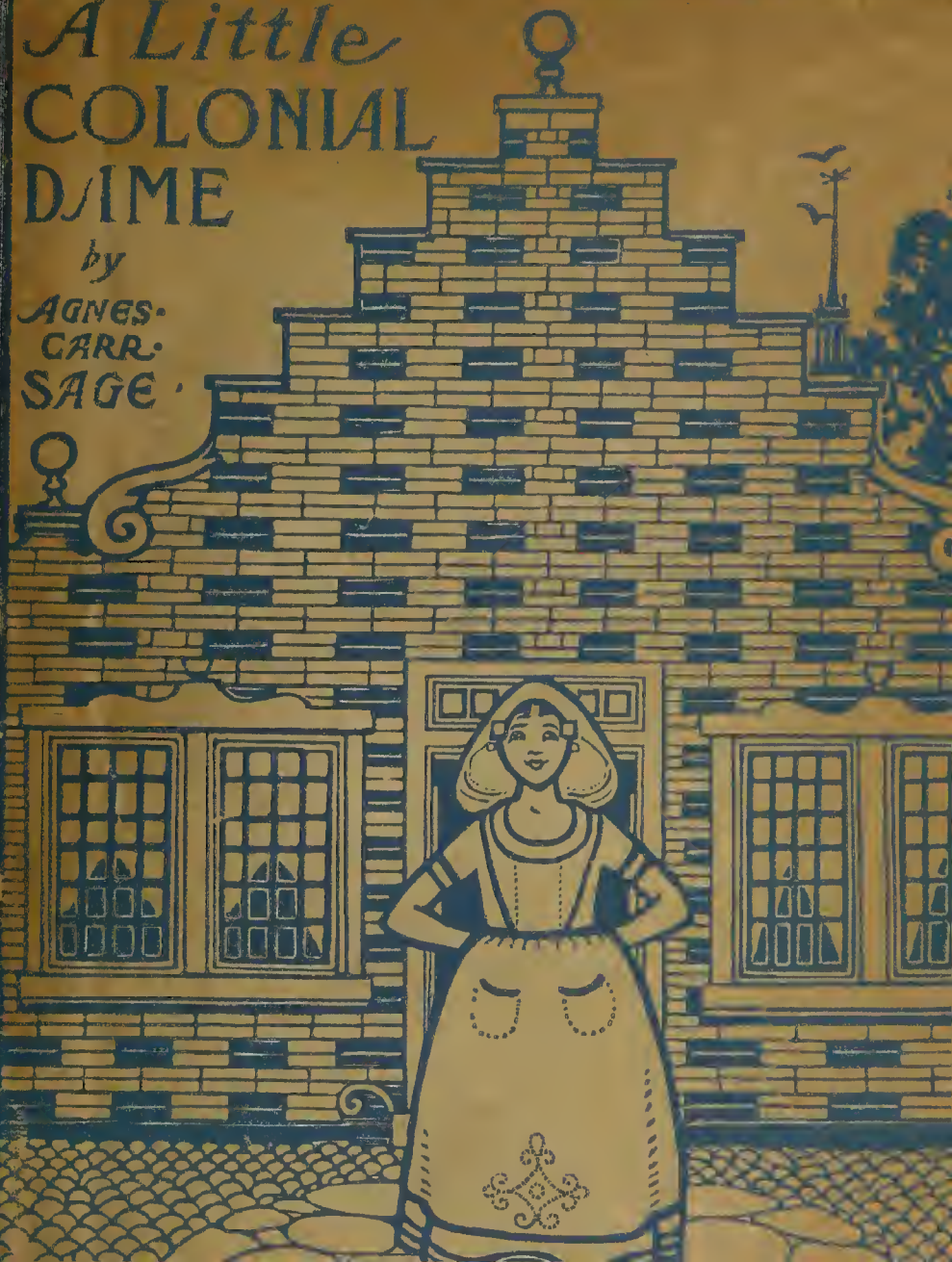
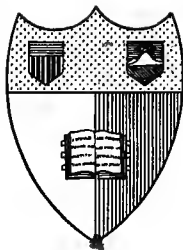


# A Little COLONIAL DIME

by  
AGNES  
CARR  
SAGE





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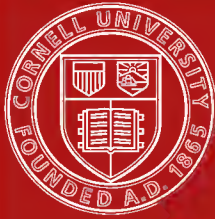


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“I MUST THANK THEE, FRANZ DE MILT.”—Page 5.



# A LITTLE COLONIAL DAME

*A Story of Old Manhattan Island*

BY

AGNES CARR SAGE

*Author of "Christmas Elves," "The Jolly Ten," Etc.*

ILLUSTRATED BY

MABEL HUMPHREY

*Second Edition*



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TO  
THE SONS AND DAUGHTERS  
OF THE  
COLONIAL DAMES OF AMERICA  
THIS TALE OF  
**YOUNG LIFE IN OLD NEW AMSTERDAM**  
IS CORDIALLY DEDICATED  
BY THE AUTHOR.



## AUTHOR'S NOTE

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In preparing this story of Colonial Days the best histories and biographies have been consulted and many bits of folklore unearthed in order to produce as true a picture as possible of those simple early times, while many a veritable incident has been interwoven with the fiction.

The Indian myths are those that were handed down by the redskins from father to son, and to J. K. Paulding's "Book of St. Nicholas" am I indebted for the quaint legend of the patron saint of the New Netherlands as related by Nicholas Bayard. Catharine Dubois, the pirate Captain and a few minor characters were real personages who "lived and moved and had their being" in the middle of the seventeenth century.

It is, then, with the hope that "A Little Colonial Dame" may win favor in the sight of her descendants and that she and her friends, white, black, and red, may help to revive fresh interest in the honest sturdy settlers of Manhattan Island, that this story of their joys and sorrows, festivals and sports is given to the young people of to-day.

AGNES CARR SAGE.



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# A LITTLE COLONIAL DAME

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## CHAPTER I

### ON THE VERLETTEMBERG

“Tie the splendid orange,  
Orange still above!  
*O oranje boven*  
Orange still above.”

ORANJE BOVEN.

SNAPPING cold but clear and radiant was the winter air, one December day, more than two hundred years ago. Bitter cold, in spite of the sunshine dancing over the blue, ice-flecked bay, sparkling gayly on the checker-work gables of black and yellow brick, the numberless chimneys, cornices and pinnacles which adorned the simple houses of the squat little town of New Amsterdam, and setting every gilt weather-cock to glittering with an increased and dazzling lustre. But verily, now, if ever, was the time for these variable fowls of the roof-tree to announce favorable winds, and do their prettiest to enhance the feeling of hilarity pervading the Island of Manhattan,—a hilarity which gave a truly joyous ring to the voices of the merry coasters on the Verlettenberg—the steep hill at the end of Garden Street. For it was the Fifth of December and the eve of the Festival of St. Nicholas—or San Claas as the children called him—the acknowledged

patron saint of the little Dutch colony and beloved of every loyal Hollander, old and young.

"A rare fine night will De Patroon van Kindervreugd \* have for his long ride," remarked one rosy-cheeked maiden of some twelve summers, as she dragged her wooden sledge to the top of the hill, where were gathered several girls in warmly wadded hoods and cloaks and a few small boys in *ten-broecks* and flat wool hats.

"That he will, Rychie Van Couwenhoven," responded Geertruyd Vanderen. "Sore disappointed, too, shall I be, if he fetch not a string of gold neck-beads to pop into my green yarn stocking."

"Well, I know what I am to have," said Katrinka Kock. "It is a fine embroidered petticoat of rare India stuff. I caught a glimpse of it, hidden beneath the linen in the great oak chest."

"Tut, tut, you Peep-Eye! Do you think the gracious Christ-Kinkle sends his gifts before him?" asked Geertruyd with a warning glance toward the little boys who were listening eagerly. "Were I his saintship naught whatever would I leave you but a bundle of switches, to pay for such treason. For have we not all been taught that he loves not faithless children!"

"At fourteen, I scarce consider myself a child," retorted Katrinka with a toss of her auburn head. "But Metje and Rychie have not yet told us their desires."

"Oh, I wish for skates, real Dutch skates, that I may join in the winter sport on the canal," cried blithe Metje De Groot; while Rychie remarked more slowly,— "I care not. It is the joy of the little ones I like most to see, and then I long for the festival, so I may show the mother the beautiful

\* "The patron of children's joy."

chair-back I have worked for her on the sly, under the direction of my sister Grietje."

"I have made a quilt for mein moeder," said Geertruyd. "A gay quilt of many patches for the best feather-bed and after a brand new pattern which mine cousin Anneken brought direct from Rotterdam."

"So! But look! who is that coming up the hill?"

"It is Mynheer Van Boot's French boy, Franz de Milt," piped little Hans Tyson, "always is he mooning off by himself and making pictures on stones and bits of bark."

"Much fault too, does Master Van Hoboken find with him at the school," said Katrinka. "He spends half his time in the corner under the rope-end for scribbling on his books and lagging over his lessons."

"That is so," laughed Metje. "He must know the text that hangs above, by heart. "Go to the ant, thou sluggard, learn of her and be wise."

"Ach yes, often has my heart ached to see him," sighed Rychie. "For he must have a sorry life with cross Dirck Van Boot. I, too, would make the pictures if I could draw as well as he does. Why, he made a portrait of Jan Gillertsen the bell-ringer that was as like—as like as two pieces of wampum. I fancy his face also, though it is so dark and melancholy."

"Ho, ho! Who would have dreamed Mynheer Lazybones had such a champion," began teasing Katrinka, when all were startled by loud cries of dismay from the youngsters, who had returned to their coasting. Turning, they discovered that a big, burly youth—one of the ne'er-do-weels of the town—had appeared upon the scene. Rudely pushing the little lads aside and with a loud shout of, "Hollo there! clear the track, Doughnuts!" he threw himself head-foremost upon a huge sledge and went spinning down the steep hill with tremendous velocity, entirely regardless of a small sled ahead

of him, which moved very slowly, and on which were seated two chubby little urchins, their minds so intent upon steering straight that they were quite unconscious of the danger that threatened from the swift, heavy runner fast overtaking them.

"Oh, oh! It is that dreadful Rip Van Clomp!" exclaimed Metje, while Rychie clasped her hands screaming: "St. Nicholas preserve us! There must a collision be, and Jacob Kip and my brother Pieter will be hurt!"

Truly this appeared only too probable, when an intervention came from a most unexpected quarter. The French boy, who by this time was half-way up the hill, suddenly made a dash forward, and, at imminent risk of being knocked down by the iron points protruding from the forward part of Rip's *Flying Spud*, seized the rope of the sled, and, with a quick vigorous movement, turned it from the track and brought it to an abrupt standstill in a snowbank.

So rapidly indeed was all this accomplished that, for an instant, Rip was speechless from rage and astonishment. Then realizing what had occurred, he sprang to his feet sputtering with anger and, shaking his fist in Franz's face, demanded: "What—what do you mean, you rascally frog-eater, you nobody's child, by interfering with your betters in that fashion?"

"I mean, sir, but to let you know that the leetle fellows have the right of vay," replied the lad with the utmost courtesy, but with a rather scornful curl of his short upper lip.

"*Donder and blixen!* What impudence! And I'll teach you, sirrah, that no one has a right of way where Rip Van Clomp chooses to go." Saying which he leveled a blow at the boy's head. With ready dexterity, however, the little Frenchman evaded it, and then, as the ruffian made another

lunge forward, put out his foot over which Rip tripped and fell sprawling in the snow, where he lay muttering a thousand threats of vengeance, his ire increasing as a burst of mocking, girlish laughter floated down from the top of the hill.

"Now, girls, you see what a good, clever creature he really is!" cried impulsive Rychie, and, as the victor without even a smile of triumph on his dark, grave countenance, approached, she flew to his side exclaiming: "I must thank thee, Franz de Milt, for that act. It was bravely and skilfully done."

"*Ja, ja*,\* it was so," echoed the other little maidens, while Metje shook with merriment.

"Ha, ha, ha!" She chuckled. "How like a great ugly bug Rip looked floundering and fuming there in the snow; and mark, he is afraid to come this way, and is skulking off across the fields."

"His hot blood ought to cool soon in this veather, though greatly I fear ve shall be unfriends hereafter," said Franz with a slight French accent, though living as he did in a community composed principally of Dutch and English, he generally spoke the composite language of those around him.

"I fear so, and you must be on your guard," sighed Rychie. "But, oh, it makes me tremble all over when I think what a sad festival of St. Nicholas would have been ours if our dear Pieter had been killed! The kind saint should reward you bountifully, this night, good Franz."

"That is not likely *jufvrouw*. My *baas*, Heer Van Boot, believes not in vat you call the poetry, the sentiment of your Dutch fete."

"Do you mean that you have never hung up your stocking on St. Nicholas eve?"

\* Pronounced *ya*. The Dutch for yes.

“Once, jufvrouw,” and the boy smiled bitterly at the remembrance. “In the morning I found a stout twig of birch, and felt it as vell.”

“Ach, but that was a shame !” exclaimed Geertruyd.

“Disgraceful !” cried Katrinka.

“Too bad !” echoed Metje.

And Rychie, carried away by her feelings, added : “Then to-night you shall eat your mush and milk by our fireside and hang your stocking in our chimney-corner. I warrant the good San Claas will leave no switches there.”

A radiant expression of delight flitted across the poor lad’s sober face but quickly faded as he said regretfully,—“Thanks, jufvrouw. You are kind. But that cannot be. Never would Mynheer Van Boot permit it. There is much trade, too, at the shop to-day, and, already, have I lingered longer than I ought. Good-day, for I must haste me back.”

“Then I shall go with you, and ask Mynheer myself,” declared Rychie, with the stubborn determination of a well-born Dutch girl, although her heart beat faster at the thought of encountering the cross-grained tobacco merchant, who was none too well liked in the colony, and about whom there were sundry curious rumors afloat, although they were as intangible as they were mysterious.

“Let us all go,” cried Geertruyd, “for the sun has set and it waxeth very cold.”

“I, too, must stop at Cornelis Steenwick’s to buy my orange ribbon,” said Katrinka.

“And so must I,” chimed Metje.

Together, then, Franz and the quartet of maidens proceeded through the town, he gallantly dragging all the wooden sledges ; but Katrinka kept somewhat in the rear and aloof from the shabbily-dressed boy whom every one knew had been taken in, years before, out of charity, by old Vrouw Van

Boot while, since her death, he had been the adopted son by name, but the servant and drudge in reality, of miserly Dirck Van Boot, the philanthropic widow's only child.

The narrow, unpaved streets were thronged with people of various colors—white, black, brown and red. Angola slaves the property of the rich; fantastically-garbed Indians from the settlements without the town; and bevys of soot-begrimed little chimney-sweepers begging every passing burgher and motherly matron, for a stiver or a few bits of wampum—which then circulated as currency—in order that they might “make merry on San Claas’s Day.” In every window, too, shone the “Orange Boven,” the St. Nicholas color, while in some, likewise, appeared pictures of his saintship himself, represented as a jolly, apple-cheeked little man in low-crowned hat and Flemish trunk-hose, smoking a pipe of enormous length.

The girls were kept constantly nodding to acquaintances, and not a few paused to look back in wonder at winsome Rychie Van Couwenhoven and her companion. Not a whit, however, cared she, though she did think it rather mean that Geertruyd and Metje, as well as Katrinka, should drop off before they reached Broad Street, which bordered on the canal, and where she found herself alone with Franz before a dingy door, over which was painted “Pipen en Tabac.” This the lad pushed open, and, as they entered the low, dark shop, were greeted by a growl from behind the counter, where stood a keen-eyed, scowling man of middle-age, his queue very much awry, and his rusty vest and long-waisted coat decidedly the worse for the snuff with which they were plentifully besprinkled.

“Hå, splutterkin! Where de duyvel have you loitered all this time?” he snarled. “You are not worth your salt and meal, and I’ll—” but there the sight of Rychie caused him

to pause in some confusion, and it was in quite a different tone of voice that he next spoke.

"Ah, good-evening, Jufvrouw Van Couwenhoven. So it is you who so kindly brings my naughty *zoon* home to me."

"Son, indeed!" muttered Franz under his breath.

"How, now, can I serve you? Is it that you have come for more of the prime Virginia of which your honored father is so fond?"

"Not this time, Mynheer," replied Rychie. Adding, with instinctive tact, "Though oft have I heard him observe that the very best tobacco in all the New Netherlands was to be found in your shop."

"He did but speak the truth."

"No doubt. But now it is to ask a favor I am here. It is, good Mynheer, that you will allow Franz to sup with us this evening and stay to welcome Knecht Rupert."

"Hum—m—m!" A frown darkened the tobacco-broker's features. He longed to refuse, but Dirck Van Boot, surly miser that he was, often showed himself in his generation "wiser than the children of light," and there were reasons why he wished to stand well with the family of the Schepen Van Couwenhoven, who was a prominent member of the influential West India Company. After a moment's hesitation, then, he said: "Franz is an idle, lazy fellow, jufvrouw, and scarce deserves your gracious invitation. But since it is your desire, he shall go, though I can ill spare him on the edge of a festival."

"All the packages vill I tie up before I start," put in the boy.

"Very well, then, be about it, for time you must have to get into your kerck clothes."

"And I must away home to don my St. Nicholas ribbon," cried Rychie. "But I thank you, Mynheer, for your con-



sent. Mind, too, Franz, that you are not late. Good-night!" So, gathering her warm cloak about her, the little lass, with a gasp of relief, escaped from the store and sped toward Pearl Street, in the fast falling twilight.

## CHAPTER II

### ST. NICHOLAS EVE

" Ah, well I recollect the ample space,  
Where little people did their stockings place,  
Then sit delighted round the hickory blaze,  
And watch the chimney with expectant gaze,  
Discussing all they thought the dawn would show,  
And wondering where Saint Nicholas next would go."

A MOST inviting picture of homely comfort was presented to the eyes of poor Franz De Milt when, one hour later, he knocked timidly at the back door of the Van Couwenhoven's substantial stone house in Pearl Street.

The portal swung wide, and a cheery-faced lad, somewhat taller than himself, welcomed him with a hearty shake of the hand, and, drawing him into the spacious kitchen or living-room, cried: " Enter, enter good Franz. Glad are we to see you, for mine Sister Rychie has told us how you saved the little Pieter from a broken head on the Verlettenberg. Most bad and unmannerly was that of Rip, but, after all, he is a funny chap, and often makes much sport on the Parade and in the Market Place."

Franz thought he had never been so happy as when, having been also warmly greeted by Vrouw Van Couwenhoven, he found himself ensconced on the comfortable settle in the chimney-corner, gazing about the pleasant, fire-lit apartment.

Dutch houses were always clean, but at the Festival of St. Nicholas they were superlatively so, not an atom of dust or rust being allowed to remain in crack or crevice, and to-night the long dresser was fairly resplendent with its array of well-polished mugs, platters, and porringers of pewter and Delft ware. The floor was scrubbed to a state of immaculate whiteness and plentifully besprinkled with snowy sand, while in the great fireplace mammoth hickory logs snapped and crackled beneath the iron pots suspended from the hooks and trammels. Best of all in the hungry boy's sight, however, was the square table spread with a cloth of home-spun linen on which were set forth, not only the regulation mush-and-milk, but small saucers of preserved plums and heaps of savory *oly koecks*, sweet, rich, and brown as chestnuts. Round this board briskly stepped Grietje Van Couwenhoven, a fresh-faced maiden of eighteen, whose dark eyes contrasted strikingly with her blonde locks and fair complexion, and who looked pretty as a peach in her house dress, consisting of a gay, quilted skirt, short enough to display her fancifully-clocked hose and low shoes with silver buckles; a white apron and dark bodice confining her slender waist; while her golden hair was rolled plainly back beneath a little muslin cap. She was directing the movements of two negro women engaged in dishing up a platter of fried ham and preparing other portions of the evening meal, their dusky features, gaudy turbans, and short gowns and petticoats of green linsey-woolsey adding a touch of the picturesque to the home scene.

"How good! how beautiful it all is!" thought the young orphan.

Presently, in danced Rychie, fluttering with excitement, and with her flaxen braids tied with orange-colored ribbon. "Welcome art thou, as the blumies in the spring-

time, Franz," she exclaimed. "And rarely glad am I that sour old Herr Van Boot was as good as his word. He is a veritable bear, and not at all like mine *vader* here, who always is so kind and generous." Deftly, then, the happy girl perched herself on the knee of the fat, jolly burgher, who was contentedly puffing at his long pipe of "Virginia," in his comfortable easy-chair, and began arranging his skull-cap of tawny orange silk.

"Whish! whish Rychie! It is not good manners thus to speak of Franz' employer," reproved Mynheer Van Couwenhoven, trying to look grave, but relapsing into a low chuckle. "Have you discovered, boy, that my daughter has a sadly flattering tongue? One would think she took me for San Claas, and wanted to wheedle a very fine gift into her blue worsted stocking."

"Now, cruel is that," cried Rychie. "Nor is it like you, mine *vader*, to accuse me of grinding the axes, when well you know how much I love thee."

"Ay, sweetheart, even as I love thee." And an affectionate embrace passed betwixt father and child, making the little stranger sigh, half enviously. "Truly, a blind man would know that."

"Come! come!" called the mother at that moment. "The supper is on the table, so draw up and eat ere the hog's meat gets cold."

Willingly enough, then, all took possession of the rush-bottomed chairs around the appetizing board, and a very genial, united family party they formed, the good-humored Hollander and his buxom wife, surrounded by their five children, Grietje, Hendrick, Rychie, Pieter, and little six-year-old Blandina, the baby of the household, while Franz felt wonderfully at home, and laughed and chatted as he had not done since the death of his benefactress, old Vrouw

Van Boot Before they had finished, there came a rap on the upper half of the divided door.

"It will be Nicholas Bayard," remarked Grietje, with a blush, and black Sophia admitted a stalwart young man with a pleasant, open countenance. All greeted him cordially, and, after shaking hands with Franz, he dropped into a seat and entertained them with bits of gossip and funny stories, while he partook of the preserves and cakes pressed upon him by the hospitable hostess.

Supper over, the company gathered around the wide hearth; Mynheer returning to his beloved meerschaum; the thrifty housewife busying her fingers with some intricate knitting; Grietje and Nicholas planning together a holiday merry-making, and the boys and girls roasting apples and nuts in the ashes. Meanwhile the black women cleared away the dishes, and the little negro children—Hendrick's boy Flip, Rychie's small maid Deborah, and a scrap of a pickaninny called Clytie, all born and bred in the house—mingled familiarly with the family.

Apollo, Sophia's husband, also stole into a warm corner and sat with a short pipe between his teeth and his ebony face all aglow.

"These chestnuts and shagbarks I picked myself on Nutten Island," said Hendrick, "so know they are fine and fresh. Here, Flip, come and crack some hickories, while Pieter and I roast chestnuts for Franz and the girls."

"Then I," remarked the French boy, producing a knife from his pocket, "will the head of San Claas cut on one of these shagbarks."

"Oh, can you really do that?" asked Blandina, cuddling down by his side.

"I tink I can, though better would I like to paint it."

"That will be fine," declared Rychie. "And meanwhile

Elsje shall repeat to us the pretty legend of the good St. Nicholas. Hast thou ever heard it, Franz ? ”

“ No, I have not. Never. ”

“ Then you shall. Come, Elsje, leave Sophia to wash the plates and mugs, while you tell us of the poor young women to whom the gracious saint brought such rich dowries. ”

“ Yah, yah, leetle missy always lub dat story, ” chuckled the aged negress, whose wrinkled face curiously resembled a withered russet apple, and, dropping on to a low cricket, she at once began: “ You must know, chilluns, dat when St. Nicholas libbed on dis earf, he was no small, fat mynheer wif a big hat and a long pipe. No, no! A great, gran’ bishop was he, wif trailin’ robes, a crown on his head, and a crook in his hand. ”

“ A crosier, ” corrected Hendrick, while Nicholas Bayard, a smile playing about his lips, whispered to Grietje: “ What a come-down for his saintship to sooty chimneys and knit stockings ? ”

“ Far, far ober de big sea was his home in a land called Asia, and he was always berry amiable and kind to every-poty. But, pest of all, he liked the jufvrouws, and it made his so kind heart pain like de toothache when he heard ob a nobleman who was too poor to get his three daughters any marriage portions whateber. Not eben one silk petticoat or one silver chain could he buy, so neber, neber could dey be vrouws. ”

“ That was naught so direful, ” remarked Grietje, with a toss of her pretty head.

“ Well, dey thought so, ” retorted the old woman. “ And often did dey cry demselves to sleep pecause of it. But listen what St. Nick did do. One night, when de moon shone bright, up to de house he crept. Still and soft, like a

weasel, he came and in at de winder, tossed a silken stockin' filled wid gold up to de berry top. No wampum, no stivers, but all good gold guilders. It came down ker-plump! right at de vader's feet. He handed it to his oldest girl, and de berry next day dere was a weddin'.

"Den, soon after, de bishop went again and brought anoder hose ob money for de second daughter, who lost no time in marryin' de man ob her choice.

"But all de while, de Herr Nobleman could not rest for botherin' his head over who in the world could be to him so kind. Ebery night he watch, watch until, at last, he espied the saint comin' wid de youngest wench's dowry. And den out he popped, and, catching de holy man's robe in his hands, cried: 'O, Nicholas, servant of God, why dost thou seek to hide thyself?'

"Now, so modest was St. Nicholas dat he was not pleased at being discovered, and he made de nobleman swear neber to tell any one of de fortune giben to him and his. Away den, he vanished; but eber after, de patroon, his daughters, and deir handsome husbands lived as happy as clippers when de tide is high. And dis is why you chilluns hang up your stockings on St. Nicholas Eve and in de mornin' find 'em full ob toys and sweeties."

"If we have been good, Elsje," added small Blandina, with a world of solemnity in her gentle voice.

"That, too," said Rychie. "is the reason our saint is sometimes called 'the guardian of maidens.' Is it not a pretty tale?"

"Charming," replied Franz. "And much have I enjoyed hearing it."

"But it is a rare foolish one," cried Nicholas Bayard, with a twinkle in his merry eye. "I am astonished, Elsje, that you should talk such nonsense."

"Ha, ha, ha! Baas Bayard must always hab his joke," cackled the old crone, not a whit offended.

"Now, see! I know the true, authentic story of our patron saint, for I am his namesake and learned his history before I did my Heidelberg."

"Tell it; tell it, then!" chorussed the youngsters, while even the Schepen drew his chair nearer to listen, and Vrouw Van Couwenhoven let her knitting fall upon her lap.

"Not a bit of a bishop was St. Nicholas, and he never so much as set foot in Asia. He lived and died in the Fatherland and was the jolliest of bakers, his trade being determined the night before he was born by his mother dreaming that the sun was turned into a vast New Year cake and all the stars to *oly koecks*. Therefore, as soon as he was old enough, to a famous baker in Old Amsterdam was he apprenticed, and made and sold and gave away no end of cookies and gingerbread alphabets to the little folk of that great city. He was a pleasant, sweet-tempered caitiff, and at twenty-four years of age fell head over heels in love with his master's daughter, pretty little Katrinchee, who was plump as a partridge and the toast of every 'prentice lad in town."

Here young Bayard looked hard at Grietje, who seemed deeply engrossed in twisting the corner of her apron.

"Now, Baker Nicholas was as odd and original in his courting as he is now in his gift-giving. First of all, then, he made a cake in the form of a heart pierced half through with a toasting-fork, and presented it, smoking hot, to Katrinchee, who straightway ate it up with marvelous gusto."

Again the story-teller paused to put a chestnut down to roast, while Pieter and Blandina shouted, "Proceed! proceed!"

"A month later, he baked another cake which represented



two hearts gracefully entwined with a true-lover's knot. This, also, did Katrinchee devour, smiling her thanks."

Just here the chestnut burst open with a loud "pop."

"One more month, however, he waited, fluctuating between hope and fear, and then he contrived a third cake that took the shape of a letter, upon which he engraved the sweetest sort of a poesy, and when the girl read the lines she heaved such a sigh, it made my hero feel as hot,—as hot as this chestnut." And Nicholas fished his nut from the ashes.

"He was so encouraged, though, that he ventured on a downright declaration by means of a fourth cake in the likeness of a chubby Dutch Cupid, the acceptance of which meant a timid little '*Ja*' and permission to ask her hand of the head baker."

At this point occurred another interruption, while young Bayard offered the roasted chestnut to Grietje, and, as she took it with a becoming blush, the Schepen and his *vrouw* exchanged meaning glances.

"Well, after smoking and pondering, and pondering and smoking from Kierstyd't to Pinkster, the father at length gave his consent, and the loving pair were married and lived happily for many years, especially as when the Boss Baker was called to join his forefathers, he left all his business and fortune to Nicholas. They had no children, but all the boys and girls in Amsterdam knew and dearly loved the generous little man who, morning and evening, distributed among them his nice fresh cookies and doughnuts. He was made a burgomaster, and, likewise, became a good Calvinist, uniting with the true Reformed Church, although many persecutions had the followers of our faith then to undergo. But trials come to all, and one day the *gude vrouw* Katrinchee died, and after that Nicholas would have been sadly lonely but for his friends, the children."

"I would have given him a big bear's hug and a dozen kisses if I had been there," lisped Blandina.

"Ay, little heart, I warrant you would, and so I hope did some other small curly-heads. Still, one night, the baker was feeling very downcast as he sat alone thinking of his lost Katrinchee, when, suddenly, a tremendous uproar arose without, his door was burst rudely open, and in rushed an unknown person gasping: 'Hide me; hide me, I pray! For in sorest danger is my life.'

"'How and by whom, friend?' asked Nicholas, rising. 'Who would harm thee?'"

"'Ask me not now, Nicholas, I beseech thee,' said the stranger, at which the host exclaimed: 'Then thou knowest my name!'"

"'Surely, for everybody has heard of thy kindness of heart. But hide me now, and when the danger is past all will I explain.'

"'But first,' asked the baker, 'thou art no murderer or fugitive from justice?'"

"'No, I swear it on my faith. But hark! they are coming! Wilt thou protect me or no?'"

"'I will.' Saying which, the good Nicholas conducted the man to a secret closet built in the wall, the door of which could not be distinguished from the other panels. Giving him, too, the key, he bade him: 'Lock thyself in so, should they take me away, thou may'st be able to escape.'"

"'Dinorah thinks that Mynheer Van Boot has just such a closet,'" whispered Franz to Rychie.

"'For what and wherefore?'"

"'I know not, but list! Herr Bayard proceeds.'"

"'Soon a loud halloing and banging sounded outside, and a babel of voices shouted, 'Open! open!'"

"'Nicholas went to the door, and at once a mass of people

forced themselves in, demanding the arch heretic they had seen enter. 'He is here, we saw him come in,' they cried.

"'If he be here, find him,' quoth my namesake calmly. 'I will not say he is not here; neither would I betray him were it so.'

"The religious fanatics—who really honored and respected the burgomaster, if he was a Calvinist—ransacked the house from attic to cellar, but failed to discover the concealed cupboard. At last, however, as they paused in disappointed rage, one dismayed Nicholas by saying: 'We have heard of a secret place in your home where your money and papers are kept. Open that to us, and aught that is yours we swear not to molest.'

"The hidden fugitive also heard these words, but he was stout-hearted and trusted in the Lord.

"'Ja, where is thy strong closet?' asked another of the party. 'We must and will examine it.'

"'Very well, find it, then,' answered the brave baker."

"Donder! but that old St. Nick was a plucky wight!" ejaculated Pieter admiringly.

"That was he. So at it, again, the rabble went, hunting and tapping on the walls. But all in vain, and finally the leader, in his temper, shouted: 'Let us take this fellow. then. One heretic is as good as another—as bad, I mean.'

"'Seize him!' cried another.

"'Away with him!' roared a third.

"'To the stake!' added a fourth.

"So, forgetting all the kindness he had shown to them and their children, these burghers, carried away by mistaken zeal and bigotry, actually bound Nicholas, and were about to drag him off to execution, when the secret panel in the wall flew open, and forth stepped the stranger with so lofty and inspired a mien that the startled mob was hushed

to silence. 'Unbind that man,' he thundered, 'and bind me in his stead.'

"Awestricken, all stood as though spellbound.

"'Unbind this man, I say,' he repeated.

"No one moved.'

"'Well, then, I shall do it,' and quickly he released the prisoner from his bonds, after which, gazing at the excited men around him, with mingled pity and indignation, he made them such an address that, one by one, they bowed their heads in shame and slunk away like whipped hounds.

"'Who art thou?' asked the baker, in wide-eyed wonder, when all were gone.

"'Thou shalt know,' replied the strange guest. 'But first, listen to me, kind and good Nicholas. Thou willingly endangered thy life for one who had no claim upon thee but the holy claim of hospitality. For this, then, blessed be thee and thine, thy memory when thou art dead and thy lot hereafter. Truly, thou art worthy to know who I am,' and he then disclosed the fact that he was the famous John Calvin, of whom full oft you children have heard the Dominie speak.'"

"The great reformer?" asked Hendrick.

"Yes, the same. But when Nicholas would have knelt to him, he forbade him and departed, saying: 'Now farewell, but let me have thy prayers, for blessings, indeed, are the prayers of good men.'

"After that, our friend devoted himself more and more to the cause of the Reformation, while ever were his house and purse open to the needy and distressed. He still gave his goodly cakes to the little folk, and every year, on his birthday, made a feast for old and young. To a very old age did he live; but one sixth of December, as he sat by the fireside after all his guests had departed laden with gifts and pleasant

wishes, a knock came on the door, and there entered a stately figure, who sat down beside him. The aged burgo-master's eyesight was dim, but, with his wonted cordiality, he exclaimed: 'Thou art welcome!'

"'Well do I know that,' said the stranger. 'In the home of the good Nicholas everybody is welcome!'

"'Thou knowest my name; may I not, then, know thine?'

"'Assuredly,' and, bending down, the newcomer whispered in his ear that name which once before had made his heart leap in his breast, adding, 'Dost thou remember the adventure of the closet?'

"'Yea, blessed be the day and hour,' responded the old man. 'But, now, thou must partake of my cheer on this anniversary of my birth, for never shall I see another.'

"So Calvin remained with him the entire night, and on leaving in the morning said, as though in prophecy: 'Those who remain behind thee shall bless thy name and memory. The little children will love thee, and, so long as thy countrymen cherish their ancient customs, thou wilt not be forgotten.' And has it not so proved, even in this New World?

"Peacefully, then, the gracious Nicholas passed to his forefathers and there was mourning for him throughout all Amsterdam, while, on the day of his funeral the shops and schools were closed and the girls and boys had no heart for play. The whole city gathered at his grave, and all at once among the throng appeared the same imposing personage who had visited him on his birth-night. In glowing praise words he spoke of the open-handed baker, closing with, 'Now, join me, my friends, old and young, men, women and children, in blessing his memory as the good *Saint Nicholas*.'

"So spake John Calvin, and, as with one voice the multi-

tude shouted: 'Long live the blessed memory of the good Saint Nicholas.'

"Thus he won his title; while on this eve of the festival he loves, he still returns to earth, rides on the housetops and glides down the chimneys, to gladden with his sweet cakes and fine gifts, the little *kinder* folk of whom he always was so dearly fond."

"A rare, choice tale, with an excellent moral wrapped up in it," remarked Vrouw Van Couwenhoven, with an approving nod.

"And well told," added Mynheer, while the children wished there was more. But Grietje uttered not a word, only gazed into the fire and twisted the corner of her apron.

"See," cried Pieter, "Franz has cut upon the nut a head as like to the bountiful San Claas as the picture in the window."

And truly, the tiny bit of carving was skilfully executed and won much enthusiastic praise when Franz handed it to Blandina, with a courtly little bow. The mother smiled and whispered to her husband: "The poor lad seems well mannered, and I feel a great liking and *jammer* for him in my heart. The boys must have him here as oft as Dirck Van Boot will permit." To which the genial Schepen responded:

"Ja, ja, gude Vrouw! See that they do; see they do. Perchance it may brighten him up, and I like not to see so old and sad a look upon so young a face."

But at that instant, the merry tinkle of sleighbells sounded without, and a thundering rap-tap-tap on the door caused every one to start, while the eyes of the small folk grew round and bright with half-frightened expectation.

## CHAPTER III

### KNECHT RUPERT

“Look! the moon shines through the trees,  
Children cease your noisy play.  
The joyous moment has arrived,  
St. Nicholas' happy, happy day.  
With beating heart we wait to see  
Who gets the cake and whose the rod will be.”

WITH a cry of terror, little Blandina flew to the refuge of her mother's arms, and the small negroes hid their silly heads. Pieter, however, assumed all the airs of the hero he felt, as he thrust his chubby hands into his pockets and boldly announced: “See, I'm not afraid. Don't be a goose, Blandy! It will only be Knecht Rupert.”

“Knecht Rupert,” repeated Franz, in a puzzled tone.

“To be sure,” cried Rychie. “Hast thou never heard of St. Nicholas' most trusty messenger?”

But before the words were out of her mouth, Heer Van Couwenhoven had flung wide the portal, and, with mock reverence, was bowing in a gigantic figure which strode into the center of the room and, from beneath shaggy brows, cast searching glances upon the little fireside group.

Clad all in furs, from his head to his foot, the new-comer presented a truly curious appearance, while his long, heavy robe was edged with a fringe of sleighbells that kept up a cheerful tintinnabulation as he walked. A tall fur cap,

with three fox tails hanging behind, crowned a shock of raven hair; great boots lengthened out like Esquimaux snowshoes covered his feet; a long black beard swept his chest, and his dark eyes gleamed and glowed like coals of fire. But what interested the youngsters most, were two enormous quivers, strapped, Indian fashion, on his back—one brimming over with tempting cakes, and the other filled with ominous birch rods.

“Worthy Knecht Rupert, you were expected and are most welcome,” said Vrouw Van Couwenhoven, dropping a ceremonious curtsey, while Blandina ventured one eye up from her mother’s capacious shoulder. “From whom do you come?”

“From my master, the gracious St. Nicholas,” replied the giant, in a deep but kindly tone.

“And think you he will follow himself before the cock crows?”

“So, without a doubt.”

At this Rychie clapped her hands, Pieter chuckled, and Blandina risked two eyes.

“Do you bring a message, good Rupert, from his Saintship?” Asked the mother again.

“That I do, honored madam, and tokens of his favor and disfavor also. He sends a cordial greeting to thee, Catherina Van Couwenhoven, to thy husband the worthy Schepen, to pretty Grietje, and to honest Nicholas Bayard, one and all. Thy *kinderen* he will always remember, while too, the brown faces he will not forget if they have proved faithful and kept their fingers from picking at the sweetmeats.”

At this, black Flip hung his head and old Elsje shook a warning finger at Deborah, whom she had caught that very day, dipping into the treacle pot.



"Children, dark and pale, I greet you all; Hendrick, Rychie, Pieter, Blandina and thy young friend Franz—St. Nicholas sends you his blessing, and says you have done well, on the whole. But he would remind you of a few faults that you may correct them. He is highly pleased with Hendrick's progress at the Latin School, but regrets that he feels his manhood so much that he waxeth a trifle headstrong, and is not so obedient to his father and mother as becomes a lad just turned fifteen. For Rychie, he has naught but commendation words, as she has been all that is truthful and generous; while he praises Pieter for not tearing his *tenbroecks* so oft as formerly, but bids him beware of unseemly boasting. You, Franz, are worthily patient with your severe master, but you too often neglect your book for your pencil and should try to be more industrious. San Claas, too, always hears little Clytie cry when Blandina pulls her wool. She should endeavor to treat the small maid more kindly when the New Year makes her her mistress."

At this, the yellow head on Vrouw Van Couwenhoven's shoulder bobbed wildly and a muffled little voice sobbed—"Oh, I will, I will, Mynheer. I do promise it."

"Then will his saintship accord thee his gracious forgiveness and drop many gay trinkets in thy blue stocking. Nevertheless, over the mantelshelf, I will hang a birch-rod, as a reminder to all; and may the glad *Nieu Jar* dawn in peace, good-will and joyfulness. Fare-thee-well." And then the quiverful of St. Nicholas goodies came showering down upon the broad hearth and a glorious scrambling ensued, while, when the merry-makers thought to look up, Knecht Rupert had vanished, furs, bells, quivers, and all.

"Well, now, this is what I call sport," exclaimed Pieter,

munching a sugared confection. "And I wager I have grabbed more than any of you."

"Beware of unseemly boasting," quoted Rychie laughingly, and then turned away to divide her spoils with the little colored servants.

"Was the sweet cake, that Baker St. Nicholas made for Katrinchee, like this one?" asked Blandina of young Bayard, holding up a heart-shaped cookie. "Yes, I daresay it was," he laughed. Then taking it from the child's hand, after replacing it with a fat little doughnut man, he said: "Come, Grietje, let us eat this together," which they did amidst the applause of the whole family, though blushing Jufvrouw Van Couwenhoven declared it was "naught but St. Nicholas fun and that her parents were as silly as the children to be amused at such foolishness."

"No matter, no matter," cried the jovial Schepen, "the sagest often relish a scrap of nonsense. But look, the 'farmer's bell' will soon ring for nine and the stockings are not yet hung."

"Oh, let us hang them at once," screamed the little people, and then what excitement followed and what cries of delight and bursts of rollicking laughter as the home-spun, woolen hose were produced, with a long red one for Franz, and a procession was formed headed by the father and mother, while a bevy of small darkies brought up the rear.

Each armed with a lighted candle, away they went, through the corridor to the best parlor which, on this festal night, was a bower of evergreens and orange-hued ribbons. There in the fireplace (the jambs of which were inlaid with blue and white Dutch tiles, brought across the sea from the never-to-be-forgotten Fatherland) the stockings were hung, while the boys and girls, clasping hands, stood in a semi-circle and sang—

## THE SAN CLAAS HYMN.

"Saint Nicholas, good holy man,  
 Put your best Tabard on you can,  
 And in it go to Amsterdam :  
 From Amsterdam to Hispanje  
 Where apples bright of Orange  
 And likewise those pomegranates named  
 Roll through the street all unreclaimed.  
 Saint Nicholas, my dear, good friend  
 To serve you ever was my end ;  
 If you me now, something will give,  
 Serve you, I will, as long as I live.' "

Sweetly the fresh, young voices rang out on the pine-scented air and then the children fell on their knees and repeated their evening prayer with extra fervor and devotion.

As they finished, the bell of St. Nicholas church, within the fort, chimed the ninth hour, which was the signal for retiring and Franz cried : " Oh, I must away home without delay or locked out shall I be."

"Nay, boy, stay with us the night," said the hospitable mother. "There is a second sleeping-bench in Hendrick's room and then you will be on hand in the morning to see if the good Saint has remembered you in his round."

"But Dirck," stammered Franz, "I fear he would be full of anger."

"Give yourself no *kommer* on that score," put in Nicholas, "for in Broad Street will I stop on my way home and tell Van Boot that the Heer Schepen wishes to keep you over the festival."

The lad hesitated, but the temptation was strong and he finally yielded, following Hendrick to his dormer chamber under the eaves, while young Bayard said "Good-night," adding, "A new gun have I just bought for myself, so the old firelock I left here the other day you might place beside

the French boy's stocking. Mayhap it will please him and some time do him good service."

"A fine idea and thou art kind to think of it, Nick," said Grietje, and the little familiar pronoun—which in the Holland tongue means so much more than you—sent the young Dutchman trudging toward his father's farm in Bouwery Lane, with a dancing heart, while clear, crisp and starlit, the December night settled down over the quaint, picturesque New Netherland town.

Nor were the fair promises of the eve belied by the day itself, for all bound in blue and gold seemed the festival morn, so yellow was the sunshine and so azure the winter sky and the waters of the beautiful bay. Few, too, were the gable roofs in the little Knickerbocker City beneath which eager youngsters were not early astir, and where grateful childish lips did not chant the praise of generous St. Nick.

The Van Couwenhoven mansion was no exception, and the rosy little Day-god had scarce gilded the snow-topped bastions and mud walls of Fort Amsterdam, when Blandina pattered into Rychie's room, a wooden Dutch doll clasped to her breast and her dimpled hands filled with sweeties and a host of tiny clay figures supposed to represent animals but which were like nothing living on the earth or in the sea.

"Wake up! Wake up, mine sister! and see what San Claas has left for thee," she lisped, dropping rose-leaf kisses on the girl's closed eyelids.

In a twinkling, then, Rychie was out of bed, and drawing forth a string of amber beads, a pair of deerskin moccasins made by the Manhattan women, a book of Dutch tales and legends, a jar of India sweetmeats and a bright gold guilder, which toed off her St. Nicholas stocking in royal style.



"BLANDINA PATTERNED INTO RYCHIE'S ROOM."—Page 28.



From the boys' apartment, also, issued shouts of delighted satisfaction, as Hendrick discovered his new low-gutter skates and fine silk coat with silver buttons; Pieter a long desired sled, and Franz a warm knitted scarf and mittens, and, above all, the gun.

Later, too, on descending to the living-room, they found the slaves holding jubilee over various articles of clothing and papers of snuff and tobacco, while Mynheer and his wife glowed with pleasure at the gifts of their children.

"Many, many thanks, sweetheart, for the so beautiful chair-back," whispered the mother to Rychie. "I know well that much of thy playtime has been worked into it, and rarely proud am I of mine daughter's skill. A place shall it have on the best carved Holland chair."

"My meerschaum suits me like green cheese suits a mouse," added the Schepen waving an elaborately ornamented pipe with a procession of fat little figures encircling the bowl.

"I, too, am charmed with my kerck girdle," said Grietje, holding up a curiously wrought belt from which a Bible and hymn book were suspended by silver chains.

"It is good that all are so content," remarked Vrouw Van Couwenhoven, and Franz sighed:—"How could it be otherwise ven all is so lovely! Such joy have I not felt since Moeder Van Boot went to heaven."

"Poor Franz," whispered Rychie. "By and by you must tell me more of her, and, also, of your own unfortunate mother."

"So I vill if you care to hear it."

"But now," summoned the housewife, "let us to breakfast, for much is there to do before our friends arrive from Breucklyn and from Pavonia."

## CHAPTER IV

### FRANZ'S STORY.

“My mother! When I learned that thou wast dead,  
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?  
Hovered thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son—  
Wretch—even then, life's journey just begun!”

—COWPER.

THE Knickerbockers kept early hours, and, long before the sun touched the noon mark on the garden dials, saddled and pillioned horses, capacious sleighs and long lumber wagons were crossing the ferries from Long Island and Pavonia and galloping, gliding and rumbling through the postern gates in the wooden palisade or wall, which extended from river to river, and up past the batteries, the block-houses and parade, all bringing country folk to keep the festival with their town friends.

Cheery were the greetings exchanged on all sides, and blithe and light-hearted the innocent laughter, as hospitable doors flew open, while, at the Van Couwenhovens, a whole score of kinsfolk, Van Brunts, Bergens and Van der Grist, gay as peacocks in long-waisted silk coats or elaborately embroidered petticoats, took possession of the Russia leather parlor chairs, strayed into the big kitchen or tripped up to the plain little sleeping rooms to arrange a disordered cap or tie anew a St. Nicholas ribbon.

“Who, pray, is that ugly little redskin hanging about



your front gate?" asked Jannekin Bergen of Rychie, as they stood by one of the small paned windows.

"Oh, that is Owano, a Manhattoe boy who fetches us oysters from the shore and helps Hendrick pound the corn in the great mortar. He is a steady, patient creature, and Elsje often lets him sit in the chimney corner and gives him a mug of milk or bowl of *suppawm*."

"Then she is very foolish, for the Indian is our enemy. I hate every *Lenni Lenape* as I do poison, and, so, too, does mine father. Only last week he caught a Shinnecock girl picking up sticks in our wood and broke one of them across her back. They are all thieves and scalpers and should be hunted and killed like the beavers, though not half so valuable are their copper peltries;" and Jannekin threw back her head and laughed at her own rude wit.

"Whish! Jan, whish! It is wicked to speak such cruel words," cried Rychie, flushing with indignation. "God made the Lenape as well as the Hollander, and he first gave him this great land. I am sure it was most unwise of Uncle Bergen to do such a thing. Has he forgotten what befell Hendrick Van Dyck for shooting the squaw who stole his peaches! My father says that shot cost the colony two thousand guilders, besides all the poor people who were murdered at Hoboken and Pavonia."

"Ja, ja! And that just shows what a bad, revengeful set they all are."

"Not all, Jufvrouw," put in Franz, who had been listening in silence to the girls' conversation. "Owano is truly good and grateful. A leetle favor I vonce did for him and now ever to me he brings the paints made by his tribe. But for that my poor pictures I could not make. The Indian is like to the looking-glass, that reflects. You kind, he kind; you cruel, he cruel; you cheat him, he cheat you;

you steal his land, his squaw, his papoose, he steal your scalp. So!"

"And pray who made you so wise, Mynheer frog-eater?" retorted Jannekin, with an insolent glance at the lad that caused Rychie's blood to boil.

"Nobody, for I am not at all sage; but I have eyes to see and I have likewise a heart, Jufvrouw."

Jannekin had the grace to blush at this gentle reproof, but all felt it a relief when Sophia appeared to summon the company to the holiday feast spread in the spacious kitchen, for in those simple days and contracted houses, dining-rooms were unknown.

Very different, too, was the substantial meal from the elaborate collations of many courses served to us of a later and more æsthetic time. But good Vrouw Van Couwenhoven saw no fault and beamed with satisfaction at the head of the long table, feeling that her culinary efforts did her proud. She was sure there was nothing left to be desired, for were there not geese stuffed with prunes; fat turkeys garnished with necklaces of sausages; plump chickens cheek by jowl with dishes of fried ham; noodles swimming in savory sauce; the richest of apple pies and oly-koecks, and the most generous supplies of sauer-kraut, preserves and waffles! And then, too, the circle of candles in the center of the board shone upon as jovial and contented a company as was gathered together in all the American colony; the rotund Mynheers cracking many a far-fetched Dutch joke and their wives turning again and again to the majestic Delft teapot, ornamented with chubby little shepherds and shepherdesses, from which Grietje dispensed fragrant tea in fairy-like cups not much larger than thimbles.

Poor Franz's eyes grew round and bright at this profusion and he enjoyed himself mightily, being snugly tucked in

between Hendrick and jolly little Jacob Van der Grist, at the lower end of the table, while he and all the other urchins did flattering justice to their hostess's skill, until waistcoat buttons became uncomfortable.

"And, now, let us away at once to the Kolck and have a skate on the ice, ere the shadows fall," suggested Hendrick, when, at length, knives and forks were laid aside, the women had withdrawn for a dish of gossip among themselves, and pipes and tobacco were beginning to circulate among the men.

"Ja, ja! That will be the most fun of all," agreed the other boys. All, that is, except Franz, who had never owned a pair of skates and whom Rychie drew aside, begging that he would take a walk with her instead.

"For I am longing for a breath of fresh air," she said. "And surely my cousins cannot think me uncivil if I slip away for half an hour, since they have Grietje and Blandina to entertain them. Besides, Jannekin is in such a contrary mood to-day that I care not to be with her. All, too, because she did not like the gifts in her St. Nicholas stocking."

"So! Was that it? Vell, then, it vas not so vith me," replied Franz with a contented laugh, and he willingly donned his warm new scarf and mittens and accompanied the young girl through the almost deserted streets down toward the squatty little fort, which, however, on this gala afternoon, appeared more imposing than usual with the beautifying snow topping its mud walls and the Prince's banner floating from a flag-staff on the outermost bastion.

"See, even the heavens to-night wear the dear *oranje boven*," cried Rychie, pointing to the western sky which the setting sun had dyed a dozen tawny golden tints, from palest lemon to deepest, richest orange. "Is it not a fine, delightful holiday, Franz? And now that we are alone I

want you to tell me all you can remember of your poor mother and your life over the seas, and how it chanced that you came to live with Mynheer Van Boot."

"Ah, it is leetle then I have to tell," sighed the boy, the bright look fading from his expressive countenance. "I do not know vere it vas ve lived in the Old World, for the first thing I can recall is a very tall man who took me in his arms and kissed me again and again, saying, 'Good-by, leetle Franz, good-by, good-by.' He did not say '*adieu*,' and I am almost sure it vas English he spoke, while my maman cried and sobbed and hung about his neck imploring him not to leave us. But he vent. He put me down and ran out the door very quick, and I fancy never came back."

"And that tall Mynheer! Was he your father?" asked Rychie.

"Maybe so. I do not know, for I vas too young to miss him much and I vas soon as gay as any butterfly playing in the pretty garden of our *petit chateau*. But my poor maman vas always full of sorrow, and, at last von day she said to me, 'Franz, *mon enfant*, ve must go and find thy father. Ve must go a long, long vay.' Then she packed our clothes in two bundles and ve started; valking, always valking, and a great, great distance. But, finally, ve came to the sea and there vere three big vessels and many, many people—such queer-looking people, vith grave faces and tears in their eyes! Since then, I have heard that they vere called Valdenses."

"Waldenses! The persecuted Waldenses from Piedmont, who were driven from their homes and came to make a settlement here, on the South River!"

"Yes, those are the vons. My mother and I joined them, and, vith them, sailed for this New World, where, I think,



"LIKE A BLESSED OLD ANGEL, IN A CAP OF QUILTED CALICO."—Page 35.



she hoped to find my father. I do not know all this myself but Vrouw Van Boot and Dinorah have told me so. We sailed in the chief ship, the *Prince Maurice*, and you must have heard how she was wrecked off the far coast of Long Island. I can recollect that and what a cold, wintry storm was raging when we were cast ashore in a spot where there were no trees, no sticks, nothing of which we could make a fire."

"Oh, Franz, how dreadful! Whatever did you do?"

"Well, not much, I think, except cry, because I was so cold and hungry, for I remember my dear maman took off her cloak and wrapped me in its warm folds. I remember, too, that the men made a sort of tent of sails in which we all huddled. I cannot say just how long we stayed there, but we would certainly have been frozen or starved to death, but for some Indians that came to our aid. They proved very good and friendly Red Men, for they brought us food and sent two swift runners to inform the Heer Director of our sorry plight."

"Yes, I have often heard my father mention that, when some one says the natives have no good in them, whatever. Then you were speedily fetched to Manhattan, and a few days after, most of the Waldenses were despatched on to New Amstel; was it not so?"

"Just so. But my poor maman did not go. The exposure on that bleak, barren shore, without her cloak, must have given her her death-blow. The bitter cold and the hardships were too much for her. When we reached New Amsterdam she was ill, very ill. Then it was dear Vrouw Van Boot came to our aid, like a blessed old angel, in a cap of quilted calico. Right into her house she took us and put us to sleep in the Kirmes bed, close beside the fire."

"Did your *moeder* die soon?" asked Rychie softly.

“That very night. Ven the cock crowed at daybreak, she had gone and I vas all alone in a strange land, vith only this ;” and Franz drew from beneath his jacket a small gold locket suspended by a chain, and showed his companion the curl of dark hair within and the inscription outside *Leonie De Milt from C. D. M.*”

The girl examined the trinket with deep interest, and sympathizing tears stood in her eyes as she whispered: “Poor Franz! Sad, indeed was that. But was there nothing else in the bundles? No money, no jewels?”

“Nothing, but some clothes, Dinorah says. I know not vat would have become of me, but for the kind vrouw. She gave me a home and vith her last breath made Dirck promise to do the same. Always vas she good and gentle and I loved her as though she had been my grandam. Ah, if her son vas only like her!”

“Aye, but he is not. Like a wicked changeling is Heer Van Boot,” cried Rychie. “I am half afraid of him.”

“So do I believe vas his mother. Often have I seen her look at him and tremble, and turn pale. Listen, mine friend; if something I tell you, give me your vord never to repeat it to a living soul?”

“Yes, Franz. I think I can promise that.”

“Vell then, on that night, my first night in the Colony, I remember vaking up. Very suddenly I avoke and there—there in the fireshine—I beheld Dirck Van Boot. Close beside the bed he stood and down over mamam he bent, lower and lower. She never stirred but lay vith closed eyes and a face like marble. He laid his hand on her throat, there vas a flash of steel and I think—I shall always think—that then and there he cut something from off her neck.”

“Do you mean that he robbed her?” exclaimed Rychie aghast.



"I believe so, though I could not swear it. All at vonce, he saw I vas awake, started back with an oath, and, muttering to himself, hurried from the room."

"And you did not scream or call?"

"No, for remember I vas but eight years old and understood neither Dutch nor English. Indeed I dropped off again to sleep and ven I next opened my eyes, all vas like a dream. The sun vas shining in the vindows and Dinorah and the *gude vrouw* vere crying and vringing their hands over my poor, dead mother."

"But is Dirck really cruel to you?"

"Sometimes. He has a heavy hand and always vas he jealous of his mother's liking for me. For his vow's sake he dare not turn me off, but I know he hates me. If it vere not for Dinorah I could not stand my life."

"Poor Franz! But now often must you come to us and we will try to make you happier."

"Oh, you have, you have, jufvrouw! Never shall I forget this blissful day."

"It has been pleasant, and it is time we went home to wind it up with a dance," said Rychie cheerfully.

But in this closing festivity, Franz was not destined to take part. As they crossed De Heere Straat, they encountered Rip Van Clomp, who, with a sardonic grin distorting his features, shouted: "Ho, ho, Frenchy! There's a rod in pickle for you. Heer Van Boot is fuming with rage at your long absence. He sent me to bid you return to the canal shop without delay."

"Do you believe he speaks the truth?" asked Rychie of Franz, under her breath.

"I fear so. Dirck does not like me to have much pleasuring. Anyvay it is better that I go at vonce. So, jufvrouw, please bear my thanks to your good father and mother

for all their kindness. The joy I have had is worth a few strokes of the lash."

"What! You think you will be beaten?"

"It is possible. But that is no matter; I am used to flogging. Glad would I be though, if Hendrick could find time to bring my gun to Broad Street. Dinorah will help me to smuggle it into the house."

"He shall do so. Good-night, dear Franz. But no longer must you call me *jufvrouw*, simply Rychie."

"May I? Thanks. Good-night, then, friend Rychie," and, with a brave smile, the boy hurried off while, rather sadly, our sympathetic little Colonial dame returned home to join in the gay tripping to Apollo's merry fiddle.

As she entered the house, Blandina exclaimed: "Why, sister, one of your orange ribbons you have lost!"

"Have I?" Answered the girl absently. "It must have dropped off my braid. But no consequence is that, since the festival is so nearly over."

## CHAPTER V

### THE NEW-YEAR KRULLERS

“Only a night from old to new !  
Only a night and so much wrought !

\* \* \* \* \*

The Old Year's heart was full of greed,  
With selfishness it longed and ached,  
And cried : “I have not half I need,  
My thirst is bitter and unslaked.”

—H. H.

SEVERAL weeks elapsed before the Van Couwenhovens saw or heard much more of Franz De Milt. Hendrick and Rychie, when skating on the canal, sometimes caught glimpses of him peering from one of the tiny upper windows or hurrying in and out of the shop, bearing huge, bulky packages ; for the festal season made trade brisk. He never had the opportunity, however, to do more than nod and wave his hand to them, for, in those days his master was in a testy mood and was putting his young charge through what he termed “a course of sprouts.” This, too, because Rip Van Clomp, smarting from his mortifying encounter on the Verlettenberg, had taken his revenge in a mean and underhand manner by rehearsing to the tobacco merchant a lengthy and mendacious tale, declaring that Franz had, in his hearing, mocked and made sport of Heer Van Boot to the wealthy Schepen and his family. This

filled Dirck with ire, and, utterly refusing to believe the French boy's vehement protestations to the contrary, hardly allowed him to leave the house and rendered his dreary existence more of a burden than usual.

But in the downtrodden lad's bosom beat a very grateful heart, and, at every leisure moment he could secure, he stole away to his small attic chamber and bent over a smooth, square board, upon which he was endeavoring to portray a view of the blue bay and snow-capped fort, beneath a sunset sky, such as his girl friend had declared to be like "the dear *oranje boven*."

Rudely drawn and crudely colored though it was, with the poor materials at his command, the sketch displayed considerable talent and ability, and when, on *Kerstyd*t or Christmas, Owano carried it, carefully wrapped in paper, to Rychie Van Couwenhoven, with a pleasant greeting from the lonely boy, she was in ecstasies. She was certain even Gerard Douw, the famous artist of Leyden, could paint nothing finer, and, proudly hung it on the parlor wall, among the portraits of her Holland ancestors and the pictures of naval combats, where it certainly gave a touch of bright color, very pleasing to the eye.

"I am sure he is the best boy on all Manhattan," she declared, "and that Rip Van Clomp ought to be clapped into the stocks for telling wicked lies about him."

"Pouf!" sneered Hendrick. "Girls always think a soft, glib tongue and civil manners are everything! Rip is not such a bad fellow, and makes no end of fun in the marketplace and on the Parade. I would not ask for better company, for he can keep everything spinning and that is a fact!"

"Ja, spinning till your head swims," spoke up Mynheer Van Couwenhoven sternly. "I do not like, my son, to hear

you take his part. Can it be that you go with him and his set of idle splutterkins, who, more than once, have been reprimanded by the Schout for their noise in the street on Sabbath morning?"

To this, however, Hendrick vouchsafed no reply, but left the room, shutting the door with more energy than was necessary, while his father frowned and his mother looked troubled.

Christmas was kept in a religious manner by the ancient Hollanders but was not extensively observed as a great holiday, being overshadowed by the festivals of St. Nicholas and New Year, betwixt which it is sandwiched in, and with a very cold snap, followed by days of unseasonable mildness, the year wore to its close.

And, at length, the last day dawned, the eve of the glad *Nieuw Jar*, the time when every worthy Dutchman considered it an imperative social duty to call upon all his friends and neighbors and when the seldom opened front doors, with their shining brass knockers, swung on their hinges from early morn till late at night, to admit the well-wishers of the season.

In the cheerful kitchen of the Van Couwenhoven mansion, you may be sure active preparations were going forward. A royal fire blazed in the deep chimney and the energetic Vrouw, clad in short gown and petticoat, was cutting out and boiling the light, rich krullers for which she was famous among the skilled housewives of the town; for no ordinary oly-koecks were these, but real Dutch krullers made after a time-honored recipe, that was a secret in the family, brown as chestnuts and crisp as pie-crust.

"Out of the way, youngsters," cried the busy dame to Rychie and Hendrick who lingered near to watch the boiling. "Else you will be spattered with the hot hog's fat."

Take thy sister, Rick, and be off with her to the Flatten Barrack. I am sure she would enjoy a bit of sledding this fine day."

"That I would, if you, brother, were there to keep Rip in order," put in Rychie.

"I would rather go skating on the Salt River,"\* said Hendrick. "For the canal and the collect pond are rough and no good whatever."

"But that you cannot do. I forbid it. Only this morning thy father did observe that the river was very unsafe since the last thaw."

"Yet that was rare foolishness, moeder," argued the boy, "for last night, Tunis Van der Grist came over on the ice from Breucklyn and told me it was as firm as thy head-cheese and as smooth as thy soft, pink cheek."

"Oh, thou wily flatterer!" laughed his mother. "Nevertheless thou canst not pull the wool over my eyes. So, away with you both to the sliding, and here are two stivers with which to buy New-Year cookies at Peter Van Twinkle's bake-house," and, diving into the patchwork pocket hung at her side, Madam Van Couwenhoven produced the coins which sent the young folks off with smiling faces to join the merry-makers on the Verlettenberg, or Flatten Barrack, into which the name was sometimes corrupted.

On the way, they stopped at Peter Van Twinkle's tidy little shop, fragrant with savory odors, to invest in the sweet New Year cakes stamped with a crown and breeches. Hendrick made short work of his, but Rychie had scarce begun to nibble her fluted oval of seedy richness, when her eye fell upon an aged man with flowing gray hair and beard, who was soliciting charity on the corner of the street.

\* Now East River.

"Oh, see, Rick," she cried. "What a poor, forlorn, old beggar! He looks perishing with cold and hunger!"

"Then he should go to work and earn some jacobusses for himself," replied her matter-of-fact brother.

"But, mayhap, he can get no work to do. Ach, the sight of him makes my heart ache, and I shall help him all I can." Saying which, the easily touched girl darted to the mendicant's side and shyly slipped her cake into his hand.

"A thousand thanks, kind little lady," exclaimed the man fervently. "For, verily, I am near to starving or I would not be here, and you are the first who has heeded me to-day."

He was evidently English, but Rychie cared not for that, and, carried away by her feelings, she added the guilder from her St. Nicholas stocking to her gift of the New-Year cookie, thereby calling forth a gracefully worded blessing from the ancient, although he seemed strangely nervous meanwhile, starting at the glance of every passer-by. As soon, too, as the children's backs were turned, he slunk into a dark alley and disappeared.

"Well, Rychie, I must say thou art a silly noodle thus to fling away thy presents," cried Hendrick as they hurried on.

But his sister only shook her flaxen head, remarking, "On Christ-Kinkle Eve, the good Knecht Rupert bade us be kind and liberal to all, and he is wiser than thou, mine brother," while her heart beat a joyous roundelay all that short December afternoon as she slid and frolicked with Geertruyd Vanderen, Katrinka Koch, Metje De Groot and the other little Dutch Vans and Vanders on the "Flatten Barrack hill."

Twilight was falling ere the young Van Couwenhovens tore themselves from the fascinating sport and wended their way home to find their bread and buttermilk awaiting them

by the kitchen fire, their parents absent at a tea-drinking and Grietje gone to a supper of soft waffles and chocolate and a New-Year Eve dance at the Bayard Bouwerie.

"Does the best parlor look neat and fine, Elsje?" asked Rychie as she finished her evening meal.

"Dat it do," replied the old slave. "De sand on de floor am washed like white clouds and de brass chair nails shine jest like leetle missy's eyes. I 'spect de ole Mynheer and his vrouw gwine to come down and dance dis night, for sure."

"What old Mynheer, Elsje?" asked small Blandina, who sat near by on her low green cricket.

"De great Mynheer ob de portrait, your honored grand-fader, of course. Hasn't you chilluns eber heard how ebery New Year Eve, when de clock strikes twelve, de picture folk all come down to shake hands and wish each oder 'Happy New-Year.' Den if nobody disturbs 'em, sometimes dey dance in de firelight."

"O Elsje! do they really?" exclaimed Rychie.

Hendrick, however, jeered at the idea.

"Ja, dey do so. Massa Rick may laugh if he like, but my old moeder once saw de gostes wid her own eyes and watched 'em step a minuet."

"Then I wish that I could do the same, for it must be a rare sight," said Rychie, and, when, on her way up-stairs, she stopped in to inspect the apartment prepared for the morrow's visitors, she gazed up with increased respect and awe at her stolid-faced Holland ancestors. As, too, the light from the hickory fire flickered over them, they seemed to beam down approvingly on this winsome young scion of their house, as well as on the festal room with its high-backed chairs, the carved bedstead upholding a puffy feather-bed—ever the odd adornment of a New Amsterdam



parlor—the huge chest containing the household linen and the New-Year table already set with bowls, flagons and tankards of massive plate. The vessels were filled with cherry brandy, Hollands, Geneva and other strong waters, and the dishes with a tempting variety of cakes and sweetmeats, while conspicuous among the good things appeared Vrouw Van Couwenhoven's famous krullers, heaped upon a shining silver platter.

"Ah, how I should love to see them tread a minuet," sighed Rychie again, and, even after her head was on her pillow, the idea haunted her dreams, while, just as the tall clock in the hall struck eleven, she started up wide awake, with the vague feeling that something eventful was about to happen.

"The old year is almost spent," she thought, "and very soon, now, the picture folk will come down to greet the new. Oh, I must, I must them see!"

The household was, by this time, wrapped in profoundest slumber, but, possessed by Elsjie's fable, she crept out of bed, slipped on her clothes and stole noiselessly down-stairs, shivering from sheer nervous excitement.

The best room was still illumined by the ruddy glow from the hickory logs, and Rychie basked for awhile in the grateful warmth.

"They are quiet yet," she soliloquized, glancing up at the painted countenances. "But the hour draws near, and I must hide or they may not come down. Elsjie says that they much dislike spectators. Good! Yonder is the very place," and running to the linen chest, she lifted the lid and clambered lightly in.

There was no danger of her meeting the luckless Ginevra's fate, for this strong box had no spring lock, but an honest Dutch fastening, and, by placing something to

slightly raise the cover, the curious little maid had as comfortable a hiding spot as could be desired, nestled as she was among the lavender-scented sheets and homespun table-cloths.

So cozy, indeed, did it prove, that she became somewhat drowsy before the clock—one of the very few in the New Netherlands—chimed the midnight hour and the knell of another twelvemonth. But, then, in an instant, she was on the alert and eagerly peering out from her snug nest. The corner where the chest stood was in shadow, but the fire-light revealed the portraits still unmoved, and, Rychie was about to utter an exclamation of disappointment, when her thoughts were diverted and her heart gave a great bound into her throat, as she saw a door leading to the rear of the house, suddenly and silently swing open. Scarcely daring to breathe, then, she gazed with wide-open, staring eyes, as a dark figure, bearing a lantern, entered with slow and stealthy tread. A very ancient man, apparently, bowed and bent, with long grizzled hair and beard, and a sack thrown across his shoulders.

“It is the Old Year,” thought the fanciful girl, recalling certain cuts she had seen of Time personified. But the next moment, she almost betrayed herself by a scream, as she recognized the beggar to whom she had given her cookie and guilder that very afternoon.

Cautiously, the midnight marauder advanced into the fire-shine, hungrily eyeing the bountifully laden table. And then, all at once, a startling transformation took place. The bent old creature became straight and tall; the gray beard and hair were torn off and flung aside, and a handsome man in the prime of life, stood before the little watcher’s astonished sight.

She could scarce credit the evidence of her senses, and,



"ATE AND DRANK ALMOST RAVENOUSLY."—Page 47.



too dumfounded to speak, pinched herself to see if she were awake, as the intruder seated himself at the board, and ate and drank almost ravenously, snatching the viands and draining several glasses of Heer Van Couwenhoven's choicest brands. His appetite appeased, however, he threw himself back in his chair and seemed to hesitate. But, at length, with a frown and muttered, "Well, what must be, must, and here's for Cherie, home and the boy!" seized a silver bowl and dropped it into his bag, following it up with the porringers and plates that were the very apple of the house-mother's eye.

Utterly aghast, poor Rychie watched these proceedings, too frightened to utter a sound, but when the burglar laid violent hands upon a very old and beautifully engraved flagon with three handles, she murmured under her breath, "The loving-cup! The dear loving-cup! Oh, mine vader's heart will it break, to lose that!" while the lid of the chest was wildly agitated.

"Plenty of the needful here!" chuckled the thief, but the next instant his humor was changed to alarm, as out of the shadows suddenly emerged a slim, wraith-like form, and a stern, girlish voice cried, "Stop!"

With an oath, the man fell back, looking as though he beheld a ghost, as indeed he thought he did, and, then, as Rychie exclaimed, "Ah, do not take the loving-cup of our forefathers!" he sank into a seat ejaculating, "By St. George and the Dragon, 'tis the little lady of the cake!"

"That is so," said Rychie, understanding him at once. "And is it thus you British reward all who do you a service?"

The man reddened. "Believe me, young Mistress," he stammered, almost humbly, "I never dreamed this to be your home or naught would have tempted me here. I only heard

that a rich New-Year table was always spread over night in the house of the Schepen Van Couwenhoven ; while, on my honor, this is the first time I have ever soiled my fingers with such work as this."

"Then why begin now?" asked Rychie. "Do you not know that it is wrong and wicked to steal?"

"I do, I do," cried the miscreant, with a stifled sob. "But wait ; let me tell you my story, before you judge me too harshly. I was a gay, young fellow and perhaps a trifle wild, but really bad, never. Cast off by my father for marrying, as he fancied beneath my station, in a moment of desperation I left home and wife, determined to show my family that I could win name and fame by my own unaided efforts. Alas, that is easier said than done ! For five years I wandered over Europe, now trying this, now that, but always ashamed to return without the fortune of which I had been so confident. At length, fancying that the will-o'-the-wisp I followed might be beyond the seas I joined the army, and was despatched out here to the Colonies and, though I say it myself, no more honest soldier ever entered the Province. Like an Angola slave I worked, I who had been born and bred a gentleman ! But in the end my health gave way and for weeks I languished ill of a low fever. I recovered, but felt I could endure the rude fare and homesickness no longer. One month ago, then, I deserted from Fort Orange at the other end of the Great River. I will not harrow your tender heart with a recital of the pains and perils I underwent, as with an Indian guide I traversed on foot the long distance hither, suffice it, that I am here ; but the officers are on my track, though so far, thanks to this beggarly disguise, I have escaped detection right under their very noses. If caught I shall be flogged within an inch of my life, or it may be, shot."

The listening maiden shuddered.

"Across the ocean I hope and believe my patient forgiving wife and my darling son are waiting and watching for my return, though God knows it is long, very long, since I heard aught of them, weak coward that I have been ! After all these weary, wasted years the desire to look upon their sweet faces has overwhelmed and conquered my pride and every other feeling, but, saving your guilder, I was utterly penniless and so for the first time, determined to take what was not my own, hoping that the end might justify the means !"

"Poor man !" sighed tender-hearted Rychie, the tears starting to her bonny blue eyes.

"To-morrow night, the *Golden Unicorn* sails for England. Her crew, after the New-Year festivities, will be so dazed that I can easily slip on board and conceal myself until the ship is far out at sea. Then ho for home and my little woman ! who, I pray Heaven may be there to welcome the prodigal."

"And will you go to her as a bad wicked robber ?" asked the girl.

"No, by my faith, no !" cried the Englishman, emptying his sack. "You have saved me from that, little lady, as well as from starvation to-day, for I would cut off my right hand before I would steal from you or yours. Give me but these krullers to eat while I am a stowaway, and all the plate shall be left behind."

"Yes, that will I do." And Rychie, much relieved and rejoiced, herself dropped the cakes into the stranger's bag. "Now go at once and God speed."

"But first I must have your promise not to mention this meeting until the *Golden Unicorn* weighs anchor at seven o'clock on New Year night."

"To my mother, may I not ?"

"No, no, to no one, walls too often have ears ; and think, just think, my life is in your hands ! Promise, I implore !" His tone was so agonized and beseeching that the girl was touched.

"I do not like it, but I will promise," she said.

"Thanks, for I know I can trust you, and now farewell," and, resuming his disguise, the deserter turned to depart. Near the door, however, hung Franz's little picture and he paused abruptly before it.

"Who painted that ?" he inquired.

"It was a friend of mine," answered Rychie, surprised. "A young boy of the town."

"Well, sweet mistress, you can tell him, from one who knows, that he has the gift,—the gift of genius which should be cherished and improved. But, also, bid him beware ! Beware of the restless Bohemian blood that too oft goes with the artistic temperament. That was my undoing. Once I, too, had the knack of drawing, and an eye for color, and held the brush of a ready painter. By it I hoped to soar above my fellows, but I lacked stability and now it is too late, too late," and with a sigh that almost sounded like a groan this mysterious being departed, as he came, by a back window.

Feeling as though in a dream, Rychie rearranged the disordered table, and then creeping back to her sleeping-bench, fell so sound asleep that she failed to hear even noisy Pieter when he awoke the household with his "Happy New Year !"

She was absent, too, from the family circle when Schepen Van Couwenhoven formally presented to his youngest daughter—smiling dimpled Blandina—that chocolate-hued pickaninny known as Clytie, to be her special property and handmaiden, even as on a former first of January, Deborah had been given to Rychie and Flip to Hendrick.



## CHAPTER VI

### BRAVE AND TRUE

"Oh, deem them not for ridicule a theme,  
Those worthy burghers with their spouses kind ;  
Scorning of heartless pomp the gilded dream,  
To deeds of peaceful industry inclin'd.  
In hospitality sincere and grave,  
Inflexible in truth, in simple virtues brave."

GAILY the sunbeams glittered on the black and yellow gables that first day of January, and fully as resplendent were the maids and matrons of New Amsterdam, in their Sunday-go-to-meeting muslins and brocades, silken petticoats and multitude of chains. Rychie presented a curiously quaint, attractive little vision when, at last, she descended arrayed in her best taffeta gown and embroidered stomacher, with her amber beads about her neck.

Her face was hardly in accord with her attire, however, when she found the house in an uproar and every one demanding,—“What has become of the krullers? The New-Year krullers?”

Madam Van Couwenhoven looked flushed and angry. “The beautiful cakes with which I so much trouble took!” She cried “Ach, but it is an outrageous theft and a mystery unaccountable.”

“Mebbe de great ole Mynheer and his vrouw gobbled 'em up,” said Elsje.

“What is worst of all, too,” continued the dame, “is that

in the biggest kruller of them all I did hide a fine gold ring. It was at the request of Nicholas Bayard I hid it there, for he fain would follow in the footsteps of his namesake saint. It was to be his surprise gift to Grietje. That too, is whisked away."

At this Grietje blushed and looked concerned, while she suggested that perhaps little black Flip was the miscreant.

"If that be so, to the whipping post shall he be sent without mercy," cried the enraged Dutch-woman starting for the kitchen, but before she reached the door Rychie, turning more scarlet than her sister, exclaimed, "No, mother, no! Flip is not the culprit."

"Why, mine Rychie! What canst thou know of this?" asked Heer Van Couwenhoven in amazement.

"I know—I know who has taken the cakes," stammered the confused girl, "but at present I cannot tell."

"Not tell," gasped her mother, "why and wherefore?"

"Because my promise I have given; but when the night comes then shall you know all."

"But Maritje, this is outrageous foolishness," cried the tried housewife who was fast losing her temper as well as her cakes. "And I command you to say, at once, who has my New-Year krullers."

"And my ring from Nicholas; though forsooth, I do not know why I should wear his tokens," added Grietje.

"That I cannot do. It would be a lie. Oh, *mijn vader* canst not thou trust me until the nightfall?"

"Surely, sweetheart. There! there, good vrouw, say no more, and leave the little one in peace. You would not have her break a promise?"

"There be some better broken than kept. But whom did she promise?" Rychie was silent and now even her father looked grave. "Speak my child, whom didst thou promise?"

"That too, I cannot say."

"See Wolfert! It is stubborn, she is and truly bad it looks. But hearken to me, Maritje. This instant moment shall you speak or else to your chamber go and there spend your New-Year day."

At this the Schepen puffed grimly at his long pipe and Grietje would have ventured a remonstrance, had not Rychie, without a word turned and left the parlor.

She felt her tongue was tied, so that it was useless to argue the point with her excited parent. But the lump in her throat made her tug at her neck-beads as though they choked her and she could not repress a low sob as she thought of all the pleasure she should miss. For, certainly Franz would come to-day, if ever, and kind Nicholas Bayard of whom she was so fond. She hoped they would not tell him that his little favorite was banished in disgrace.

"But I could not help it," she murmured as, ascending to her dormer-room, she removed her holiday finery and sat sadly down to work on her Flemish lace. From time to time too, she endeavored to console herself by repeating—"I am right. I know, I am right. When once a promise is given never should it broken be," while the New-Year callers came and went and the sound of merry greetings floated up from below.

During the afternoon Sophia, bursting with gratitude for Rychie's defense of her son Flip, whom she felt would have been dishonored forever had he been sent to the public whipping-post, appeared with an inviting little lunch. Plump, white oysters brought by Owano from Gouanes; sweet wheaten bread and a cup of rich, smoking chocolate which she persuaded her young mistress to eat, meanwhile trying to cheer her by chatting of the visitors she had admitted.

"Most all de gran' folkses of de Province hab been here."

she said, "as well as some dat ain't quite so gran', De Van der Doncks and de Van Boskercks and de Rapeljies from Breucklyn. Burgomaster Van Cortland, dat lawyer Van Schelluynne, Dominie Bogardus, Dirck Van Boot and his French boy, and de Herr Director's son. And, Missy Rychie, Nicholas Stuyvesant bring wid him jest de mos' splendiferous young gemman I eber done clap my peepers on."

"Oh, then Franz has really been here and I have missed him!" exclaimed the disappointed girl, paying small heed to the negro woman's last words.

"Yah, he am here now. But you not lose much, for he only tip-toed in sort o' scared like after his baas, and am settin' down dar wid his mouf shut tight as a periwinkle, dough de missus herself holped him to all de goot tings and de harnsome Britisher axed him 'if he allays left his tongue at home when he went to make calls.' He, he, he!"

"Poor Franz! No doubt he is afraid to talk before Mynheer Van Boot. But Sophia, who do you mean by the Britisher?" Her mind reverting, with a start, to the one she had so strangely encountered the previous night.

"De big, purtty one I done tell you about. De one wat come wid young Heer Stuyvesant and who am down-stairs yet. He rigged out fine, jest as dough he gwine to a kirmess, wid his hair in curls on his shoulders; and he has eyes as brack as ripe dew-berries and so sharp dey seem to look right frough yer. He look mighty often, too, at Missy Grietje when she laff and pucker and pass him cakes on de bestest silver waiter. Apollo say he tink he is stoppin' at Wolfert Weber's inn."

"A newcomer then? But were he dressed in cloth-of-gold and were he twice as comely, I know he could not hold a tallow dip to good Nicholas Bayard." For Rychie was as stanch in her friendships as in her veracity.



SHE LAFF AND PUCKER AND PASS HIM CAKES."—Page 54.



Nevertheless, when Sophia had departed with the tray, she—being after all, a true daughter of Eve—slipped into the hall and peered over the balusters, hoping to catch a glimpse of the magnificent gallant as he passed out.

But for some time she had to wait, as Sir Ralph Hastings and the two Nicks, Nicholas Stuyvesant and Nicholas Bayard, lingered long in the Heer Schepen's best room, while Vrouw Van Couwenhoven politely tried to entertain the gruff tobacco merchant. Meanwhile, Blandina and Franz eagerly listened to the war of wits flashing around the nut-wood table where from a swinging kettle of burnished brass, bonny Grietje poured the tea that Elsje brought on at three o'clock.

"Stir or bite, Sir Ralph? Will you stir or bite?" she asked, pausing, sugar-tongs in hand.

At this, the Englishman looked bewildered, the children laughed and young Bayard, who appeared out of sorts, muttered under his breath—"So my fine Britisher does not know everything, though he does pretend to a title."

Evidently he was not prepossessed in the stranger's favor.

"I mean, Sir Ralph, shall I sweeten your tea or place a lump in the saucer?" Greitje hastened to explain.

"Ah, that is it! Pardon my stupidity, kind hostess, and sweeten it, sweeten it for me, by all means, while in the honeyed draught I'll drink the health of the fairest maids in all the world, the maidens of Manhattan."

"A neat turn and a ready wit, I vow," chuckled the Governor's son, while a pleased smile crossed Greitje's cherry lips.

"Aye, aye, a rare fine wit, and a worthy gentleman, a very high-born, worthy gentleman, whom it is an honor to have amongst us. I fear our Holland boys will have small

show with the jufvrouws, while Sir Ralph is around." This was put in abruptly and somewhat unnecessarily by Dirck Van Boot, with a quick glance at Nicholas Bayard who was leaning moodily against the mantelpiece.

But that youth only wondered lazily why the crusty tobacconist should care to flatter this gay cavalier from over the sea, and thought no more about it. The fact was, no one had mentioned to him the disappearance of the krullers, and he felt hurt at missing the ring from Grietje's finger. As soon, then, as the other young men bowed themselves out he, too, took his departure.

Now would have been the time for the fair hostess to explain that his gift had not been received. But the coquettish damsel was annoyed by his manner to the stranger, and determined to torment him a while longer.

As he held out his hand in farewell, she only remarked coldly—"Methinks you are rather uncivil to my guests, Mynheer."

"In this world, Grietje, there be worse things than incivility," he answered sadly. "And not always is the ready, oily tongue, the true one."

"Like Rychie's," lisped Blandina, who was helping herself to a sweet lump out of the sugar-bowl. "Just think, all the visits she has lost to-day, because she would not a promise break."

"Hey! Is that so? Then, forsooth, she has my love and commendation."

"And mine, likewise," whispered Franz, who had, hitherto, sat in silence.

"Oh, but she was very naughty and filled the moeder with anger," said Blandina. "The father, too, says she has the Van Couwenhoven obstinacy."

"Rychie unruly and obstinate!" Franz could hardly



credit it of the kindly little being who was his ideal of sweetness and light, but, learning there was no chance of seeing her that day, was nothing loath, when Dirck summoned him to depart, though, once outside, he was taken severely to task for behaving like a whipped cur and sitting mute as a roach in the Collect pond."

Long and earnestly, he scanned the small-paned upper windows, but nowhere could he catch sight of the rosy, girlish countenance, framed by a halo of golden hair, he had so counted upon looking into that day.

As they turned into the Great Highway (the present Broadway), they again encountered Sir Ralph Hastings, this time alone. He paused to chuck Franz under the chin and bid him, "Stiffen up and cultivate a ready tongue of his own," and, as he did so, the boy was almost certain he saw him slip a paper packet into the snuff-stained hand of Dirck Van Boot.

## CHAPTER VII

### HENDRICK

“ I am a young fellow,  
Who loves to be mellow,  
With jovial companions from morning to night,  
I've no taste for squalling,  
Or old women's bawling,  
Who string nonsense together and call it all right.”

—THE MERRY MAN. (Adapted).

So it chanced that with many of our Knickerbocker friends it was scarce as happy a New-Year as it should have been, and the little weathercock, which adorned the Van Couwenhoven's peaked roof, must have pointed due East if he considered the way the wind blew within doors, for even Hendrick turned fractious and declared: “There was no fun in calling on a parcel of old vrouws and he should go to the turkey-shooting at Beekman's Swamp instead.”

But this his mother quickly vetoed.

“Nay, mine zoon, you will not shoot this day,” she said. “At fifteen, it is full time you began to behave like a civil Hollander and a gentleman. So start at once and my greetings bear to the De Groots and Vander Voorts and to Mistress Hogeboom.” While his father bore him off with him, to pay his respects at the White Hall, near the Battery, the home of the Governor, Petrus Stuyvesant.

A jolly, rubicund-faced dignitary was this Dutch ruler of



"BIDDING HIM TREAD IN HIS FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS."—Page 59.



the New Netherlands, and gay as a flamingo did he appear, in his scarlet waistcoat and yellow breeches, with a sword at his side and his best wooden leg strapped with bands of silver. Many a joke did he crack with Hendrick, bidding him, "tread in his father's footsteps, and, like him, he might become an Heer Schepen and administer justice every Monday morning in the stone *Stadt Huys* or City Hall," while he raised his peaked eyebrows until they almost met his bald head and his small eyes twinkled with merriment upon each side of his extremely prominent nose. "His High Mightiness, the Lord Director" was in a particularly amiable humor that day, which, unfortunately, was not always the case.

This visit over, the elder and younger Van Couwenhoven parted company, and Hendrick lingered long in the market-place to watch the negroes dancing to the rude music of horns and tom-toms. And here, alas, he encountered two of his least desirable companions, Rip Van Clomp and Rem Hockstrasser, each of whom carried a gun on his shoulder.

"Ho, Rick, is that you?" they cried.

"Now that is good, for we are bound for the turkey-shooting and want your company. You are a capital shot, you know, and sure to win a prize."

"But I started to make the New-Year visits," began Hendrick.

"And paid them in the market-place," interrupted Rip. "Oh, you are a sly dog, Rick! But I hear there is to be fine sport at the Swamp to-day; much better anyway, than the silly chatter of the wenches and a headache tomorrow from eating too much cake and East India sweetmeats."

"So do I think, Rip, but I have on my kerck clothes," and

Hendrick glanced down at his best galligaskins and Sunday coat with its big silver buttons.

"That is no matter. It will not harm them. So come along like a little man." Thus urged Hendrick yielded, joined his friends and was soon at Beekman's Swamp, where a bevy of youths were squandering their stivers in the exciting sport of firing at live turkeys put up for the purpose.

Rip and Rem did famously, each bearing off a plump fowl, but luck seemed against Hendrick, who could not succeed in ruffling a feather, while, at last, he had the misfortune to slip and get a rough tumble, thereby soiling his breeches and tearing an ugly rent in the skirt of his new silk coat.

"Ha, ha! What will the Vrouw Van Couwenhoven say to that?" laughed his unsympathizing companions, when they saw him stamping around, his little queue of hair tied with black lute string, fairly standing out with rage.

"Whatever she says, it will be your fault, ye doughnut-headed splutterkins!" he shouted, and would have followed it up with some Dutch epithets more forcible than polite, had not his cousin, Teunis Van der Grist just then approached, saying soothingly:—"Tut, tut, Rick! Calm thyself and with me come home, to Breucklyn, where mine sister Mina will mend the tear so neatly it will scarce be noticed. I have two pairs of 'low-gutters' here so we can skate across."

"Ja, that will better be than facing the mother in this plight," sighed Hendrick gloomily and he was spinning across the Salt River before he remembered that only the day previous, he had been forbidden to venture there.

"Think you that the ice is strong, Teunis?" he asked.

"Well, not so strong as it was. The thaw has weakened it considerably, but 'twill hold to-night if—"

At that instant, however, a sharp, ominous cracking sounded beneath their feet and Teunis, who was slightly in advance, had but just time to glide to a firmer spot, when a scream of wild terror rang through the air, and, looking back, he beheld the dark surging water in a jagged opening in the ice and Hendrick's brown head disappearing beneath.

At early twilight, Rychie sat in her lonely chamber, thinking of the deserter so soon to make his desperate attempt to leave the American shore and of the wife and child awaiting him somewhere in that great Old World, beyond the broad Atlantic; when a voice on the shed roof without her window cried: "Let me in, Rychie, let me in quick!" On flying to open the casement, an exceedingly wet and bedraggled boy tumbled at her feet, sputtering: "Oh, mine sister, run for dry clothes and a hot drink as fast as you can, for I am nearly drowned and frozen as well."

Indeed, he seemed so, as he lay almost exhausted on the floor, his teeth chattering, his lips blue with cold and his garments stiff from the congealing of the water with which they were soaked through.

Thoroughly alarmed, the girl hastened to do his bidding, helped him to disrobe, ordered Elsje to prepare a warm posset, and covered him up snugly in her own feather-bed.

Then, and not till then, when a reaction had taken place and a delightful glow was stealing over the lad's shivering frame, did she venture to inquire:—"Whatever is it that has happened to you, Hendrick?"

"Why, I was on the Salt River, skating across to Breucklyn, when the ice broke and in I went. But for a shabby old fellow who risked his own life to save mine, I should be down at Davy Jones's locker this blessed minute, for there

stood Teunis Van der Grist and never stirred a finger to help me, for which, I vow, we shall be unfriends henceforth."

"And, oh, dear! Thy fine kerck suit is quite ruined! Does the mother know it?"

"No; it was for fear of her that I came in by the roof, though my arms and legs were so numb I could hardly clamber up. But outside I met the father and he is full of spleen because I went to the turkey-shooting and on the river and failed to pay the tiresome New-Year calls. How he did *jaker*, and says I shall live on bread and water for a week and he will not take me with him to Williamstadt. This last I think is too hard;" and the boy buried his face in the pillow to choke down an unmanly sob as he thought of the trip up the Great River and visit at the vast domain of the Patroon Van Rensselaer, to which he had looked forward for many months.

"Poor Rick! I am sorry for you," said Rychie, though she could not but think he deserved to lose his anticipated pleasure.

"What is queer, too," he, at last, continued, "is that the old cove who yanked me out from under the ice seemed to know me. He called me Van Couwenhoven, and gave me something for my 'younger sister with the blue eyes.' That must be you, Rychie, for Blandina's are like hazel nuts," and diving into the pocket of his damp breeches, Hendrick produced a very moist and soggy package, which, on being undone, revealed a single broken kruller. "Well, I'll be dondered! Whatever made him send that?"

"Oh, I know; I am sure I know," cried Rychie. "It is a token! a token to let me know who your saviour was and it fills me with gladness. Though," she added half under her breath, "I would it had been the one with the ring."



"What, do you mean that that brave old chap was the thief who walked off with the mother's cakes?" And Hendrick sat bolt upright in bed, in his excitement.

"It may be so and it may not be so. Not yet can I tell you." But Rychie's dimples came and went mischievously, and putting on her festival dress, when the clock struck seven, she tripped happily down to the best room, and, creeping to Vrouw Van Couwenhoven's side, whispered, "Now, *mijn moeder*, all shalt thou know."

In mute amazement the family listened to her tale of the midnight guest, and, when she ended by saying—"I am sure he was no common, wicked robber, while to-day, he dragged our Hendrick from a grave in the Salt River," the contrite Dutch woman caught her to her heart, sobbing—"O mine Rychie! my white lambkin! forgive thy mother! It was in my temper I spoke this morning and thou has been the truest and bravest of girls! To think but for thee, all our rare old silver would now on its way to England be."

Grietje, too, hugged her rapturously, and tears were in the Schepen's eyes as he asked: "How can I repay my daughter for rescuing the loving-cup of her ancestors and for her dreary day above?"

"By pardoning Hendrick, dear *vader*, letting him come to the New Year supper and taking him with you, as you intended, when you go up the Great River for the fur-trading. I know that he has been most headstrong and disobedient, but he has, likewise, been well punished, while much repentance does he feel."

"Well, then, sweetheart, to please thee, it shall be so. But on one thing I have made up my mind and that is to separate him from Rip Van Clomp and his unruly crew. Always have I meant that in Holland the boy's education should be finished off, and the time is nearing when to his

Uncle Johannes in Rotterdam, he should be sent. He is now fifteen and when the Spring comes, he shall go."

"Oh, not really, my father?"

"Ja, dear one. It is for his best. But wish! Let not the thought of it cloud thy brow to-night, but run up and tell thy brother that, for thy sake, he has my pardon."

So Hendrick was summoned down and a truly happy, festal evening was spent within the home circle, beneath the gaze of the old Mynheer and his placid-faced vrouw, who looked down benignantly from their heavy frames.

And at that very time, opposite Najack—an Indian settlement where Fort Hamilton now stands—the *Golden Unicorn* was plowing her way through floating blocks of ice and on board was one more passenger than appeared on the captain's list, a concealed stowaway, whose pockets were stuffed with Dutch krullers and in whose heart was the sentiment, if not the words, of a then unwritten song—the song of "Home, Sweet Home!"

## CHAPTER VIII

### WILLIAMSTADT

“ See here and there the buildings cluster round,  
All to the street their cumbrous gables stretching,  
With square-clipt trees and snug enclosures bound,  
(A most uncouth material for sketching).  
Each with its stoop, from whose sequester'd shade  
The Dutchman's evening pipe in cloudy volumes play'd.”

THE small village clustered about Fort Orange at the head of the noble stream discovered by Hendrick Hudson and called by the Dutch *Groot Rivier* or Great River has since grown into the City of Albany, the capital of the Empire State. But in colonial days this place changed its name as often as did New York. Aurania and Beverwyck were its earliest cognomens but at the time of our story it was known as Williamstadt, and being the advanced post of the fur-trade, thither at certain seasons, those interested in the chief export of the country went to barter with the Indians for the valuable skins of the beaver, otter, fox, wolf, deer, raccoon, bear, elk and buffalo.

The West India Company always sent agents to bargain with the savages, but this year the Heer Van Couwenhoven decided to go himself, and combine pleasure with business by visiting for a time at the home of his old friend Van Curler, the representative in this country of the wealthy pearl merchant of old Amsterdam, the Patroon Van Rensselaer, and the director of his famous estate Rensselaerwyck.

So soon therefore as the river was navigable which, owing

to a mild February, was unusually early, he set forth in a small yacht and with him went Hendrick and his boy Flip, the former overflowing with delight and with gratitude to his sister for the intercession which had won him back the treat he had forfeited.

“Try if you can learn aught of the deserter from Fort Orange, who got away in the *Golden Unicorn*,” was Rychie’s parting injunction.

“And see if you can hear anything regarding Sir Ralph Hastings whom, folks say, must have gone northward for the fur-trading,” added Grietje with a little blush. For after several weeks of jollification with the young men and women of New Amsterdam that brilliant cavalier, without the ceremony of a leave-taking, had abruptly disappeared, nobody knew exactly whither. Nicholas Bayard, however, was well content at his departure and, having finally learned the fate of his New-Year gift, was once more a constant visitor at the hospitable house in Pearl Street.

“Dough it be a berry bad omen to hab de gold circle whisked off in dat fashion! No luck, ’till it am foun’again, no luck ’till it am found!” croaked old Elsje.

“Do not fail, too, to give Madam Van Curler this pot of my best apple-butter and repeat to her all the civil messages with which I have charged you,” put in Vrouw Van Couwenhoven. “And I hope you will ever behave in a manerly way, and do us great credit whilst abroad.”

“That I will, mother, and try to remember all the girls wish news about,” and with a kiss on each cheek all round, the excited, happy lad scampered away to start on his two weeks sail through almost primeval wilds, where he could hear wolves, bears, panthers and other beasts of the forest howling by night and could discern dusky savage figures flitting, specter-like, amidst the trees upon the shore.

The stay at Williamstadt was also a novel experience for the homebred youth, and he returned such an exceedingly "traveled young monkey," boasting of all he had seen and heard, that his mother was inclined to make fun of him.

But the good-humored Schepen only laughed, saying,— "Let the little cockerel preen his feathers if he will. 'Tis a harmless bit of conceit that will soon blow over. The lad will not so proud-stomached be when he has crossed the sea and looked upon things of greater worth."

His sisters and Pieter, however, were eager enough to hear all he had to relate, and on the evening after his return, Franz, as well as Nicholas Bayard, dropped in to bid him welcome home and to listen to his adventures.

"Our yacht, the *Blue Beaver*, was just fourteen days and nights in going up the Great River," he said. "And Schipper Hardenbroeck declares 'a rare good boatman will be spoiled by sending me to Holland, for the book-learning. In no time, he taught me the names of all the ropes and sails and how to manage them, so now I can sail a craft with any one. O, it is fine to fly with the wind, and the owner of a vessel do I mean to be, when the tiresome study-days are over. You, Grietje, would like the highlands up yonder. They are more grand and lofty than anything you ever saw. Mountain upon mountain, all covered with pine trees as thick as the palisades in the longel.\* At Esopus we stopped several hours to take on wood and water and Dorigeman Jansen, whom the mother knew in Dordrecht, came down to greet us and to shake us by the hand. He seemed rarely glad to see me and says that you, Rychie, and our cousin Jannekin Bergen must go up to stop awhile with his girls. In the early summer he wants you to go, when

\* City wall.

the wild strawberries are ripe and you can pull the pink laurel in the woods."

"Oh, I should love that," cried Rychie, "And I know Jan would like it, too. May we really have such pleasure, mine vader?"

"Well, we will see," said the Schepen. "It can hardly be this year, but some year mayhap you can go."

"There are hosts of redskins around Esopus and at Williamstadt also," continued Hendrick. "Mohawks and Mohic-cans, who are not half so mild and friendly as our Manhattoes and the Shinnecoeks and Canarsies of Long Island. At Fort Orange, there is a coffee-colored face for every white one. They come there from far and near to sell their furs, and will give anything or do anything for gunpowder and 'Dutch *Dare-Devil*.'"

"Ja, ja, that is the truth. Powder and liquor make all the trouble with the natives," put in Nicholas Bayard.

"Heer Van Curler told me as many firearms are paid for peltries, as there are guilders, and everybody in the place buys furs. The soldiers at the barracks, and the merchants in the shops, as well as the traders. Why, they even pay in pelts the wage of the clergyman and schoolmaster, Dominie Gideon Schaats. They give him one hundred and fifty beaver skins every year."

"Well, he is better off than the teacher who birched the horn-book into my pate," laughed Nicholas. "Poor, old fellow! He earned so few stivers and wampum-beads, that he had to take in washing after school, to keep soul and body together."

"Ach, what a shame! I never thought the folks of New Amsterdam could be so stingy as that," exclaimed Vrouw Van Couwenhoven. "I have always heard they were more open-handed than the Walloons of Beverwyck, and put much more hearty food on their tables."

"Thou art right there, *gude vrouw*," chuckled her more ponderous half, "More than one morning I caught Master Rick making grimaces at his breakfast of bread and butter-milk, though Madam Van Curler dropped a lump of sugar into the bowl, as big as my thumb-nail."

"I could not help it," stammered Hendrick apologetically, "Though I did not mean to be rude. If, too, Williamstadt housewives are economical, so are they clean. I never saw people so afraid of dirt. They are scrubbing and scouring from cock-crow to sundown. But they stay up later than we do, especially on winter nights when the sledding is good. Then, they tell me, the whole town is often out until within an hour of midnight. The Walloon girls and boys have, too, another fine custom. Into companies are they all divided, according to age, from the time they have seen as many years as the little Blandina here. Those of the same company go everywhere together, and, when a member has a birthday, they all meet at his or her home, and hold a royal, roistering *regale*. With Hans Van Curler, I went to one that was held at the Schuylers' house. By St. Anthony, what fun we had! There were pasties and sweetmeats enough there. It was Lodowick Schuyler's festival and his father and mother and sisters went out and left us to play and junket and dance just as we pleased."

"Well, never would I do that, never," declared his mother emphatically.

"No need to say that," whispered Franz to Rychie, with an amused, little laugh; for the thrifty, stirring Dutch dame always tickled his quiet sense of humor.

"We had rare sport, also, when the wild pigeons came," went on Hendrick. "They appeared just after April Fool's day, scores and scores of them, with ducks and wild geese. My, but it was jolly, and all Williamstadt kept holiday and

went out to shoot them. Pop ! pop ! pop ! could be heard on all sides, and at every pop down tumbled a bundle of feathers. The Walloon lads are very fair marksmen, but I warrant I brought down as many as Hans and Lodowick together."

"You must have improved, then, in your shooting, since the New Year," snickered small Pieter, but his brother passed over this unnecessary remark in contemptuous silence.

"I carried home fifteen brace one night, and you may be sure we ate something beside bread and milk and boiled beef, that week."

"Did the officers and soldiers at the Fort take a hand in the bird-shooting?" asked Grietje.

"That they did. Every mother's son of them. And oh, that reminds me ! I heard something Rychie, of your New Year visitor who makes his calls at midnight."

"Really, dear Hendrick ! Oh, what was it you heard ?" cried his sister, now deeply interested.

"Heer Van Curler well remembered the uproar there was over the deserter and his mysterious escape. His fat sides shook like a jelly-fish, when I told him how you gave the man the krullers and held your tongue, so he might get away. He thought it so good, that he repeated it to the Commander of the Fort."

"And what did the Heer Commander say ?"

"Why, he almost jumped out of his top-boots with surprise, and shouted, 'Wat donder is dat ! Confound the saucy hussy ! Methinks she deserves to have her flaxen pig-tails snipped off, for letting the Prince's men come back like whipped hounds, leaving their prey behind them.' Then he likewise roared with laughter and declared, 'But truly it was a fine joke, a rare fine joke ! and after all, Charles Morrow



was a taking rascal, and one I should be sorry to see riddled with leaden bullets.' ”

“Oh, is his name Morrow ?”

“Yes, and he seems to have been very fond of a lark, while he would trade off half his rations to the Indians for colors with which to paint pictures. He made a portrait of the beauty Alida Schuyler. Ah, Sister Grietje, there is a belle for you! She is the comeliest girl in all the New Netherlands, and it is lucky for you his curly-headed highness Sir Ralph Hastings did not seek his beaver pelts in Williamstadt. He would never look at Manhattan jufvrouws again.”

“What do I care, pray, for Alida Schuyler or Sir Ralph Hastings, either!” exclaimed Grietje pettishly, while Nicholas frowned grimly.

“Owano told me he saw the British lord at Coney Island, landing from a curious looking black ship that lay just off the shore,” put in Franz modestly.

“Then it was nonsense Owano spoke, or else he does not know Sir Ralph’s lineaments. What, forsooth, would a grand Mynheer and a friend of the Director’s be doing in that God-forsaken spot, with the clippers and the conies? But, hark! The farmer’s bell rings for nine, and the children should have been on their *slaap-bancks*\* an hour ago. Good-night, Franz; good-night, Nicholas.” And thus summarily dismissed, the guests departed, while Grietje bustled about fastening doors and windows, and sweeping the young folks—white and black—off to bed.

From this time, Hendrick found himself quite a person of importance among the boys of the town, who had never been six miles from home. Rip Van Clomp and Rem Hockstrasser, especially, flattered and made much of him, and he

\* Sleeping benches.

was constantly seen in company with those undesirable companions. Soon, too, he began so to neglect his studies, in order to play at marbles or angle for sun and roach fish in the Kolck, that Dominie Luyck, the master of the Latin School, was obliged to complain of him to his father.

"Alack, alack!" sighed the worthy Schepen. "No longer can I delay. One week from to-morrow the *Angel Gabriel* sails for Rotterdam, and in her, to the dear Fatherland, the lad must go.

Very rapidly, then, preparations were pushed forward, and only too quickly for the already homesick urchin, the last night he should spend for years beneath the gabled Pearl Street roof had arrived.

Affecting, too, was the parting interview betwixt parents and son. The sobbing mother mixed plenty of good advice and entreaties with the woolen hose and knit vests she was packing in his box; and Mynheer bade him "remember that he had now come to years of discretion, and should endeavor to act wisely and well." So saying, he gravely presented to him a bundle of goose quills, to one of which was appended a scroll bearing this inscription: "This quill given by Pieter Wolfertsen Van Couwenhoven to his eldest son Hendrick Lucas, in 1661, was a present in 1635, from his grandfather in Holland."

"Cherish these *mijn zoon*," he said. "And when thou art a man and hast boys of thine own, follow the custom of thine ancestors and to each give one of these heirloom quills. Tell them of the good and sturdy men of our race who have been gathered to their forefathers, and may the great God bless thee and make thee an honor to thy name."

So Hendrick was sent out into the world. On a smiling May morning, when the green island shone like an emerald in the sunshine, the *Angel Gabriel* spread its white wings

and flew away with him down the lovely bay, while a tearful group watched the vessel out of sight and waved a long farewell from the ramparts of Fort Amsterdam. Little, though, did the young voyager dream of the wonderful changes that were to take place ere he beheld the small, quaint, colonial town again.

## CHAPTER IX

### PINXTER

"Pentecost, day of rejoicing, had come.

The church of the village

Gleaming stood in the morning's sheen.

Clear was the heaven and blue, and May, with her cap crowned with roses,

Stood in her holiday dress in the fields, and the wind and the brooklet

Murmured gladness and peace, God's peace."—*H. W. Longfellow.*

IN the middle of the seventeenth century New York's busy, bustling Maiden Lane was only a fair, green country road, the rural stillness of which was rarely broken by aught but the murmur of the little stream that flowed from a crystal spring, the warble of song-birds in the tree tops, or the merry, light-hearted chatter of the thrifty Dutch maidens who here came to wet and bleach in the sun, the yards upon yards of strong, serviceable linen spun by the firesides and laid away for their marriage portions. Indeed, it was from this practice of the frugal Holland women that *T' Maagde Paatje* (as it was called in the Netherland tongue) won its name.

Thither, then, one warm, pleasant morning, a fortnight after Hendrick's departure, went Rychie Van Couwenhoven, Katrinka Kock, Geertruyd Vanderen and other of their young friends, each having an armful of the winter's weaving which their mothers had sent to be dampened and laid upon the grass. As, too, they knelt beside the creek, dipping the white fabric in the sparkling water, a little bobolink

tilting and liting in a willow tree overhead, heard Metje De Groot remark: "So, after his long absence, the fine young Britisher has returned once more to Wolfert Weber's tavern."

"Ja," responded Katrinka, "I met him yesterday walking on *De Heere Straat* with the Heer Director. Oh, but truly, he is a brave-looking beau, and had I seen a few more birth-days and made my first Communion I should dearly love such a one to take me to the corn-huskings and apple-bees. But what do you suppose brings so grand and mighty a gal-lant to New Amsterdam?"

"Ah, my brothers were wondering that very thing only this morning. Mayhap, though, Rychie Van Couwenhoven can tell us, for he has called more than once at her home to see her sister Grietje."

"Do you hear that, Rychie?" called Katrinka. "They say your family more than any one knows the whys and wherefores of Sir Ralph Hastings' visit to the New Netherlands."

"Then it is untruths they speak," retorted Rychie. "He has sat in our best room and on our stoop, but we have inter-changed no confidences whatever. I do not like him, and neither does our mother. I have heard mine father say he brought letters to Governor Stuyvesant, and that it is for the fur trade he has come and wishes to barter in wild beasts' skins."

"Well, that sounds sensible, but surely it is not for peltries that he goes to the Heer Schepen's house! There are none there, unless it be a red neat's hide," and Katrinka showed a dazzling row of strong white teeth at her own wit.

"Nay, it is for pretty Grietje, and the love-making more like," put in Geertruyd Vanderen. "All the grown-up girls are ready to pull their muslin caps for him, and of course a young Mynheer wants some pleasuring. You know all work

and no play makes Jacobus a very dull, stupid splutterkin. Grietje, too, has a wise blue eye, and is aware what a comely couple she and the dark Englishman make together. Least-wise mine Cousin Anneken says so."

At this free girlish criticism of their elders Rychie flushed angrily and started up, exclaiming, "Whish, Truyde! I will not let you talk so and make sport of my sister! You very well know it is Nicholas Bayard who will some day be my brother, and it is only as a friend of the Director's son that this stranger comes under our roof."

"So! Well, then, you need not show such *kommer* and turn so red and white! A moment since your face was the color of my scarlet petticoat, and now it is as white as that of the lady who is said to haunt this lane by night."

"Oh, Geertruyd, do you believe that story?" cried Metje, her cheek rivaling Rychie's in its pallor.

"What story?" asked Katrinka curiously.

"That a woman all clad in white, walks up and down the Maiden's Path, after the shadows fall.\* They say she has walked ever since the New Year, and Cornelius Clopper, the blacksmith, declares he has beheld her with his own eyes. She was pacing very slow and solemn, and always and ever wringing her hands."

"Oh, but that is sheer nonsense talk," sneered Katrinka. "Did Cornelius Clopper venture near enough to have a good look at her ghostship?"

"Not he. He took to his heels like a rabbit, and scudded back to his forge, where, straightway, he fell down in a fit."

"Ha, ha, ha! What a brave Corney. How then did he even know it was a woman! It might have been Rip Van

\* A legend existed among the early settlers of New York that a white figure haunted the Maiden Lane by night.

Clomp or some of the other boys who love a bit of deviltry better than their mush and milk."

"No, it was not Rip," said Rychie decidedly. "Our old black Elsje is very wise in such things, and she feels sure it is a true phantom; the phantom of an Indian bride whose brave was killed in battle, and who for grief drowned herself here in the bleaching brook. I would not come here after dark and meet the pale vrouw for a hundred fathoms of seawant."

"Nor I," chirped Metje, with a shudder. "And your chatter makes me feel creepy all over."

"And I am all turning to goose-flesh," laughed Katrinka mockingly. "Ach, but you are a set of silly noodles, with your shivers and your squaw-spectres. The White Lady does not bother me half so much as Old Silverleg putting a stop to the Pinxter merrymaking on the Parade. That is what I call a mean, abominable shame."

"Tush, Trinka," reproved Geertruyd. "Of our Heer Director it is not seemly so to speak."

"Then let him more seemly act. First the Shrovetide revels went and now the Pinxter fun. Why, pray, should he spoil our pleasure? Even the old folks like it not. They say the Governor is too straight-laced by far, and it will do his High Mightiness no good whatever."

"Well, well, young heads like ours cannot judge," said Rychie. "But look how near the sun is to the noon mark. The linen, too, is all wet and spread; so let us be going."

"Ja, for it is the dinner-hour."

So, still laughing and arguing, the friends, with arms wound about each other, sauntered slowly down the pleasant rural road, while the eavesdropping bobolink flew home to his mates bearing her a tender, juicy worm, together with the scraps of gossip picked up from those "little, chattering, human hens."

The following day was Sunday, and Whitsunday or Pinxter at that, and winsome Grietje Van Couwenhoven was as radiant as the gay Dutch tulips in her flower-garden, as she stood in her neat little bed-chamber arrayed in a full half-dozen richly-embroidered petticoats, as was the fashion of the day, a trim bodice, elaborately wrought, clasping her round *svelte* young figure, and a necklet of gold beads shining against the milky whiteness of her throat. Meanwhile, her wealth of fair hair—which she never on Sabbaths and holidays covered with cap or bonnet—was brushed smoothly back and fell in two long heavy plaits far below her waist.

She was just buckling on the silver girdle received at the festival of St. Nicholas, and to which were hung her Bible and hymn-book, when quick, light footsteps were heard ascending the stairs, and in bounded Rychie, bearing in her hand a bunch of pure white lilies that seemed to have caught and held the Whitsuntide sunshine in their golden hearts.

"See, Grietje," she exclaimed, "what Nicholas Bayard has brought to you for a Pinxter *blumie*. Are they not sweet? and in your girdle you must wear them to the kerck."

"Ah, ever is Nick thoughtful and kind," said the older maiden, taking the fragrant blossoms from her sister, to fasten at her corsage. But just then a woolly head was popped in at the half-open door, followed by the meager form of small, black Deborah, clad in a scant robe of green linsey-woolsey, with a string of "Job's tears" around her ebony neck. She held out a daintily arranged nosegay of pink and white English daisies and gracefully drooping ferns.

"Oh, the cunning, button posies!" cried the much-favored girl.





"THE DARK, HANDSOME CAVALIER."—Page 79.



"From whence came they, Deb?"

"From de big, gran' furrin' gemman. Dat Injun 'Wano fotch 'em, and says de British *baas* promised to gib him ten stivers for pullin' de brakes in de wood."

Tucked in the bouquet was a tiny, three-cornered note, which Grietje seized and read eagerly, a becoming roseate glow suffusing cheek and brow, which keen-eyed Rychie noted with a curious contraction of her loyal, little heart. As, too, she accidentally caught a glimpse of the opening words, she muttered indignantly, "Sweet Mistress Margaret, forsooth! If I were mine sister thus would I not be called. The Holland names are good enough for Holland girls."

When, then, the lilies were cast aside, and the daisies given their place at the fickle damsel's waist, she said entreatingly, "Oh, Grietje! Surely poor Nicholas's flowers thou wilt not so disdain!"

"Disdain them! No. never. But both I cannot wear, and Sir Ralph might think me uncivil if I left his gift at home. Many a Pinxter have I sported Nicholas Bayard's *blumies*." So, gathering up her handkerchief and bead of purple wampum for the collection bag, this Knickerbocker belle hastened to join her mother, and with her walked, as demure as a little nun, with downcast eyes, to St. Nicholas's Church within the Fort. Scarce a word, too, did she vouchsafe the large, fair young man in a long-waisted, big-flapped taffeta coat and bulging breeches, or the dark, handsome cavalier in velvet doublet, gold lace and plumed hat, although both stood at the door of the sanctuary and saluted her with low bows as she passed.

Rychie lingered behind to put the poor, discarded lilies in water, before following with the younger children, while Schepen Van Couwenhoven had preceded his family some

time before, and, clad in his long robe of office, sat with the other City Fathers in the pew reserved for their use ; and soon the most profound Sabbath calm descended upon the town, not even a negro or Indian boy daring to shoot a marble or utter a shout in the quiet streets, during morning service.

Well trained, likewise, were the small Dutch folk within the kerck, and still as bright-eyed mice kept even Pieter, Blandina and little roguish Jacob Kip during the hour sermon of Dominie Megapolensis, though they anxiously watched the grains of sand dropping through the hour-glass on the pulpit, and drew a tiny sigh of relief when the clerk rapped sharply with his cane for the discourse to end.

Church over, however, tongues wagged merrily, and much of the conversation on all sides was of the Governor's unexpected suppression of the Pinxter Monday sports, great dissatisfaction being expressed by old and young. Only the City Fathers maintained a discreet silence on the subject. As for the Director himself, he looked as grim and stolid as the *Stadt Huys*, and stumped off to Whitehall without a word or greeting for any one.

Not so, though, his two sons, Balthasar and Nicholas, who joined the Van Couwenhovens, the former saying somewhat moodily, " Pray, good people, do not visit the father's orders on our heads. We like them no better than you, and to make some amends have planned a riding party to the Wedding Place at New Harlem. Will you go with us, Grietje?"

" With all my heart, if I can get a horse."

" Good ! And it has been arranged that our English friend, Sir Ralph, is to ride with you."

" Oh, dear, I wish I was grown up," sighed Rychie. " Then I, too, would be of the party. Dear Nick, could

you no' take me on a pillion behind you, even if I am not yet in my teens? I shall soon be thirteen, and it is so lonely at home since Hendrick went away." And a pleading little face was turned up to young Bayard's, and five soft fingers slipped into his strong, muscular hand.

"Aye, willingly will I take you, dear heart," he responded. But Grietje interposed, "Tush, Rychie! I am astonished at you. Most forward and unmannerly is it of you to make such requests. Of course you cannot go. I am sure that the mother would never allow it."

"No, little Maria; there be times and seasons when small 'gooseberries' are not wanted," laughed Sir Ralph, who hovered near.

"If you please, sir, my name it is Maritje," retorted the tiny maiden, drawing herself up with a dignity that made her elders laugh. Then, as she turned away, she murmured under her breath, "If I am a gooseberry, you will find that I am not a green one."

Nor did the Englishman's loud "Ho, ho! What a peppy bantam-hen it is!" tend to increase her liking for him.

Scarcely better pleased were the worthy Schepen and his wife when they heard of the holiday excursion.

"Since all is cut and dried, I suppose you must keep to your word and go," said the former. "But, Grietje, I like not this walking and riding with the foreigner. He does not look you full in the eye as an honest man should, and occasion shall I take to tell him that my daughter is to wed only one of her own race and faith."

"Then will he think I have jumped to great conclusions, and my father will make me appear most unmaidenly," pouted the offended girl, as she went to exchange her best gown for a simple house costume, that being the unvarying custom of thrifty Dutch women on reaching home.

## CHAPTER X

### SUNSHINE AND SHADOWS

“ Good fortune quite a fickle Miss is  
And in one place will never stay ;  
The hair from off thy face with kisses  
She strokes, and then she flies away.”

H. HEINE.

“ FRANZ, some day this week, can you walk with me to the Kyckout ? ”

It was Rychie who asked this question, one balmy, mellow evening in July. The boy had come over to deliver a bundle of tobacco for Heer Van Couwenhoven, and, as that worthy, pipe in hand, was leaning over the fence, discussing the prospective price of beaver-skins with his next door neighbor, Burgomaster Van Cortland, he was nothing loath to linger a few moments with his girl friend on the cozy little stoop and enjoy the pleasant animated scene Pearl Street always presented on a warm summer night.

The checkerwork fronts of the big-doored, small-windowed mansions which lined one side shone startlingly bright in the last rays of the setting sun.

Below, the broad river shimmered with a tender twilight hue, and the closely trimmed trees gave the appearance of a toy village to the neat thoroughfare. Neighboring burghers gathered in social groups to smoke and talk over the doings of the town or latest news from Fatherland ; while their *gude*

wrouws also visited from stoop to stoop exchanging confidences, receipts and patterns of quilts and chair-backs wonderful to behold ; merrily too, the children played in the road and young people wandered in the prim, box-bordered gardens now brilliant with tulips, ragged robins, gold cups and pink and lavender hyacinths.

"Will you go as far as the Kyckout with me?" repeated Rychie. "For I have not had a good long walk outside the walls this year. Other summers Hendrick and I often went there, but I am afraid to go alone, or with just the girls. I am afraid of the wild horses."

"Certainly I vill go, with the greatest of pleasure," responded Franz, highly gratified ; "I wish to fill Hendrick's place for you as much as I can. By the vay, have you heard from him?"

"Oh, no. It is not time yet. It takes a vessel many weeks to cross the great sea and, ah me ! how Flip and I do miss him ! Flip is like a twin separated from his other half. He begged hard to go with my brother, but they do not like black servants in Rotterdam, so he had to stay behind, and it fills me with sorrow to see the way he mopes around."

"I vonder if Hendrick vill chance to run across the painter soldier, Charles Morrow," remarked Franz musingly, for he felt strangely interested in the stowaway who had taken so much notice of his little picture.

"That is not at all likely. One went to England and the other to Holland. The Old World is a very big place. But what day, Franz, can we have our ramble?"

"I might go to-morrow. I think both Dirck and Dinorah vill then be at home and there is not much trade now at the shop."

"So soon ! Oh, that is fine ! Then I will be ready in the early afternoon and we will have a goodly chat, while

mayhap we can find a few late strawberries in the long grass."

"I hope so. But now I must hie me home at once. I only came to fetch the paper of fresh 'Virginia.' A ship is just in from the Southern Colony."

"So! Well if you must go, I will step down the street for a word with Geertruyd Vanderen. She promised me some seeds of her crimson hollyhock. Good-night, dear Franz, and sugared dreams."

"'Sugared dreams!' Not often are they that," thought the lad, as he wended his way to the gloomy old house on the canal where, he however, found the slave Dinorah,—who had a very warm corner in her heart for the boyish waif—waiting with a dish of sweet baked apples and cream that she had prepared for his "night-cap," before retiring.

"Where is the baas?" he inquired, as he enjoyed the unexpected tid-bit with hearty gusto.

"Lors, honey, he am gone out as usual. Dirck Van Boot is like the bats and owls and hawks. He lubs to fly by night. Dere am berry 'sterious goin's-on in dis house, and it am a goot ting you sleep so sound. Mebbe keep your head from turnin' white, like my pore ole cocoanut."

"Oh, you dear foolish old Dinorah!" laughed Franz in his soft, caressing voice that was so winning to true womanly souls, and winding an arm about the ancient negress he imprinted a kiss upon her withered, wrinkled cheek.

"Bress his bright face," she muttered as she lighted his candle and watched him disappear aloft. "If Dirck am plottin' mischief agin dat chile, he got to do it to de ole woman fust. Dat I do swar."

As Dinorah said, Franz was a sound sleeper. Made happy too, to-night, by the savory apples and cream and by the prospect of a pleasant outing on the morrow, his head had



hardly touched the pillow before the drowsy little god waved his poppy wand and sent him floating away, away to the beautiful Land of Nod—that enchanting land where all are equal and earthly cares are all forgotten. Loudly Jan Giltertsen the koeck, or bell-ringer, chimed the hour of nine. Franz heard it not. His dreams were a fantastic medley of black faces and white ; blue waters and green rolling pasture-lands. A vision of his mother came to him beckoning, beckoning, and then she faded into old Vrouw Van Boot, while like an echo from past ages he fancied he heard the voice of his long-lost and scarce-remembered father, calling him from over the ocean.

Was it that that awoke him or was there an odd thumping noise below ? He could not tell, but all at once he found himself sitting up on his sloping *slaap-banck*, listening intently, with strained ears, and the bewilderment a sudden recall to the world of reality often causes. Profound silence for an instance, and then, again, stealthy footsteps and the dragging of some heavy objects certainly broke the stillness of the night.

“ It must be that robbers are breaking in,” was Franz’ first idea, for though the modest abode seemed to offer scanty inducements for plunder he knew the tobacconist was believed to be far richer than he appeared, and to have much treasure hidden away. “ Vell, the testy miser deserves to lose his precious guilders, while vhy should I risk my life to save them ? ” he thought.

But, presently, better feelings triumphed, and he determined to rescue his master’s property if it was in his power. His curiosity, too, was excited by discerning a long, narrow skiff floating on the canal beneath his window.

“ By St. Anthony ! The rascals came by vater ! ” he exclaimed, and hastily donning his coat and trousers, he stole on tip-toe down the rickety stairs, every creak of which

made him pause and tremble, for fear of discovery. To his surprise, however, the first floor was just as he had left it, the shop and apartments at the rear being as dark and silent as might be expected at midnight. "Perhaps, after all, it was but a dream," he murmured.

But as he stopped to consider, the low murmur of suppressed voices fell on his ears, and seemed to issue from beneath his feet.

"Why, they must be in the cellar," he concluded, in some surprise, and shivering from head to foot, although the night was almost sultry, he softly opened a door leading to an underground basement, and crept cautiously down a steep ladder. Soon a glimmer of light in the distance assured him that the marauders were at work in an inner room, where the finest brands of snuff and cigars were supposed to be stored, and of which Heer Van Boot alone carried the key.

With pale face and startled eyes, he silently made his way to a long, narrow crack in the wall and peered through, when, so great and overwhelming was the shock he received, that his brain reeled and a sick faintness seemed for the moment to paralyze all his faculties. "Could this be a nightmare?" he wondered stupidly, or did he really see three stalwart men—masked men at that—in the long, dark cloaks and slouched hats of typical desperadoes? No, he was not deceived. They were there, and were rolling up and throwing into boxes the richest of fabrics, utensils of gold and silver, and precious glittering stones, all of which they bore up a gang-plank and out of a low door opening on Broad Street and the canal.

"Robbers? Aye, without doubt; but Dirck Van Boot was not the sufferer, for he himself stood in their midst, giving orders in low tones, or turning aside to consult in



"I SEE NOTHING, NOR DO I HEAR AUGHT."—Page 87.



whispers with one who appeared to be a sort of commander, and whose figure the boy fancied he recognized, in spite of the visor which concealed his features and his voluminous mantle.

"Oh, vat does it mean! vat can it mean!" groaned the distressed little watcher. "Bad and cruel as Dirck is, surely, surely he cannot be a—a—" but the last word was merged in a frightened gasp, as a small dry stick lying on the earthen floor snapped sharply under his feet. At the unwonted sound, Dirck wheeled round with an oath, exclaiming, "What in donder is that?"

Franz had only just time to slink into a dark corner and hide behind a bale of tobacco, before the man appeared, lantern in hand, at the entrance of the stone cellar, glancing anxiously to the right and left.

"I see nothing. Nor do I hear aught now," he said at last, returning after a moment of breathless suspense. "It must have been a rat, but this sort of work makes one quake at his own shadow."

"Aye," responded another voice, "but the ducats, my man, think of the Virginia ducats! And drink, drink to our enterprise! It will steady your pulse."

Years older, looked poor, bewildered Franz, and years older did he feel, when he again ascended the stairs to his small attic room beneath the eaves, while so overstrained was every nerve, he almost screamed aloud at sight of a woman's form standing in the middle of the floor.

It was Dinorah, and there was a gray, ashy tinge to her dark skin, as she caught him in her arms, crying, "Oh, Franz, Franz, why did you leab your bed dis unlucky night, and what—what is it you hab seen?"

In a few concise, sobbing words he told her all.

"Den, like Heer Adam and Vrouw Eve in de garden ob

Eden, you hab tasted de fruit ob good and ebil, and your eyes is opened to de bad naked truf," said the aged negress solemnly. "But, boy, if you wants to lib out your 'lotted days, neber dar' to breave to anoder soul what you hab seen to-night. You can talk to old Dinorah, but to no one else. Promise me dis. Promise it by de memory ob our bressed dead-an'-gone missus, who wrestled wid de Lord for dat son ob hers many an' many a time, and who, I tank Heaben, am took from de shame to come."

"I promise it, Dinorah," said Franz, awed by her heart-broken fervor, and then she sat beside him and held his hand until he fell asleep.

The Kyckout or Look-Out was a high point of rocks jutting out into the East River, at about the place where Eighth Street now ends. It was a pleasant walk from the compact little settlement of four hundred houses bordering on the bay, over the green, rolling land of upper Manhattan; the only drawback being the herds of horses, branded with their owners' names, and there turned out to graze during the summer months.

Some of these, born and raised among the rocks and fields, were as wild as the buffaloes and bison of the Western prairies, and a stampede was always to be dreaded. But Rychie felt quite courageous with Franz and his gun by her side, and gaily set off past the Vly block-house and Half-Moon battery, and out of the Water Gate; although it struck her that her companion appeared unusually grave and absent-minded.

"A stiver for your thoughts, Franz," she laughed, as they paused for a short rest on the shady bank of the fresh-water pond known as the *Kolck*. "Your wits seem wool-gathering."

"Yes, I fear that is the truth, but my thoughts I cannot

sell, and you must pardon my stupidity, for not so well as usual did I sleep last night."

"No, how was that?"

"Oh, very strange noises were in the house. At breakfast Dirck said they were made by the rats and mice, and asked if they kept me awake, and if I took them to be ghosts." And the boy laughed a bitter, scornful little laugh at the remembrance.

"Ach, of late, always does our talk come round to ghosts!" exclaimed Rychie. "For we still hear of the pale vrouw taking her night ramble in the Maiden's Path; and even on the Kolck here they say the wraith of an old Indian sachem comes in his bark canoe, and that the sound of his paddles may oft be heard. How I wish he would glide out now from under the trees and tell to us something of the future. I would like to know whether it will really be true, as Nicholas Bayard thinks, that New Amsterdam will grow and spread into a great city, as big as old Amsterdam in Holland. Why, Nick thinks that a hundred or two hundred years hence it may even reach as high up as the Kissing-Bridge across the Tamkill. Wouldn't that be marvelous? If it does, I wonder what just here will stand?" And the eyes of the imaginative little maiden wandered dreamily over the fair, sweet, rural landscape. Naught, however, whispered of the sighs and groans to arise from that peaceful spot, nor of the Tombs prison that, in the course of centuries, would cover the skating and fishing place of the Knickerbocker youths and the haunt of the Manhattoe chieftain.

"The Kissing-Bridge," said Franz, as they sauntered on, "a long way is that, but Owano and I went there on Pinxter Monday. To spear eels did we go, and there I saw Jufvrouw Grietje riding with Sir Ralph Hastings."

"Yes, with him she went to a Pinxter dance at New Haarlem and came home so late that the father was sorely angry. He likes not the gay young Britisher."

"He is right, for much I fear his deeds are as dark as his face, and, Rychie, he is not fit to kiss thy pretty sister."

"To kiss her!"

"Aye, for I saw him steal von kiss from her lips, upon the Kissing-Bridge. 'It is the custom of the country, I believe,' he remarked."

"And what did Grietje do?"

"She tossed her yellow head with indignation, 'Ja, Mynheer,' I overheard her say, for I was down by the kill right under the bridge, 'Ja, Mynhèer, it is the custom for the Holland boys, for those who are like our brothers and with whom we have learned our Heidelberg and cracked our Paas eggs; but for others, no, never!"

"That was a good answer, was it not?"

"Yes, but Sir Ralph did not mind it. He only bent down saying: 'Oh, sweet Margaret, I prithee think that with thee I learned my Heidelberg."

"Oh, the bold, rude trifler! I do not believe he ever learned it at all. But what more did you hear?"

"No more; for just then the horses started up, and they galloped off, while Owano began to sputter and fume and shake his fist at the Englishman. 'Owano no like *Yengee* man,' he muttered. 'Yengee man got false tongue. He say, "Bring brakes I gib you ten stivers." Owano go to the voods, he pull much leetle leaves, but no stivers does he see. Ugh! No like Yengee man.'"

Rychie laughed heartily at Franz' mimicry of the Indian lad's wrath, while shortly after they reached the Kyckout and spent a halcyon hour perched on the high rocks, gazing out over the broad shimmering river and beyond to the forest-



crowned banks of Long Island. *Sewanhacky*, or the Isle of Shells, the Red Men called it in their soft, musical tongue.

Indeed, the verdure-clad hills were casting long sun-down shadows, ere they, at length, turned their footsteps homeward, and, hand in hand waded through the long grass which almost reached their waists, while often their feet caught in the wild pea-vines interlaced through it, and frequently a grape-vine stretched out finger-like tendrils to clutch them as they passed.

"Such a charming promenade! Not so happy have I been since St. Nicholas Eve," declared Franz, who had cast aside the somber feelings left by his exciting night, and with the light-heartedness of his mother's race lived only in the present, reveling in the sunshine, the summer beauty and the companionship of his little friend.

Rychie was about to agree when the tramp, tramp as of a marching army suddenly sounded on the air, and with a quick glance to the west she stopped, screaming in terrified tones, "Oh, Franz! Franz! the wild horses!"

Too true! An enormous herd of the pasturing beasts loomed up like a dark cloud not far away, and evidently infuriated by some unknown cause was madly bearing down upon them in a great seething, snorting, panic-stricken mass.

What should they do? Where should they run? About a quarter of a mile distant, a grove of chestnut trees offered a possible refuge, and towards this they scurried, the boy almost dragging poor Rychie over the ground. But the undergrowth of vines retarded them sadly, and, at length, the trembling girl tripped, fell, and lay still, completely exhausted panting, "Leave me! Leave me and try and save yourself, for not another step can I go."

Leave her indeed! The gallant little Frenchman would

have been trampled to atoms first. Placing her behind him, he bravely, though with a white, set countenance, faced the oncoming, frantic horde, his gun leveled, ready to fire at the head of the leader a powerful gray animal with waving mane and tail streaming out like a pennant; the flash of whose rolling, blood-shot eyes, he could already discern.

On the herd came, steadily, relentlessly, crushing many a tiny, weak colt beneath their hoofs, in the mad unreasoning rush. Crouching, Rychie whispered, "Good-bye, dear Franz," and covering her face, tried to remember her prayers.

"Five minutes more, and, like the poor little horses, all trodden and mangled, we too, shall lie," thought the lad, but the next instant a rapturous shout of "Hola! hola! Here, quick, this way!" escaped him, for across the green plain a fearless rider on a fleet-footed steed came speeding, and, before Rychie could at all comprehend her unexpected deliverance from a violent death, muscular Nicholas Bayard had stooped and lifted her, like a baby, onto the saddle before him; Franz had scrambled up behind and they were all flying toward the town.

But not before the pawing, prancing, half-crazed creatures were so close that they could feel their hot, fiery breaths upon their cheeks, and it was a race for life to outstrip them.

Fortunately, however, this was accomplished, and they whizzed through the city gate.

"O Nick, good Nick! Whatever can I do to show my gratitude?" sobbed the unnerved girl, when the young man set her gently down at her father's door.

"Speak not of gratitude, dear little one, for always shall I thank my lucky stars that I chanced to turn off the Boston Highway to-day. Turned off just to see if the wild raspberries were getting red, and so was there to see the stampede, and thy danger. But—" and now she fancied there was a sad

look in the kindly eye, and a sad note in the kindly voice, "It would make me more at ease if thou could'st watch thine sister a bit and advise me if her manner and movements be different from the ordinary. Do not think I would make a spy of thee, child. I only desire thee to keep thy blue eyes open. It is for Grietje's own good I ask it, and the good of us all, while often have I heard the Heer Schepen say that 'a very old head has the little Maritje on her young shoulders.' Dost thou understand, sweetheart?"

And with a knowing smile, Rychie answered, "Ja, ja, I understand, dear Nicholas."

## CHAPTER XI

### THE WHITE LADY

“ Dear, you should not stay so late,  
Twilight is not good for maidens ;  
Should not loiter in the glen,  
In the haunts of goblin men.”

—*C. G. Rossetti.*

JULY once over, the remainder of the bright, jocund summer sped blithely by in the social little Dutch colony, its monotony broken by many homely, festive gatherings in the way of berrying-parties, roof-raisings, and apple and husking bees ; besides the great long-looked-forward-to St. Bartholomew Kermis or Cattle Fair, always a ten days' excitement at the close of every August.

It was at this time, too, that Rychie attained a new dignity. She entered her teens and the quaint grown-up demureness sometimes assumed by young girls.—

“ Standing with reluctant feet,  
Where the brook and river meet,”

sat rather prettily on her cheery, plump little personality.

“ Oof, but the small one seems older than Grietje there with all her nineteen years and her wisdom teeth, though much do I fear the very best of common sense has not sprouted with them,” declared the mother, casting an anxious glance at her eldest daughter. For truly during these

months the fair Jufrouw Van Couwenhoven was strangely unlike herself. Often, too, did she grow restless beneath the steady, puzzled gaze her young sister bent upon her, and once exclaimed impatiently, "Pray, Rychie, why look you at me so reproachfully? Such staring is very annoying, as well as unmannerly."

"But the reason I could not tell her," said the little maid to her confidant Franz, "I could not say to her that it was because I was surprised at her disregard of the father's wishes. Though she knows he and the mother like it not, she will talk and dance with the British Sir Ralph more than with anyone else, and the cold shoulder turns to Nicholas Bayard—dear, good Nicholas, whom I would love to serve and please. Truly sometimes I think it is bewitched my sister is."

So October came with its golden days and nutty spoils to delight the active boys, and one chill evening, after a busy day at the *Stadt Huys*, the Schepen heaved a deep sigh of content as he drew his arm-chair into the cozy ingle-side and watched his *vrouw* bringing out the big spinning-wheel from its accustomed corner.

"Like frost does it feel to-night, and soon now the winter will be upon us again," he remarked.

"Ja," responded the dame. "And with the warm days the lingering, loitering ways of summer should be laid aside. Come! come! girls. To work! Blandina, fetch your knitting-pins and make the green yarn stocking grow beneath your fingers. Rychie, I wish you would make some use of the instruction given you by Master Van Hoboken at the school, and write out the recipe for my famous krullers. It, as a great favor, have I promised to Madam Stuyvesant, though to no one but the Director's lady would I think of granting it."

"I will do so, mother," responded Rychie, who was peering out of the window, wondering what had become of Grietje. Upstairs, then, she ran, and despatched Deborah in quest of pen and paper.

"In Missy Grietje's room I done find de quill and dis piece ob paper lay dere on de floor," said the little slave as she returned, holding out a long, narrow slip.

"Good! for just the right size is it for the recipe," replied her young mistress, but the next instant she gasped and turned pale on perceiving that there was writing on one side of the sheet. Then almost mechanically, and without a thought of prying into her sister's secrets, she read:

"The Maiden Lane—thanks to the absurd myth of the White Lady—is the safest spot. Be brave, my dear one, and meet me there soon after nightfall. Fail not, too, to fetch with you the strong box containing your gold chains, silver porringer, seawant and guilders. Hide it beneath the ever-greens as we arranged. A boat rowed by Indian water-dogs will await us on the river below, and in Breucklyn, by special license, can we be married. R. H."

As in a flash, the sensible child, old beyond her years, comprehended it all. Motioning Deborah to leave her, she dropped into a chair, exclaiming, "Oh, oh, oh! Can it be that Grietje is already gone! Would she really make us all so unhappy? Surely, she must be bewitched to dare to face the pale vrouw, even for one that she loves."

The next moment, however, she started up again with a sudden determination. "But, perchance, I also must face her if I would stop mine sister ere it be too late. The very thought makes my blood freeze in my veins. But, there, I

can do it. For Grietje's sake I can do it, and for our parents and for Nicholas whom I promised to serve."

Truly our little colonial dame was formed of the stuff of which heroines are made, and now, without giving herself further time to think, 'she slipped softly downstairs, unbolted the rarely opened front door and darted out into the night.

But it appeared to her like a special providence when, just without the gate, she encountered Franz, accompanied by Owano. Waiving then the ceremony of a greeting, she cried, "Run, Owano, run as fast as your feet can fly to the Bayard Bowery and beg Herr Nicholas to haste to the Maiden Path without delay, while, Franz, do thou come with me, for I am in sore trouble." So imperative, indeed, were her words and manner that both boys obeyed her behest without question.

Meanwhile, we must revert to foolish young Grietje, whose head having been turned by a flattering tongue, had in an evil hour agreed to forsake home, family and country for the gallant looking stranger, the dashing manners of whom appeared so attractive beside the plain, staid ways of the Manhattan men.

Poor, innocent, simple, little Dutch girl! At the last moment her heart almost misgave her, and a surging wave of home-sickness threatened to overwhelm her as she plucked a few frost-kissed artemesias from the garden and pressed her lips in a passionate farewell against the cold bricks of her childhood's home, while she murmured between her chattering teeth, "Cruel, cruel was it of Ralph to choose that haunted spot for me to meet him in!"

Nevertheless, with a dark mantle gathered lightly about her, and quite unaware that the tell-tale note had slipped from beneath her bodice, she flitted like a shadow down the quiet

street, which was almost deserted at this hour, past Cornelius Clopper's forge glowing like a fiery red eye on the corner of Maiden Lane, and sought the ancient willow tree standing leafless and gaunt in the pale moonlight. In this a screech owl had taken the place of the gossipy bobolink. Once a shimmer of white made her start back in affright, but a moment's thought assured her it was but the linen on the bleaching-ground, and, trying to still the rapid, suffocating beating of her heart, she waited and watched with hearing painfully alert and nerves strung to that high tension which comes very near to breaking.

Longer and longer grow the shadows ; higher and higher rides the moon ! A rustle in the bushes makes her jump ; but she does not see two small people creeping softly up behind her.

" Oh, why does he not come ? " she inwardly cries.

The owl hoots dismally, but above its doleful cry may distinctly be heard the tread of a heavy footstep crunching the dry grass. Sir Ralph beyond a doubt ! and with a cry of relief and joy Grietje turns to encounter—what ? A tall, weird, white form ! A spectral-looking form ! No delusion this time, but a veritable figure which, with trailing robes and waving hands, comes slowly gliding directly toward her. One wild, terrified shriek startles the night-bird from his perch, and the girl gasping, "'Tis she ! 'tis the White Lady ! " shivers, sways and falls to the ground in a deathlike faint.

Almost as frightened also was the watching Rychie, but her anxiety regarding her sister overpowered her fear of the apparition, and in a twinkling she had cleared the bank, her plump arms were round the unconscious maiden's neck, her soft cheek pressed close to hers, and she was wailing,—“ O Grietje ! Grietje ! Can it be that thou art dead ? Open thine eyes and look at me. See, it is Rychie, thy own sister





"PUT UP YOUR WEAPON, OUTLAW!"—Page 99.

1

Rychie, who followed to beg thee to return to our home. Franz, too, is over yonder and he will let naught do us a harm."

"By all the powers of evil, what is this hubbub about? Maria here! Margaret swooning! Confusion! This is a pretty coil!" and Sir Ralph Hastings, bearing a dark lantern, strode upon the scene. "But hist! There is no time to lose. My pinke waits below and she must go, in her senses or out of them."

So saying, he lifted the fainting girl, and would have carried her off then and there, had not Rychie, with the strength of desperation, clung to him like a leach, retarding every movement and screaming and sobbing,—“No, no! You shall not take her thus when she has no will or knowledge whatsoever.”

“And think you I am to be balked by a little spitfire wench like you! Beshrew me no! We must be off ere the tide turns. Confound you, girl! Let go my doublet and cease that to-do! You will bring the whole town down upon us.”

“I care not. For O, Sir Ralph, if Grietje leaves us so, the mother's heart will break and our father's head be turned to gray, while Nicholas—Nicholas——”

“Is at hand to speak for himself,” shouted a clear, manly voice, and young Bayard, closely followed by Owano, came crashing through a neighboring hedge.

“Thanks be to the great God that I am here in season.”

Without a “by your leave,” then, he took quiet possession of the still oblivious damsel, and as Sir Ralph, scowling with rage, drew a dirk from his belt, continued: “Put up your weapon, outlaw! With such vermin I would not deign to fight. But, unless from this spot you depart at once, in the bleaching-brook shall you be ducked.”

“I do not stir without Mistress Van Couwenhoven, sirrah!

She is my promised wife, and my wife she must, and shall, be."

"Never, that I swear. Long have I had my suspicions, but until to-day they could not be proven. Now, however, I know. Harken, Rychie! No English noble is this; no English noble whatever. He is the pirate captain, Evan Jones, of whom full often you have heard. He is the bold wicked sea-robber who seized and captured Henry Appel's ship, the *Prophet Daniel*, and who has had many a poor trapped slave sold at the Coffee House. Off Coney Island his black-flagged bark now does lie, and 'tis thither he would have taken our dear Grietje. To think of her being a pirate's bride! But, Mynheer, for her sake, one chance shall you have. To-night you are free to leave these shores forever, but if you do not go, to-morrow all shall the Heer Director know, and then I warrant that in irons will you be borne to the 'keep' within the Fort."

The exposed man ground his teeth with rage, but Nicholas was a young giant in height and strength, and his muscle commanded respect.

"So, by the arch fiend, the jig's up! And it is you, you copper-skinned imp, and that blockhead of a Dutch ghost, I have to thank for it!" and, shaking his fist at Owano as well as breathing vengeance on all the inhabitants of New Amsterdam, the discomfited Sir Ralph vanished in the darkness.

But where was Franz during this exciting interview under the willow?

Not far distant you may be certain; but when Rychie sprang to the aid of her unconscious sister, an innate delicacy held him back, while longing to be of assistance he concluded to give chase to the phantom, which he proceeded to do, with a courage that would have made many an older youth open his eyes in admiring astonishment.

The lad, in spite of his bringing up, was peculiarly free from superstition, and he had long been curiously anxious to solve the mystery of the White Lady. Now an opportunity presented itself, and he seized upon it.

Away then he scampered after the pallid form as it suddenly turned and beat a retreat; nor did it "dissolve into thin air" as might have been expected of a conventional, well-bred spirit, even if that spirit was once a Manhattoe squaw. On the contrary, discovering that it was pursued, it broke into a positive run, and bounded over the ground with a solidity that savored far more of this world than of the sphere celestial.

This only helped to increase Franz's curiosity, and, being on his mettle as well as very lithe and fleet of foot, he with a slight exertion soon succeeded in overtaking the fleeing figure, grasped at its fluttering white draperies and actually tore them from off the wraith.

"Bless me, do phantom ladies wear boots and braid their hair in a queue," was his first amused thought.

The next instant a rough hand was on his throat, and hoarse, strangely familiar tones hissed in his ear, "Silence! One word, and I will kill you as I would a red wolf!" While far more frightened and aghast than if he had indeed encountered a being from the "Land of Shadows," the boy staggered back to rejoin his friends feeling as though his small world had been suddenly turned topsy-turvy, and it was his sorry fate to always play the detective un-awares.

Amazed and bewildered enough were the honest Schepen and his wife when Nicholas Bayard, with a stern, set countenance, strode into the cheerful kitchen and laid pale drooping Grietje on the wooden settle, and astonished beyond measure were they at the story he had to relate.

It was, too, a very depressed and mortified young woman, who, an hour later, listened to Nicholas's discoveries regarding the *soi-disant* Sir Ralph, and sobbed out her shame and sorrow on Wolfert Van Couwenhoven's fatherly shoulder.

"Oh, *mijn vader*, I am indeed miserable," she cried. "For this bad, untrustworthy pirate has deceived and robbed me as well as the seamen of the Spanish main. All mine gold beads, the porringer of silver and my kirstydt and birthday guilders he persuaded me to pack in the strong box and hide under the evergreens, and every one of those has he taken."

"What! Your beautiful neck beads. O, alackaday!" groaned her mother.

"Chut, chut! That is no matter, no matter whatever," said Mynheer soothingly. "Since I have my first-born, my white lambkin, safe from the sea-wolf, I care for nothing else. Do not weep for thy trinkets and gew-gaws, *mijn kleintje*, but thank the good Lord and thine sister that thou hast been protected from a worse fate than a green grave in the burying-ground. Rychie seems to be the guardian angel of our roof-tree."

"That is the truth," murmured Dame Van Couwenhoven, and drawing her second daughter to her side she lovingly stroked her flaxen braids.

"Yes," stammered Greitje, "it makes me tremble to think of my so narrow escape. The little one was truly kind and sisterly to brave the White Lady in order to stop my folly, and I shall ever remember it. Oh, that dreadful pale woman! I can see her yet! and I shall always dread the Maiden Lane hereafter. Still more, though, do I dread the talking there will be in the town. The birds and bats carry such news very fast, and the old vrouws will knit so much gossip into their winter hose that Grietje Van Couwenhoven

will be ashamed to show her face at the huskings and the tea-drinkings."

"Mayhap Greitje Bayard might braver be," whispered Nicholas. But ere the blushing girl could reply save by a grateful glance from her violet eyes, the door was burst open and Flip came tumbling head over heels into the center of the room.

For months the negro had not looked so happy. His mouth was stretched in an almost grotesque grin, his ebony countenance shone and his whole frame seemed quivering with pleasurable excitement. Waving something above his head, he gleefully shouted, "O, baas, baas! De *Spotted Cow* from Holland hab jist weighéd anchor in Coentie's Slip, and to me de schipper gabe dis letter and packet to fotch to you. He say dey am from Baas Hendrick. My own leetle Baas Hendrick."

## CHAPTER XII

### THE FLIGHT

To the wood! to the wood! a life of enjoyment,  
With spirits and beasts was my sole employment.  
The fairies and stags with their antlers tall,  
Without any fear, approach'd me all.

—H. HEINE.

FLIP's abrupt announcement was glad tidings indeed to the whole household, every member of which had sadly missed the merry, young scapegrace of a son, brother and master; while, in those primitive, slow-going days the arrival of a letter was of such rare and vast importance as to make conversation for weeks. Rychie and Blandina fairly danced in glee; Grietje forgot her troubles for the nonce, and the colored servants gazed at the closely written sheets with positive awe expressed upon their dusky faces. Little time, too, did the Herr Schepen lose before breaking the red wax seals and reading aloud to his attentive hearers the boyish epistle which Hendrick had exerted himself to make worthy of its long journey across the billows, although he by no means wielded "the pen of a ready writer."

The first part was taken up with an account of his voyage, during which he fancied he had sounded the heights and depths of a seaman's life. Then came a description of his arrival, the welcome accorded him by his Holland relatives, and his first impressions of the funny little watery land of



dykes and ditches, canals and ponds, white storks and flapping wind-mills. At length, however, he wrote : "Now something very queer I have to tell you, and, Rychie, I am sure, will open her eyes wide with surprise when she hears it. Know then I have run across our New Year thief. I have seen the deserter from Fort Orange. I have shaken the hand that pulled me out of the Salt River. In short, I have talked and interchanged much knowledge with Charles Morrow, and from him learned many strange things. But there, I must commence at the beginning and set all down in order with the quill, if I would have you understand. This letter has been writ by degrees, a few lines at a time, and one day when it was about half completed, I went down to the haven to ask when the *Spotted Cow* was to sail for New Amsterdam, as I wished to send my first epistle home by her schipper, Hans Hansen. There is a very fine quay here, bordered by linden trees, and as I walked along it scanning the ships anchored in the Maas, and wondering if it be true, as my uncle says, that the city of Rotterdam is built on ninety islands, out from one of the merchants' tall houses which overlook the river stepped a handsome, heavily bearded man, clad in very rich apparel. I vouchsafed him but a glance, and was passing on when he darted forward and, with a sort of a shake in his voice and in rare bad Dutch, said, 'I crave your pardon, young Mynheer, but will you have the kindness to tell me if you were born a twin, and, if so, whether your other half be in the New Netherland colony?'

"It was so funny that I laughed outright, but seeing he was an Old England man answered him in his own tongue, 'No. That I was not, and to my knowing had no double anywhere.'

"Then, by St. George, never was there such a likeness !

quoth he. At which I thought it only civil to inform him who I was and whence I came.

“Had he been mine brother he could not have shown more pleasure, while he fairly shouted, ‘And I am Charles Morrow, the fugitive and stowaway!’

“‘This chance meeting seems like a miracle,’ he continued, ‘for I have a dozen questions to ask of you. Come with me, I pray, to mine inn, where we can converse without interruption.’

“I hesitated, but he insisted, and was so urgent that I finally yielded, and accompanied him to the comfortable little tavern where he is stopping. There, over a mug of beer and plate of bread and cheese, he told me all his story. Some of it you have already heard from Rychie. How, against his parents’ will, he married, then left his wife and child to seek a fortune, and the sore plight that befell him in America. But there is more, much more. The *Golden Unicorn* was at sea five days before he was discovered in the hold. Then, sputtering with rage, the sailors dragged him out and carried him before the schipper, who was mad as a hornet and threatened to pitch him into the waves. However, as Charles Morrow offered to work his passage and set to like a beaver, he cooled down, and ere the shore of England loomed up they were the best of friends. In that country our fine soldier only lingered long enough to see his father and mother and ask their forgiveness, which they cordially gave, welcoming him like the prodigal son, killing the fatted calf and lining his pockets with gold. Then off he posted again in hot haste to France. For it was in France he parted from his wife and child, and there hoped to find them. But, alack! It was not to be. They were gone. Every trace of them had vanished. Frantically he questioned the neighbors, but they knew little. ‘It is six

years since Madame and the boy departed, and she never talked of her affairs,' they said. 'We think they were bound either for the Low Countries or the New World, but could not say which.'

"Half crazed then he hastened to Holland, and hither, thither, everywhere, but could find not a single clue. It was as though they had been whisked off the earth. So at last, giving them up for dead, he was about returning when he met me.

"Just as Charles Morrow reached this sad conclusion to his tale, he dropped his head on the table and began to groan and weep and berate himself. 'Oh, Léonie! oh Chérie! oh, my little Franz,' he suddenly cried:

"'Who? Who did you say?' I screamed, jumping up, for the names, so different from our Holland names, struck both odd and familiar upon my ear.

"'My son Franz and my wife, Léonie de Milt Morrow, though I never called her aught but "Chérie,"' he sobbed.

"Then, in a twinkling, I saw it all, understood it all. For do you not recall last St. Nicholas Eve, when with us Dirck Van Boot's boy Franz spent the night? In my room he slept and was very restless. In the early morning then, as he tossed on his pillow, a locket I saw hung about his neck. A gold locket, and on it the word 'Léonie' was plainly cut. I remembered it well, for I thought it such a strange, pretty name."

"Well, you must imagine the explanations that took place. It is too much to write down, for our tongues wagged for hours.

"But this is the truth beyond a doubt. Franz de Milt is Franz Morrow. Through a mistake he has been known by the name of his French mother. But he has an English father, a very high-born English father, who has sown plenty

of wild oats, but now longs to settle down to a staid old age, with a son beside him. He was full of grief when I told him all I knew of the woman who died in Vrouw Van Boot's best bed, and the hard life Franz leads with Dirck.

"To think I was so near and knew it not," he moaned. 'But my son must come to me, must come without delay.'

"Indeed he would return to the colony to bring him, himself, but fears being shot as a deserter, by the Prince's men, should he again set foot on New Netherland soil.

"Therefore, within the packet that goes with this, you will find a note and money for Franz. Charles Morrow sends the gold to pay his way to Fatherland, and begs you will at once start him over the sea. Is it not wonderful news and like the end of the tales old Elsje used to tell to us?

"Within the packet you will also discover Grietje's ring. The stowaway nearly swallowed it while munching a kruller, and now desires to return it to its rightful owner.

"Uncle Diedrich has just called out that the *Spotted Cow* is to sail in two hours, so I must close with love and respect to one and all. Tell Flip I miss him every day, and it seems rarely lonesome without a black face.

"Your son,

"HENDRICK."

"Tank de Lord, de gold ring hab got home agen! Now, mebbe all de criss-crosses will come right!" ejaculated old Elsje, and Nicholas devoutly prayed her words might prove prophetic as he slipped the recovered gift on Grietje's finger.

"Oh, but it is of Franz I think!" cried Rychie. "How happy he will be and how that cruel Dirck will *janker*! Pray let me be the one to carry this grand news to him, and I will be off to Broad Street the first thing in the morning."

The dear little maid had her way, but, alas! when glowing

with her delightful revelations, she reached the tobacconist's, on the following day, the bird had flown. Franz was gone, and it was long, very long, ere he received the wondrous announcement from over the sea.

When Nicholas Bayard left the Maiden Path, bearing his unconscious burden, and closely followed by pale anxious Rychie, Franz only accompanied them as far as the garden gate. There he turned aside, saying to the Indian lad, who trotted after him like a faithful dog,—“Come, Owano, let us go home. They need us not now, and I fain would get some vinks of sleep.” For he felt strangely wearied and bewildered by the night's adventures and discoveries. With an assenting grunt, the Manhattoe boy went with him to the canal, though he said he should not, that night, return to the Indian settlement outside the town, but curl up in some corner and there seek repose.

“But you will be cold, my poor Owano!” protested Franz

“No, Owano got blanket. Blood warm. Sleep like dormouse.”

“So! Vell, then, good night and do not let the rattle-vatch take you into custody.” So great was the fear of a conflagration in little New Amsterdam, that leather buckets, hooks and ladders were always kept in readiness, and a watchman, known as the “rattle-watch,” traversed the streets from nine o'clock until Drum-Beat at the Fort.

Nodding cheerfully, then, Franz entered the house, and was proceeding to his own apartment, when his footsteps were arrested by the sound of loud angry voices in the room behind the shop. He recognized them as those of the pirate captain and his master, Dirck Van Boot.

“Confound you, you numbskull of a Dutchman!” roared the former. “How dare you come flaunting your play-act-

ing tricks down the Maiden Lane, without my permission ! You have upset the very finest kettle of fish it was ever my good luck to catch, and now that the boy has found you out, it is likely all our transactions will come to light. Therefore, I shall take French leave and you may settle things with the testy Director as best you can."

"But—but—indeed, sirrah, I did not know !" stammered Dirck, in almost cringing tones.

"Then, forsooth, you should inquire ! The ghost business was well enough to put the townsfolk off the track and keep them clear of our evening resort, but gad ! you needn't prank round there for sheer sport ! I have a fine mind to—"

"O Sir Ralph ! I beg, I implore ! Speak not so loud. If the walls have ears we are undone."

There was dire fear and agony in the tobacco-merchant's appeal, and whether they were imparted to the captain, or he himself saw the wisdom of less strident tones, he certainly dropped his voice and Franz heard no more.

A dull presentiment of coming evil, however, oppressed the boy's young spirit, as he sought his couch, and nestled under the light feather-bed that served as a coverlid.

The violent conversation had driven sleep from his eyes, and he was lying awake thinking, with some apprehension, of the bad half hour he would surely have with Dirck on the morrow, when the light of a candle reflected upon the ceiling announced that some one was ascending the stairs. A moment later Dinorah stumbled in, and, falling on her knees by the low bed, overwhelmed him with tears, embraces and half-sad, half-angry ejaculations.

"Vat is it, Dinorah ? Vat has happened ?" he gasped in alarm.

"Hush—h ! Speak not above a whisper. For oh, my lamb, dat I took from your pore mudder's arms, dere be

danger hangin' ober you—dreadful danger, from which you must flee ; flee dis berry night."

'Flee, Dinorah ! Are you mad ? Surely you do not mean that you want me to run away ?"

"Ja, I do, at once. But first, Franz, tell me what it was you found out in de Maiden Path."

"Vell, I discovered who the pale vrow is," and the lad chuckled at the remembrance.

"Yes, yes ! And it was——"

"Dirck. Snuffy old Dirck. Is not that droll ?"

"No. It is terrible, not droll ; and so will you think, my sugar lump, when you know all dat eavesdroppin' Dinorah hab overheard. De baas is now afraid of you. His black deeds make him afraid. He has made up his mind to get rid ob you, and wid dat dare-debil Sir Ralph he hab hatched a vile, wicked plot. It 'pears dat oily-tongued nobleman am a smuggler and a bad sea-robber, and wid him on his horrid vessel you are to be shipped."

"Oh, no, no ! Not to be a pirate ! Never could Dirck be so cruel as that !"

"It is the truf. I heard him swear it wid mine own ears. And worse dere is. For if you prove not mild and meek, and mind all de captain says, ouf ! off from de mast-head yon are to swing. For, as de baas says, 'Dead folks tell no tales.'"

"But that would be murder !"

"And tink you a pirate and slave-trader would stop at murder ? No, no. So do not trust a sea-wolf dough he do walk in a fine sheep's doublet, but run away at once. I hab come to warn you, and you must be leagues off before de drum beats."

"But where, where can I go ?" asked the poor boy, overcome by the predicament into which he was so suddenly

plunged. "No money have I, and no friends outside of New Amsterdam."

"True, but Dinorah hab sabed a few fathoms ob seawant. Dey shall be yours, and I thought mebbe you could make your way to New Amstel on de South River."

"To the Valdenses?"

"Aye. To your moeder's people. Dey might remember her and take you in."

"I do not think they vere her people. It vas only that with them ve came in the *Prince Maurice*."

"No matter. Dey all know her name and dey were shipwrecked togeder. So try and find them, dearie, and may de marciful Lord and your gun defend you from de savages and de wild beasts ob de forest!"

The affectionate old soul's words had the solemnity of a benediction, while she nearly broke down at the thought of parting from the only being she had to love. She never paused, however, in her task of hurrying Franz into his thickest garments, concealing the string of wampum beneath his jacket, wrapping his woolen scarf about his neck, and lastly thrusting into his hands Nicholas Bayard's discarded fowling-piece, which was now likely to prove of rare service to the desolate orphan.

"Good-bye, dear, dear Dinorah, and pray give my love and adieux to Rychie Van Couwenhoven."

"Some day I will, but not now. For a time nobody must know aught about you."

Then with a parting hug and blessing from the devoted negress, Franz found himself shut out into the midnight, standing on the edge of the sluggish canal, homeless, friendless, looking up at the stars, and wondering if it would be very wicked for him to bury himself and all his troubles in the deep, dark water that flowed at his feet.



"For there seems no place for me in all this big world," he thought. But his guardian angel held him back, and at last, as a remembrance of Dirck, the apprenticeship to the pirate and the gibbet mast-head surged in all their horrors upon his mind, he almost ran down Broad Street, and instinctively slunk into the shadows when the rattle-watch passed on his monotonous round.

Where Trinity Church now lifts its graceful spire above New York's busiest thoroughfare, with its steadfast stone finger ever pointing to the peaceful heavens above, lay the burying-ground of the ancient Knickerbockers. Here the early colonists were laid to a dreamless sleep in the bosom of our great Mother Earth, and here beneath a luxuriant locust tree nestled the grave of a stranger. A grave whose wooden slab bore merely a name—"Léonie De Mill." It was a pleasant green corner in summer, but now covered with red and brown leaves that rustled beneath the form of the boy who lay upon them, his arms spread over the low mound, and great, convulsive sobs shaking his whole slender frame.

For hither had Franz finally turned his footsteps, to the only spot in which he felt he had some real claim, and there, with his head pillowed on the cold ground, he longed and prayed that "Maman," his own "Maman," would come and bear him away to that blissful Paradise of which the Dominie spoke so eloquently, where "the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest."

How long he lay there he never knew, but he was growing numb and a curious drowsiness was stealing over him, a rather agreeable drowsiness, in which he seemed to hear the flutter of celestial wings, when a hand upon his shoulder and a vigorous shake brought him back with a start to the grim realities of life.

“Dirck! Sir Ralph! Sir Ralph come to carry him off to Coney Island and his black-flagged ship.” That was his first thought, and setting his teeth, determined to resist to the bitter end, he looked up to see Owano’s grave, dark face bending above him. In the far East, too, a streak of silver outlined the horizon, and a distant clarion cock announced the advent of another morn.

“Why sleeps the white Franz on the cold bed of the stranger squaw?” asked the Indian boy. “Does he, too, wish to go to the great King?”

“Yes, Owano. I vish that from mine heart. For I have no longer a home here.”

“Ugh! Has bad Swannekin\* pushed the stray bird out of the nest?”

“Aye. Sit down and I will tell thee about it,” and there, resting on his mother’s grave, beneath the bare branches of the wind-stripped locust, in the chill dawn of an autumnal day, Franz related to his humble friend, as briefly and simply as possible, the discoveries he had unwittingly made of Dirck Van Boot’s underhand transactions. He told him of the plot Dinorah had overheard, and how almost hopeless it seemed to try to cross alone and unguarded the trackless wilds which lay betwixt New Amsterdam and the South River, and there seek his unfortunate parent’s fellow-voyagers.

The dusky child of nature scarce comprehended it all, but his untutored brain understood enough to make him sympathize warmly, in his quiet, undemonstrative manner.

At the close he held out a brown palm, saying,—“Come with Owano. Me and the Pale Face be brothers. On Yengees and Swannekins turn our backs. Go, straight as

\* Indians called the Dutch “Swannekins.”

the swallow flies, to the Red Men of the North. Mohawks and Manhattoes good friends. Mohawks open wide their arms. The moon of falling leaves is at hand. Then much bear, much moose come down to the Great River. We hunt, slay, sell peltries. Fine life! Will the white Franz come?"

And gazing into his companion's earnest countenance, the homeless waif, then and there, decided to adopt the free, untrammelled life of the native American. Yes, he would go to the fierce Indian tribes of the upper Hudson. They could certainly be no more treacherous and cruel than his late master had proven, and the fur trade offered some means of subsistence.

So, grasping the friendly, bronze-hued hand, he cried, "Yes, yes, Owano! I will cast in my lot with you; we will be as brothers, and your people shall be my people."

Ah, if at that moment there had only been some beneficent fairy to whisper in the unhappy outcast's ear the contents of Hendrick's letter, and hint of the father longing to strain him to his breast and make amends for the hardships of the past few years.

But, there was no one, and so, after one long, half-regretful look at the sleeping town, the dumpy little fort and block-houses, the towering wind-mill and heaving bay beyond, and pausing to drop a tear on the alien grave under the locust, and on that of kind Vrouw Van Boot, the two strangely united lads of such different races resolutely turned their faces to the North and sped away over the hills and dales, rolling plains and rippling hills of Manhattan Island, past New Harlaem, past Spuyten Duyvel, past the Great Flats, into the heart of the very forest primeval, but ever following the course of the noble stream, up which Hendrick Hudson had sailed his *Half Moon* fifty-two years before.

## CHAPTER XIII

### BETWEEN THE ACTS

Down shadowy lanes, across strange streams,  
Bridged over by our broken dreams ;  
Behind the misty caps of years,  
Beyond the great salt font of tears,  
The garden lies.

E. W. WILCOX.

“THE Moon of Falling Leaves,” as the Indians poetically called November, was, by these events, treading so closely on each other’s heels, turned into a veritable feast of gossip and flow of tongues in the tiny Dutch City. Cut off, as it was from the world at large, without regular mails or newspapers, trifles became of stupendous importance and a fresh topic of conversation was a choice tid-bit, to be tasted again and again.

Never, then, had there been so many tea-drinkings and corn-huskings, and the “Oh, dears !” “Achs,” and “Alacks,” that were knit into the woolen hose and mittens, or dropped deep in the yellow maize, would have filled a whole dictionary of interjections.

Even the boys at the Latin school and the girls on the bleaching-ground had their opinions of Sir Ralph Hastings, whose real identity Nicholas Bayard took no pains to conceal.

But, by the time every one was talking of “Captain Evan

Jones, whose name had long been a terror to the merchantmen of the sea, the outlaw's bark was many and many a mile away, while never again did that brilliant miscreant cheat the City Fathers, or dazzle and turn the heads of the fair jufvrouws of Manhattan Island. Only Rip Van Clomp and youths of his kidney, fascinated by the tales told of the gay corsair, who had been entertained all unawares, wished that they might have gone with him to perform doughty and exciting (even if unlawful) deeds, on the romantic Spanish main.

"Ach, now, I wonder if Franz de Milt can have sailed away under the black pennant!" remarked Rem Hockstrasser one morning on the Parade.

"No, no ; indeed he has not. Franz hated Sir Ralph, and besides he would never go into such a bad, wicked business," cried Rychie, bravely defending her absent friend.

Nevertheless, the suggestion troubled her, and that very afternoon she tripped off to Broad Street to interview Dinorah for the fifth time since Franz's disappearance, now a fortnight back.

Hitherto, the old woman had sedulously kept her own counsel, but, to-day, seeing the little maiden's fresh distress, pity opened her lips and she confided to her the lad's intended destination, as she understood it, and gave her his parting message, though without revealing her master's part in the affair. That she dared not do.

"Oh, thank you, Dinorah. You have lifted a load off my heart," sobbed the girl. "For I would rather know Franz was devoured by wild beasts, than that he was in the clutches of that evil Sir Ralph. I do not quite understand why he should thus go away, but fancy you do, and do not wish to tell, so I will bother you with no more questions. I do believe, though, that wherever he is, Owano is with him."

"What! De Injun lad! Why do you tink dat?" asked the negress eagerly.

"Because he, too, has not been seen for two weeks. Not once has he come to the house to fetch stick-wood or oysters from Gouanes, or clippers from the shore, and they were together when we parted at our gate."

"Oh, I pray de Lord you speak de truf! For day an' night I is haunted by de thought of dat pore chile a-wanderin all by hese'f in de big, lonely forest."

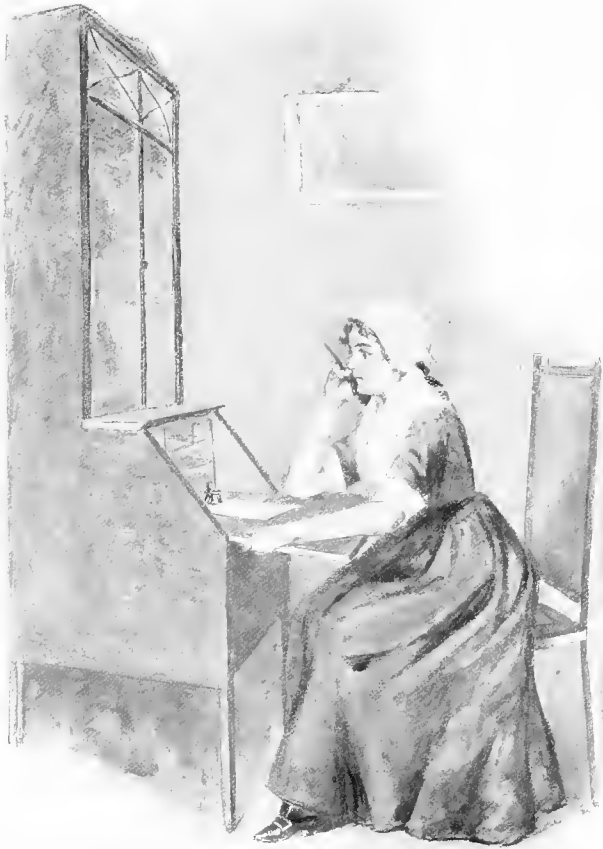
"If he had only waited one more day!" sighed Rychie, and having left her wee grain of comfort with the disconsolate slave, she went home to write Hendrick the letter which was to blast all Charles Morrow's glad parental hopes by informing him of his son's second disappearance, seemingly far more mysterious than the first.

And how did Dirck Van Boot take the flight of the boy he so disliked and dreaded? No one could say; for, after a stormy interview with Dinorah, in which he learned nothing, and after a few days of unwonted nervousness, he wrapped himself in a mantle of surly reserve that none of his curious customers ventured to penetrate.

He, however, made no effort to find Franz, and, probably, drew a long breath of relief when Evan Jones, alias Sir Ralph Hastings, was far out at sea.

Thanked his lucky stars, too, for each day that passed without his name being connected with the bold pirates, who had brought their rich spoils into New Amsterdam right under the Governor's very nose, sending some thence to the Virginia colony, in the crafts which came North laden with tobacco; and disposing of others "under the rose" to one or two shopkeepers of the town, who were not sufficiently principled to decline a tempting, if evidently illicit, bargain.

In all this hubbub, it was not to be expected that Grietje



"SHE WENT HOME TO WRITE HENDRICK."—Page 118.





Van Couwenhoven could escape criticism. True, the story of the frustrated elopement never really leaked out, but her liking for the fictitious nobleman was no secret, and girlish tongues wagged just as freely and sharply two hundred years ago, as they do to-day.

"Mayhap, now the Heer Schepen's daughter will not carry her head quite so high, nor turn up her nose at the Manhattan boys," sneered Anneken Vanderen.

"You'll see she will not," responded Lena Van Cortland. "For I warrant that one good lesson she has learned. That is, that Holland queues may be more trustworthy than British love-locks. But I know, if I were a beau, not another reel would I tread with a pirate's sweetheart."

This unkind chatter, however, was silenced or changed into fresh channels, when, on three consecutive Sabbaths, the banns of marriage for Nicholas Bayard and Grietje Cornelia Van Couwenhoven were read by Dominie Megapolensis, in St. Nicholas church. And early in the New Year, a jolly, rollicking wedding was celebrated with whole-souled hospitality in the Pearl Street house, after which the bonny bride was borne off in blissful triumph to the great fertile farm, known as the Bayard Bouwerie, leaving winsome Rychie to fill the place of eldest daughter in the pleasant home.

Gradually, too, the interest in the pirate captain, Franz's disappearance and Hendrick's meeting with the contrite soldier of Fort Orange, wore away, and the worthy Knickerbockers settled down to enjoy the unwonted peace and prosperity of 1662.

A good and abundant year was that throughout all the New Netherlands. Treaties had been entered into with the Esopus Indians and others, so that sudden outbreaks of the native savages—a constant terror always dreaded in those early days—appeared at an end.

If, too, occasionally some pessimistic burgher ventured to wonder if Governor Stuyvesant was quite wise and politic when he banished certain Mohawk and Mohegan captives to toil as slaves in the West India Company's Island of Curaçoa, he was pooh-poohed and laughed at, and the flourishing grain fields and peach orchards betwixt Fort Amsterdam and Fort Orange, pointed to as mute witnesses of the Director's sagacity. Nor did the colonists concern themselves with the changes taking place in the Mother Country. That Charles II. had ascended the British throne they knew, but that the relatives and followers of the Merry Monarch were casting covetous eyes upon the rich "dirty acres" of the New World they never dreamed, or, if they did, felt well able to defend their own.

Indeed, the chief consideration of the Burgomasters and Schepens, who met every Monday morning in the City Hall, was how to induce more people to come over and settle on the opposite side of the "*Groot Rivier*." It was with this end in view, that they concocted a glowing proclamation, describing this wild tract of country as a veritable Garden of Eden, and despatched it broadcast over Europe,—Ay, directly into the "right little, tight little island" of England itself.

"The land," they declared, "is fertile in the extreme. The climate, serene and temperate, is the best in the world. The soil is ready for the plough, and the seed can be committed to it with scarcely any preparation. The most valuable timber is abundant. The forest presents in profusion nuts and wild fruit of every description. The richest furs can be obtained without trouble. Deer, turkeys, pigeons and almost every variety of wild game are found in the woods. And there is every encouragement for the establishment of fisheries."

Religious freedom was also offered, although not long after

a Quaker was so shamefully persecuted, that womanly hearts were wrung, and one of Governor Stuyvesant's own family interceded in his behalf.

On the whole, the paper presented a most attractive picture. Alas, that it should only have increased the cupidity of the English, and that 1662 should have been but the calm before the storm, the peace and homely comfort before the so-called "Disastrous Year," of 1663.

## CHAPTER XIV

### RYCHIE VISITS DIRCK.

“O cursed love of gold! When for thy sake,  
The fool throws up his interest in both worlds.”

YOUNG.

IT was nearly a twelvemonth after the young mischief-makers of the town had, as was their custom, erected a Maypole adorned with ragged hose in front of the Bayard Bouwerie in fantastic honor of the newly-made bride and groom.

It was also a year or more since the mysterious vanishing of the *soi-disant* Sir Ralph and of Franz De Milt set the wonder-ball rolling among the gossips, when one winter evening, as the Van Couwenhovens sat around the cheery, glowing hearth—which seemed doubly attractive when the wind howled like a banshee in the chimney—they were startled by a feeble tap at the portal, and a shrill voice begging for admittance.

“Bless me! I did not think a dog would be abroad on such a night!” shrieked the mother, while Elsje, opening the door, dragged in something that resembled a drift of snow, and which sank, apparently exhausted, on the floor.

Gradually, however, a yellow, wrinkled countenance was discernible, and Blandina cried, “Why, it is Dinorah! Heer Van Boot’s old Dinorah!”

"Ja, leettle missy, it am, dough I thought dat neber, neber should I get here alive," gasped the weather-beaten woman struggling to her feet. "Like a raven, too, do I come with bad news."

"Franz!" The name was only whispered by Rychie under her breath, but Dinorah caught it.

"No, no, tank de Lord! Dat pore chile I hope am safe somewhar. It is my master who is in trouble. He hab had a stroke an' is berry ill, ill unto death."

"What! strong, sturdy Dirck Van Boot?" chorussed old and young.

"Aye, it come like a thief in de night, an' he got his come-up dis time for sure. When de leech tole me dat, away at once I wanted to run to fetch de dominie. But, no! no! Ob dat Dirck would not hear. 'Nopody do I want,' cried he. 'Nopody but the Jufvrouw Martije, Schepen Van Couwenhoven's second daughter, Martije. Go, pring her to me.'"

"Me!" screamed Rychie. "Surely Mynheer could not want me!"

"Ja, he do. It is because you were a friend to Franz, and even now de thought of de boy seems to bodder him. I tried to put him off. 'To-morrow she shall come,' I said, but he began to toss and to groan. 'Oh, no, do not wait! fetch her now, to-night.' So, because he gabe me no peace and because one likes to please those who are nigh to de dead-chamber, I am here—here to ask if kind little missy will go to de sick man, dough de storm am terrible, and dat is de truf."

At this amazing request Rychie hesitated, flushing and paling by turns, while her mother remonstrated at her venturing out on such a night.

But the head of the house spoke up decidedly. "Dinorah

is right. Ever should a dying wish be respected. There is no choice in the matter, no choice whatever. Our child must go, and I with her. So run, sweetheart, and wrap up well, while for this poor creature I mix a mug of hot stuff. It may ward off a chill."

Reluctantly enough Rychie obeyed, for never had she faced an interview with such dread. She wondered, too, if the sick whim of an invalid could be worth such exposure, when she found herself ploughing through the heavy snow, the sleet stinging her face and the fierce wind forcing her to cling tightly to her father's arm, lest she be swept off her feet.

It was certainly a wild night, and as Dinorah ushered them into the musty old house on the canal, over which the shadow of death seemed already brooding, she was seized with a nervous trembling and never could have summoned sufficient courage to follow the venerable negress into the back room, had not Heer Van Couwenhoven whispered, "Cheer up, little one, and do not fear. Naught is there to harm thee, and I shall be waiting just without and within call."

Nevertheless, that gloomy chamber was calculated to daunt a far stouter heart than that of a girl of fourteen. The fire burnt low, and one bayberry candle only served to "make darkness visible" in the wainscotted apartment, while black shadows lurking in the corners seemed like weird forms slinking from view. Dirck, with white, drawn features, lay on the bed built into the wall, and glared with a feverish light in his haggard, deep-set eyes; startling her by exclaiming, "Heaven and hell! Is this another one come to torment me before the time?"

Rychie recoiled, but Dinorah drew her forward, saying, "Lor', baas! Don't be frightened. Dis is only Maritje Van Couwenhoven whom you wanted so to see."

"Oh, ja, ja, now I remember," and a relieved look overspread the distorted countenance. "Pardon, jufvrouw. I took you for another phantom. For ever and anon I see them, and, above all, that cursed French woman with her pallid lips questioning, ever questioning, and her black eyes that prick like needles."

"Heed you not his senseless chatter. De fever makes him flighty," said Dinorah, and, pity overcoming her fear, Rychie advanced and laid a cool, little hand on the man's burning brow.

"Is it of Franz's mother that you speak, mynheer?" she asked softly, for she had heard that the fancies of the sick should be humored.

"Yes. Constantly does she come and go. The *moeder* of that donder-headed splutterkin, who looked with her look and spoke with her voice. Ach! what an eyesore and trouble he was to me! But then I will make full amends. Ah—don't glance at me so! I will make glorious amends."

He was growing excited again, panting for breath, while great beads of moisture stood upon his forehead. Dinorah flew to administer a soothing draught left by the physician, and Rychie cried imploringly, "Oh, Mynheer, do not toss and twist so! You may do yourself an injury. Lie still, I pray, and tell me why you sent for me to-night."

For a moment Dirck remained quiet. Then looking up with a more sane expression than before, gasped, "It was to ask after Franz. Say, where is it he has gone?"

"I do not know, mynheer. I wish I did."

"He did not tell you?"

"No, never."

The man turned his head aside. His left arm and leg were powerless, but the right twitched convulsively. After a while he stammered slowly, "Do you think he can be dead?"

"Oh, I hope not. I believe not. Dinorah says he started for the South River, but if anything had befallen him, surely Owano—who, we believe, was his companion—would have returned to bring the sad tidings. In truth, I know nothing whatever. But, Heer Van Boot, I feel that some time, somehow, the dear Franz will come back to us and to his father over the sea."

"Then, listen!" And five yellow, snuff-stained fingers grasped the girl's wrist. "If the lad does return, he will be rich, very rich. For every blow I gave him a gold guilder shall cure the smart. For every jewel and coin I cut from his mother's neck fourfold shall be restored. Is it not fourfold the Good Book says? Well, he shall have that and more, much more! I swear it to you—to you who was his friend."

"Ah, ha, black eyes! Now your pricking must cease! I will not be dragged to perdition without a struggle! I have made the amends, royal amends! Now go, wench, go! At your prayers remember poor Dirck Van Boot, and at cock-crow send your father and the lawyer Van Schelluyne to my bedside."

But Rychie, frightened and aghast as she was, would not quit her post until the anodyne had taken effect and the sick man relapsed into an uneasy slumber. Then, tip-toeing from the room, she fell, sobbing as if her heart would break, into the Heer Schepen's loving arms.

"So Dirck the miser has been gathered to his forefathers and left all his precious wampum and guilders behind him," remarked a little burgher to a great burgher, as they met, three days later, on the Beaverway.

"Ja. And into whose breeches' pockets do they go now?" asked the other.



“ That nobody knows except the lawyer and Van Couwenhoven, who witnessed the will. It seems, too, they got his mark only just in the nick of time, for five minutes later he dropped back on the feather-pillow and was gone. I have heard it whispered, though, that not nearly so much money as the gossips thought can be found. That, so far, only three purses of gold under the bed and ten fathoms of *Suckanhock Sucki*,\* have been discovered.”

“ So? Well now, that is strange, for our lost brother had a fine trade in Virginia, and, I strongly suspect, very profitable, underhand dealings besides. Ach! But Dirck was a queer branch to spring from the good old Van Boot stock!”

“ It is true. The old vrouw was a saint on earth and his *vader* of the salt of the province. For their sakes rather than for his shall I go to the burying.”

Thus too, felt many others, and, because virtues as well as sins of parents are often visited upon their children, Dirck Van Boot, cross-grained, niggardly and unpopular though he was, had a funeral that tested the tumble-down old house to its full capacity. Burnt wine circulated freely, and a respectful, if dry-eyed, procession followed him to his last resting-place beneath the locusts.

Then, however, it proved a nine days' talk to find that relatives in Holland were cut off by the will, in favor of the boy Franz Morrow—known as Franz De Milt—should he still be in the flesh and return within five years.

But after all, this promised to be rather a slim inheritance, greatly to Rychie's disappointment, her busy little brain having been rife with wonderful castle-building dreams of which her boy-friend was the hero. She had to run into the garden to hide her tears, when Blandina asked of their

\* Purple Seawant.

father : "Is it that Franz will be a great burgher if he ever comes back? and she heard his reply : "Hardly, my silly-pate, nor a little burgher either. Fifty and twenty guilders respectively, must be given for those honors, and Dirck appears to have been poor rather than miserly. When the cost of the burying is paid, the tobacco shop and the slave Dinorah will be pretty much all Franz's fortune."

"Then how, I would like to know, is that to pay him for all those hard knocks and his poor mother's jewels as well!" grumbled Rychie to a leafless lilac bush. "It is all very strange, yet I can scarce believe that Heer Van Boot spoke an untruth with almost his last breath."

She came in from her angry trot around the lawn looking so worn and pale, that her mother noticed it, and that night remarked to her husband—

"I do not like the appearance of our Rychie. She is losing flesh and seems to pine for Hendrick and her friend—the young French boy. What say you? Shall we not keep our long-standing promise to Dorigeman Jansen of Esopus, and let her go to stop with his girls for a few weeks? The change might bring back her roses."

"Now, a wise thought is that, *gude vrouw*. Her white cheeks have troubled me likewise. Mayhap, too, Jannekin Bergen would bear her company."

"She might, and to-morrow I will cross the passage-place to Breucklyn and have a word on the subject with mine sister."

This she accordingly did, and the result was that two young things were speedily transported into the seventh heaven of blissful anticipation.

It seemed almost too good to be true, to think they were actually to sail up that mysterious river and see the glorious Kattskills, beneath whose shadow the pretty farming settle-

ment of Esopus (the forerunner of the town of Kingston) so cozily nestled.

One bright, fresh morning in early spring, then, saw the two little maidens setting forth, as merry as grigs, under the care of rough, hearty Schipper Hardenbroeck, in whom Heer Van Couwenhoven had the deepest confidence.

## CHAPTER XV

### IN THE PLEASANT VALLEY.

“Midst greens and shades the Cauterskill leaps,  
From cliffs where the wood-flower clings;  
All summer he moistens his verdant steps  
With the sweet light spray of the mountain spring.  
And he shakes the woods on the mountain side,  
When they drip with the rain of autumn-tide.”

W. C. BRYANT.

A JOLLY, rotund little gentleman was Dorigemen Jansen of Esopus. His neighbors laughingly declared that, like the former Governor, Wouter Van Twiller, he was “five feet six inches in height and six feet five inches in circumference.”

Nor was this description so very far out of the way, while if his barrel figure was not exactly a vision of grace, it was a most delightful picture of good nature. A very merry Mynheer it was, then, that waddled over one of the finest farms on the Hudson river, and that puffed cheery clouds of smoke in the “ingle-nook,” while, Santa-Claus-wise, he “shook when he laughed like a bowlful of jelly.” Indeed, in spite of the hardships always to be met with in a new country, there was no more contented colonist in all the New Netherlands, and the heart-sunshine beaming from his kindly countenance was reflected in the faces of his apple-cheeked daughters, Elspeth and Christina, sturdy young damsels in their early teens, who were overflowing with animal spirits

and as frolicsome and light of foot as their plumpness would allow.

It was this gay trio, then, who, one blustery March day—when the mountain-peaks still wore their caps of snow, though glints of green peeped out here and there—stood on the tiny wharf at Esopus, eagerly watching the *Blue Beaver* as it made its way up stream, with all sails spread—deftly avoiding the stray cakes of ice floating in the cold azure water. They were there to meet and greet Rychie Van Couwenhoven and her cousin, Jannekin Bergen, after their long, ten days' journey from New Amsterdam.

“Welcome, welcome to Sopus and to the Cat River Mountains!” shouted Dorigeman heartily, offering a fat pudgy hand to each as they lightly leaped ashore. “And come now let me take one good look at you poth. Pless mine soul! If I wouldn't pelieve it was the comely Vanderbeck sisters of Dordrecht stepped out of the past! You favor your *moeders*, *jufvrouws*, and how goes it with them, now?”

“Fine, fine, Mynheer” responded the girls, “And they sent a whole budget of greetings and messages to you and yours.”

“Thanks. Put see! Here are mine Elspeth and Tina waiting to pestow the hug and kiss of friendship! They will take you home to the gude vrouw, while I stop to crack a few words with Schipper Hardenbroeck, and to look after your poxes. For I warrant there would be weeping and gnashing of teeth were your petticoats and gew-gaws carried on to Fort Orange.”

“That there would, good host” laughed Jannekin, showing a set of strong white teeth, as the quartette started up the pleasant valley toward the cozy farm; Elspeth and Christina being eager to introduce their guests to the quaint, rambling house of many gables, stoopes and latticed windows, to their

feathered pets of the barnyard, to Penuckle the faithful, old yellow dog, and above all to their mother, the warm-hearted if grave-faced Geetje, who was always "on hospitable thoughts intent."

Somewhat to their surprise, Rychie and Jannekin found Esopus to be merely a small farming hamlet, clustered about a "rondout," or fort, and surrounded by palisades. But its situation was most picturesque, and at a stone's-throw distant another embryo village called Wildwyck had been started.

"In reality, they are both one," explained Elspeth. "The same fort guards both, and at the same church on the Sabbath the people of Esopus and the people of Wildwyck meet together. Dominie Blom is the pastor of both places. There is no difference, no difference whatever."

The welcome accorded the young visitors was most cordial, and at the evening meal awaiting them the Dutchest of Dutch dishes, such as *hoof kaas*, *kool slaa* and *hokkies en poetyes*, figured in lavish abundance, and was constantly pressed upon them by their hostess.

"Now, Jannekin," she would say, "take up the wing of that chicken and send it with the rest. Come, Maritje, eat till you burst. I must have no thin, peaked folk at my board. You must grow as plump and rosy as my girls while you are here, and there is nothing like good hearty victuals for that."

"Why is it that these mountains are named the Kaatskills?" asked Rychie, at last, laying down her knife and fork.

"It is because of the catamounts, which are plenty as plackperries in September," replied Heer Jansen; "and because, too, there are so many little kills. Waterfalls, also, are there, many of them. Oh, you will like to see the waterfalls, when the snow melts. They are grand, and that is the

truth. Were it not for the savages this would be the very pest land in all the world."

"A Mohegan brave was over at the Dubois's this morning," said Christina. "He asked for seed corn."

"And did he get it?"

"Ja, to be sure," put in the vrouw. "The saintly Catherine would never refuse a crust or a few grains of maize to any one, be he red, black or white. I think, too, she is right."

"Then I would not be such a saint!" cried Jannekin, "and mine father and I think alike. The only gift we have for a Redskin is a leaden pellet."

"Louis, the Walloon, sometimes talks that way, likewise," replied Mynheer. "But his wife and children never agree with him. The little Lois is fine friends with an old squaw, who stuffs her pate with foolish stories. She can reel off Indian yarns by the hour."

"That would suit me rarely. But who are these Dubois?" whispered Rychie to Elspeth."

"They are our Huguenot neighbors, who live on the next bouwerie, and we are dearly fond of Lois and Leon. There is a baby, too. The comeliest darling, as fat as a partridge, and with eyes like twin huckleberries. You will see plenty of them when we can take rambles up onto the *berg*."\*

But these hilly excursions were deferred far longer than the girls anticipated. First, by an earthquake, which put all their nerves, as well as all the New Netherlands, in a quiver, (an account of which can be read in any history of New York State); and then by a heavy freshet that submerged the lowlands and played sad havoc with the early crops.

The jolly Jansens, however, only turned this last into what they termed a "vrolique," contriving a rude raft on which

\*Mountain.

they set sail and had no end of sport ; while their neighbor, Leon, like a young Diogenes, paddled over in a tub half-a-dozen times a day. In fact, the whole settlement was afloat in hastily-fashioned crafts, and poor Penuckle's life was made miserable by frequent shipwrecks, when he felt it his bounden duty to plunge to the rescue and drag the wet and laughing youngsters to *terra firma*. This watery fellowship, however, served to make the new-comers almost intimate with all the small community, and when at length the freshet subsided, nothing would do but they must prolong their visit beyond the date first set for its close, in order to make up for lost time. So the end of May still found them beneath Farmer Jansen's hospitable roof.

And how supremely lovely was the Spring in that quiet, pleasant valley ! The earth shone as green and bright as an emerald after its unwonted bath ; never had the brooks been so full, nor the waterfalls so grand, as they gaily leaped from rock to rock, from ledge to ledge, sending up a shower of glittering spray. The bracing air was like new wine, and the woods were transformed into a roseate glory by the mountain laurel and the luxuriant pink racemes of the rhododendron. Deer were plentiful, and the men and boys, gun in hand, spent many hours in quest of game, while the girls ventured as far from home as they dared to seek the modest, bewitching wild flowers in their shady haunts.

Madame Dubois often accompanied the young people on their trips up the hill-side. Rychie quite lost her heart to the gentle woman with the angel face, who somehow reminded her of Franz. She felt strangely drawn, also, to pensive, dreamy little Lois, who had all the myths and legends of the mountains at her tongue's end.

" See yonder peak, the very highest of them all," Lois remarked one day as they were finishing their *al fresco* lunch



in a cool nook within the sound of a baby cataract foaming joyously near at hand. "Indian Natto told me that it is there the aged squaw dwells who makes all the weather."

"God makes the weather, my child," corrected the mother, patting the olive-hued cheek that rested on her shoulder.

"Yes, maman, I know. God is Natto's great Manitou; but he employs the old squaw to weave the clouds out of cobwebs, gossamers and morning dew. Then she sends them off, flake by flake, to float in the air and fall to earth in soft, summer showers. Sometimes, too, she is moved to brew black and terrible thunder-storms."

"That is a very pretty fancy," said Rychie.

"But too silly for anyone except Indian papooses," sneered Jannekin.

"So say we!" shouted Leon and his chum Guysbert Van Imbroeck, who were of the party. "Therefore, Jan and Tina, if you have swallowed your bread and sausage, let us leave these dreamers to their mooning and go to hunt for birds' nests."

"Yes, we will do so," and the active matter-of-facts were soon clambering the slippery rocks, leaving only Rychie and Elspeth to listen to Lois' tale, Madame Dubois having also withdrawn a short distance to croon baby Marie to sleep.

At first, the small narrator looked hurt and seemed disinclined to proceed, but as Elspeth took out her knitting and Rychie stretched herself comfortably on a bed of laurel, ready to drink in every word, she finally continued.

"There is not a great deal more to tell," she said, "only that in her wigwam the weather-squaw keeps both Night and Day closely shut up, and lets them out one at a time. Every month, too, she makes a brand-new moon and hangs it in the sky."

"What, then, becomes of the old ones?" asked Elspeth, who was no more of an astronomer than her imaginative friend.

"Oh, those she cuts up into stars. Little stars and big stars are all just bits of worn-out moons."

"Made over, as the mother makes over the *vader's tenbroecks* for little black Tobee," laughed Elspeth.

"Just so."

"Truly, a good and thrifty way! Well, I shall often think of that when I look up in the heavens at eventide," murmured Rychie, dreamily, for the air made her drowsy. Soon, too, she fell asleep and lay on her leafy couch until the noisy nest-hunters returned, and the setting sun warned them to turn their footsteps homeward.

On another excursion they had a remarkable experience, the blue Kaatskills treating them to the very rarest sight they have to offer—one which many inhabitants of that region live and die without beholding. It was that curious phenomenon of mountain heights called by the learned men the *Fata Morgana*.

Blithesome May had given place to jocund June, and Schipper Hardenbroeck, sailing his chunky little craft up the broad river, had brought word that Rychie and Jannekin must be ready to accompany him on his return trip. So they were making the most of the short halcyon time that remained. The morning of the sixth dawned damp and misty, but weather-wise Louis Dubois, or "Louis the Walloon," as he was dubbed, declared that the wind was in the right quarter to blow away the fog, and that the noon hour would see as fine a day as one could wish.

So, trusting to his wisdom, the picnic party started early for High Rock, merrily scrambling up the steep paths, and Leon and Guysbert carrying their firelocks, in case of en-

countering some of the wild beasts of the mountains, although there was slight danger of this in broad daylight.

Louis Dubois proved a true prophet, and when they at last reached the elevated plateau that was their objective point, a most glorious view met their eyes, and was seen gradually, piece by piece, as the dark curtain of cloud was lifted and rolled back by the strong breath of the North Wind.

"Why, it is like being above the sky," remarked Jannekin in wonder.

"Yes, and mark how lovely the valley appears, enshrouded in yonder soft mist," said Madame Dubois. "It is like looking through a veil," and she pointed toward various wreaths and strata of vapor rising and hovering like snowy phantoms in the air.

Rychie was in ecstasies, and was endeavoring to distinguish the Jansen homestead from the cluster of buildings at the foot of the hills when she was startled by a low cry from Leon, who clutched his mother's gown, gasping, "O, Maman! See! Whatever can it be?"

"What is it? Why, why! It—is—ourselves, or—or—our *geests!*"\* It was Christina who answered, turning white to the very lips.

And sure enough, passing before them, as in a panorama, appeared themselves and their surroundings, reflected upon the sheets of vapor, as in a mirror. They beheld the gay petticoats of the girls, Guysbert's saucy, handsome face, baby Marie cooing and laughing in a snug crevice of the rock, the slim, brunette Frenchwoman, and even old Penuckle, who had insisted on coming with them, wagging his tawny, feathery tail. All were there, faithfully portrayed, and they saw them as travelers crossing the desert sometimes see a

\* Ghosts.

mirage of far-away springs and stately palms, only it is much more weird to gaze upon a vision of oneself than of some distant scene. All were hushed to awe-struck silence.

"It is the *geest wolk waren*, the spirit of the mist," said Madame Dubois, at length. "Often have I heard the hunters speak of it, but never did I hope actually to behold it. We are greatly favored, my children."

But cloud-pictures are of short duration, and in less time than it takes to tell the *Fata Morgana* had faded and vanished, leaving the little group paler and somewhat more subdued than usual, not one being wise enough to explain the mystery.

"Much I hope that it bodes no evil," remarked Elspeth, with a slight shiver.

"Of course it does not."

"Foolish art thou to think of such a thing!"

"Old mountaineers think it a rare fine sight."

So shouted some of the young folks. Only Rychie was silent. She had stood at the extreme end of the ledge and caught the final glimpse of the curious phenomenon. Just then, as the vision disappeared, she thought she saw reflected above her head, and peering from a tree that grew high up on the hillside, a dark-hued, gaudily-painted face, the face, she was sure, of an Indian warrior, and she fancied that there was a scowl upon his brow and an angry flash in his eye. But when she turned to look for this intruder, naught was to be seen but a graceful maple "clapping its little leafy hands" as though stirred by a passing breeze. At length she persuaded herself that some fresh, fantastic trick of the clouds had deceived her, and yet, for an instant, how real, how very real, that grim, dusky countenance had seemed.

"But to the others I will not speak of it," she concluded.

"For at me Jan and Guysbert would be sure to laugh and poke fun, while, after all, it may have been just my own fancy."

So she kept her own counsel and soon forgot the fleeting picture as she joined in the frolics of her companions. For, after the momentary depression cast by the strange caprice of Nature had passed, this proved the jolliest, happiest picnic they had yet enjoyed. Jannekin was in the best of humors and the life of the company, as she could be when she pleased; Leon shot a hawk, which filled him with proud delight; they discovered a few early strawberries trying to blush a faint rosy red in a sheltered nook; while Catherine Dubois, who had a deliciously clear, sweet soprano voice, sang them all their favorite songs.

Just as a gay little French *chanson* died away, a rustling sounded in a pine grove behind them.

"What was that?" asked the singer with a start.

"A garter-snake or a chipmunk, most likely," replied Christina, while Penuckle pricked up his ears, uttering a low growl, and the boys dashed off to investigate. They returned, however, declaring they could find nothing whatever, and soon after Elspeth, pointing to a wee silver crescent glimmering in the azure sky, said: "See! Lois's squaw has hung out a brand-new moon, and will soon call in the Day and send forth the Night. It is time for us to be going down the mountain."

"In the highest spirits they descended, their arms filled with wild roses, and their tongues overflowing with light-hearted nonsense.

"Such a dear, delightful day as it has been!" sighed Lois, when the valley was reached. "I wish it was all to be done over again."

"And why not?" cried Tina. "It will be a full week, at

least, ere the *Blue Beaver* can be back ; so, on Saturday, let us go up onto the Berg once more. The strawberries will be riper then, and we can take with us sugar, and cream from the brindle cow, to make them sweeter and richer."

"O yes, yes ; that is a fine thought ! We will surely do it. On Saturday we will go again."

Alas, alas, poor children ! They never dreamed what a day was to bring forth ! But we must turn back for a short time to certain events taking place in New Amsterdam.

## CHAPTER XVI

### PIETER AND BLANDINA MAKE A DISCOVERY

“Come to me, O ye children,  
And whisper in my ear  
What the birds and the winds are singing,  
In your sunny atmosphere.

“For what are all our contrivings,  
And the wisdom of our books,  
When compared with your caresses,  
And the gladness of your looks.”

LONGFELLOW.

“WELL, I must say that I never remember such warm weather so early in the season !” exclaimed the blithe young matron, Grietje Bayard, as, knitting-pins in hand, she entered her mother’s kitchen one Spring afternoon, some weeks after Rychie’s departure for Esopus, and sank wearily into a seat. “It is so close and sultry that scarce can I draw my breath.”

“It may be that we are to have a thunder-shower,” responded Vrouw Van Couwenhoven. “Often does that make thee uneasy for hours before. If, too, it looks like one, I must at once despatch the children to Broad Street, for I want them to take black Dinorah a loaf of wheaten bread and a bowl of the good succotash made from my dried sweet corn and beans.”

“Is the old woman all alone in Dirck Van Boot’s house ?”

"Ja. There she is to stay and take care of it."

"But how does she live? For Nicholas tells me that scarce enough money was found to cover the cost of the funeral."

"That is true. But she washes clothes and knits hose for some of the neighbors, and they keep her pretty well supplied with food. You know that at the coffee house she cannot be sold for five years, or until positively it is known whether the boy Franz be on earth or in heaven."

"Yes, more's the pity. Well, truly that was a queer will, and not enough property behind it to be worth such a to-do; for I hear they have ransacked the house from garret to cellar, and found little beside the stock in the shop. But if you want the youngsters, here they come now, down the garden-path."

A moment later, then, Blandina and Pieter dashed in flushed and panting, and full of an important scrap of childish news. They were, therefore, none too well pleased with the commission awaiting them. "For moeder," they panted, "The very first blue violets and yellow dandelions are out in the Clover Waytie, and we want to pull them before Jacob and Mima Kip find them likewise."

"So, for your own pleasuring, you would let the poor old Dinorah go to bed without her supper. Fie, fie, *mijn kinderen*. I thought better things of you than that!"

Low drooped the flaxen heads and red grew the chubby cheeks at this gentle, motherly reproof. Without further objection the sturdy little pair were soon on their way, Pieter carefully bearing the covered pewter bowl, and Blandina trotting beside him with the crusty loaf. In the meantime, dusky clouds overspread the sky like a dense gray awning, and the atmosphere became more and more oppressive. Even the active children drooped listlessly and dragged



their feet wearily, ere the tobacco shop was reached, the door of which they were dismayed to find tightly closed and barred.

"Dinorah must have gone out," decided Pieter, after pounding for some time with the iron dog's head that served for a knocker.

"It may be, though, we can get in at the back," suggested his sister. So, round to the rear they scampered where they finally effected an entrance and placed their mother's bounty on the kitchen-table.

"Let us give up the Clover Waytie and the wild blumies for to-day, and sit here to rest and cool off," sighed Blandina, dropping on to a wooden cricket and fanning herself with her apron.

"But not here by the fire," said Pieter. "Much cooler will it be in the other part of the house." So saying he went to the door of the bedroom, pushed it open and peered cautiously in. "See, Blandy, yonder is the kermis bed on which Dirck Van Boot died, and under which they found a fine purse of gold." For, like other "little pitchers," this small Hollander of eleven had the proverbially long ears, and kept them well open to the chit-chat of his elders.

"Oh, don't go in there, Pieter! It is so black and gloomy, it makes me shake with the fear," whispered Blandina.

"Nonsense, you scare-rabbit! But, ach! always are girls silly cats. Now, I think it would be grand sport to hunt and see if we could not find another purse of gold. Why, who knows, there may be one in the fireplace, or behind the wardrobe, or anywhere. Wouldn't it be better fun to pick up yellow guilders than yellow posies?"

"Ja, ja, it would," cried the tiny maid, forgetting all her tremors in the excitement of such a delightful suggestion.

It was she, too, who opened a shutter to admit some light, and led the way, as this fanciful little Paul and Paulina Pry went tip-toeing about the dark, wainscotted apartment, prying into every corner and crevice, as though a dozen people had not done the same before them, and the ancient building had not been turned nearly inside out, in the vain search for the miser's supposed wealth. So thorough, too, were they, that they even examined the andirons and peeped into the cups and jugs in the corner cupboard.

It was like a novel game of hide-and-seek. A brightly polished pipkin had just passed under their laughing inspection when, glancing upward, Blandina exclaimed: "Oh, brother, look! What a queer brown thing stands on the topmost shelf. It is for all the world like an ugly grinning dwarf."

Sure enough, a grotesque, distorted countenance leered down upon them. In reality, it was only a queer heathen idol, brought by Dinorah from her native land and kept until now, although she had long since been converted to the faith of her captors and masters. Never, however, had these young folks beheld such an object, and nothing would do but Pieter must drag in a high three-legged stool from the shop and mount upon it, in order to satisfy his curiosity by a nearer view.

"It has a big, wide mouth; goggle eyes and ears like a chipmunk's. It is part like a man, part like a beast, and part like a fish," he reported to Blandina from his lofty perch, while she pleaded that he would lift it down for her to see also.

"Ach, but you do not know how heavy it is."

Nevertheless, the good-natured lad attempted to move the quaint little "josh," and had it tightly clasped in his arms when a strange, terrifying rumble and roar suddenly sounded



"WHAT DO YOU CALL THAT?"—Page 145.



beneath their feet, making both children gaze at each other with blanched cheeks and startled eyes.

"What made that?"

But, before either could reply, the very foundations of the house seemed to shake; the floor heaved like the deck of a tempest-tossed ship, mugs and platters came clattering down from their places, and over toppled the high stool, Pieter, idol and all, falling with considerable force against the wainscotted wall. Against the wall I say, but in reality, and greatly to the alarm of the badly-scared urchin, he went crashing through it, for, as though by magic, at his touch a portion of the paneling gave way and he was precipitated into a narrow aperture or closet, where he lay for a few moments half stunned, while the diabolical clay god was shattered into a score of pieces, the hideous head rolling off into a corner and reposing there with the sardonic grin still uppermost.

"O wee! O wee! O wee!" shrieked Blandina, who first recovered her voice and strength, and laying hold of her brother's wooden shoes (all of him that was visible), she went to tugging and pulling, in the hope of extricating him from his contracted quarters. "Get up, Pieter! Speak to me! Look at me!" she sobbed, "for I am that frightened, my heart seems jumping out of my throat."

She was overjoyed, then, when the dazed lad at length sat up and gazed around. At first he appeared to hardly comprehend where he was. Then, as his senses returned, he uttered a shout of glee, made a dive into the dusky depths beyond, and, seizing something, cried, "By St. Anthony and the pigs, here's a jolly go! Verily I believe I have tumbled, head-over-heels, into just such a secret place as St. Nicholas hid John Calvin in! See! What do you call that?"

"It is a bag of canvas," stammered Blandina in open-mouthed wonder.

"*Ja*, it is, and something that jingles inside. Look! what do you call those?" shaking out the contents.

"Wampum and stivers and golden guineas!"

"Ay, lots of golden guineas, and which I warrant is the good Franz's fortune."

"Oh, do you think so? Then it will fill our Sister Rychie brimful of gladness."

The wee lassie was herself in ecstasies and danced a gay little *pas seul*, although the rocking of the mansion was still a mystery, and her brown orbs were still big and round with alarm as well as wonder.

"But the funny brown dwarf is broken all to bits!" she suddenly paused to exclaim, somewhat ruefully.

"And so is my cocoanut cracked, but that is no matter. Nothing is any matter, since the coins and beads are discovered. But hark! I hear a door shut. Is someone coming?"

It proved to be Dinorah, who, having just learned that the young Van Couwenhovens were there, came rushing in, her kinky wool fairly standing upon end, the terror at her heart revealed in the ashy gray pallor of her face. She dreaded to find them injured by some of the falling objects, but at the unwonted sight of the gap in the wall and the merry Pieter waving the money-sacks, all that it meant came over her like a flash, and, dropping on her knees, she went off into a fit of hysterics, laughing and crying wildly, while between long-drawn breaths she hugged Blandina to her breast, gasping,—  
"Tank de Lord! Tank de Lord! dat out ob all dis drefful scare and rumpus He done fotch some good after all! Dat was an earfquake, my sweetmeats, an earfquake, what so made de house to shake, and I see hab toted Dirck's miserly

scrapin's up to de light ob day! An' am de smirky ole Josh gone too? Well I'se mighty glad he's broke, dough I neber dared gib him his death crack. But tell me, my pretty ones, how came it all?"

Eagerly, though half-shamefacedly, the small folk told how they had called with their mother's gift of food, of their search for a purse of gold, and of their curiosity regarding the idol.

A close examination, too, showed that, as the tall stool tipped over, the image, in striking against the wall, must have touched a cleverly-concealed spring in one of the panels, thus causing it to swing back and land the boy, with his burden, directly within the tiny secret chamber known only to Dirck, by whom it was probably built. When, then, the miser's treasure was counted, it proved to be between four and five thousand dollars—an amount that seems small to-day, but which was considered a large fortune in that plain, unostentatious age. As though shod with wings, the excited children hurried home to relate their curious adventure, while great, indeed, was the sensation in the little town, when its good citizens, having recovered from the shock of the earthquake, learned of the marvel it had wrought and of the strange manner in which the miser's savings had been brought to light.

The following morning, Pieter and Blandina awoke to find themselves the most talked of youngsters in New Amsterdam, and were quite abashed thereby. Even the Herr Director came to shake their dimpled hands and pat their curly pates, and the dominie alluded to them in his sermon on the next Sabbath day.

Meanwhile, Schepen Van Couwenhoven and Lawyer Van Schelluyne took quiet possession of the tobacconist's gold and stored it safely away for the poor lad who had been such

a shuttlecock of destiny, and whom some mysterious fate had whisked away, just at the dawn of happier days, to seek his sustenance in woodland wilds among the Red People of the North Country.



## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE CAPTURE.

“ There through the grove their flaming fires arise,  
And loud resound the tortured pris'ner's cries ;  
Still as their pangs are more or less extreme,  
The bitter groan is heard, or sudden scream.”

“ ELSPETH, step thou into the milk-house and skim a jug of cream from yesternight's milking,” directed Mistress Jansen, the day after the gay picnic to High Rock. “ Always does thy father like it with his boiled pudding, and soon now will he be coming in from the fields to his dinner.”

“ Ay, mother, he will ; for the hand of the garden dial points close to the noon-mark, so I'll go at once.”

“ I will bear you company,” said Rychie, springing up from her seat on the doorstep, where she had been resting, and throwing spoonful of oatmeal mush to a brood of downy, yellow chicks proudly paraded forth that morning by a matronly speckled hen, who continually clucked about her offspring, an anxious, excitable bunch of fuss and feathers. “ Pray, too, let me blow the big dinner-horn. for I think that is fine fun.”

“ Ha, ha, ha ! Ach, then, you are more than welcome to all such sport,” laughed Tina, who, with Jannekin, was lazily lounging on the settle, knitting-pins in hand, but chatting and yawning far more than she worked, both being somewhat weary after their mountain climb.

A cool, delightful place on a warm summer day was Dame Jansen's snug little dairy, built of rough stone, with a bubbling spring in the center and clean whitewashed shelves. One could see his face in the shining pewter pans, and the pails and churns were as spotless as soap and sand could make them.

It was a positive pleasure, too, to watch Elspeth deftly remove the creamy surface from the rich milk, for she was a neat-handed little maiden, and promised to develop into as famous a housewife as her mother.

"It is almost as thick as butter, isn't it?" she exclaimed, as she lifted the dripping skimmer. "I warrant it was the brindle cow gave this; for her cream is always better than that of any of the others. But there, the pitcher is full; so hasten, Rychie, and blow the great horn for the men."

"Toot—te—te—toot! toot! toot!" Merrily the summoning blast rang out over the sunny, fertile meadows, while the graceful, girlish trumpeter lingered at the portal, shading her eyes with one hand, as she watched to see if it was promptly responded to.

"Do you see the *vader* on his way, or any of the slaves?" called Elspeth from within.

"No;—yes—I don't know. There is some one coming in this direction;—but—but,—Oh Elspeth, it is a Redskin!"

"Well, what of that! They often come round to sell things or to beg," and, joining her friend, both girls stood in the dairy-house door, when the Indian approached, and, humbly holding out a basket of birch-bark, stammered:

"Will white squaws buy corn? Buy beans? Big, good! Make fine succotash."

"No, not to-day. We raise all that we can use," replied Elspeth gently.

But scarce had the words left her lips, when a confused

hubbub in the distance fell upon their ears, and before they could comprehend its meaning, two horsemen dashed madly through the mill-gate and down the road, shouting, "Flee! Flee for your lives! The savages are upon us, and Wildwyck is destroyed!"

In a twinkling, the mild vender of cereals was transformed into a fierce, relentless enemy, with hatred beaming from every feature and murder in his heart.

Tossing away his basket, he suddenly caught Rychie and Elspeth around their waists. With a grip of iron he held them and bore them, screaming and struggling, toward the village, which was already a scene of massacre and wildest confusion.

"Ugh! The great sachem at Manhattan turn our brothers into slaves," he hissed. "He send them to the Isle of Death. Red men lie quiet, they wait, but they no forget. Now the time is ripe. The word has gone forth. This moon, they make the lodges of the Swannekins dark, dark! They show the pale chief that the wrongs of their brothers they will revenge."

The poor lassies, who knew no more of the Governor's imprudent action than the blithe, little robins liting and tilting in the tree-tops overhead, only half understood, and could only plead and shriek and pray; until, for Rychie, at least, a merciful swoon brought temporary oblivion.

On that dreadful Seventh of June, which transformed the pleasant, peaceful valley into a field of horror and desolation, we need not linger. He who wishes may read its harrowing details in the History of Ulster County. Suffice it to say, that when next the silver crescent hung over High Rock, those fortunate enough to escape the hands of the savages counted up their loss, to find twenty-one killed, nine wounded, and forty-five, mostly women and children, carried

off into captivity, possibly to meet greater horrors than those who encountered death at their own hearthstones.

Among the last, were several of our friends, as Rychie discovered when, after some hours, her senses returned sufficiently for her to realize her situation and to glance about the narrow, stony notch between towering rocks, where they were encamped and most carefully guarded. Her head lay upon Elspeth's lap and warm salt tears from Elspeth's eyes dropped upon her brow. Jannekin sat beside her, while not far off was Catherine Dubois, apparently more composed than any of them, as she rocked baby Marie in her arms and tried to comfort and cheer poor, frightened Lois and Leon. Guysbert Van Imbroeck, too, was there, standing near his mother, a tall, high-spirited woman, whose black orbs seemed to snap fire upon her captors.

"Where is Tina? Can it be that she was not taken?" asked Rychie.

At this question, Jannekin covered her face, with a shudder, and Elspeth's tears rained down harder than ever, though she whispered: "It may be that mine sister is far better off than any of us."

"But where is she?"

"In heaven, I do trust," sobbed Jannekin. Then in broken accents she related how, just as she herself was being dragged from the house, she had seen a plumed warrior strike with his tomahawk at Vrouw Jansen. Christina, mad with anger and terror, rushed forward and made a futile attempt to protect her parent, but both fell, clasped in each other's arms. "Oh, these bloodthirsty savages! Like bad, wicked devils are they, every one of them, and so have I always said."

And this time, no one contradicted her.

Who can ever know the fluctuating hopes and fears of the

days and weeks which followed, as the unhappy prisoners, ever surrounded by Argus eyes, were led a long, wearisome march over rugged paths and mountain heights, until they came to a rude fort of palisades enclosing several block houses, which showed that the natives had not been backward in learning a few lessons in building from the Dutch and English? Round about, too, many fertile acres were sown with Indian corn, that waved its nodding green heads in the June sunshine and promised a bountiful harvest for the fierce old Chieftain Papequanchen and his Mohawk and Mohegan braves.

Wrinkled old squaws brought the captives food and drink, and graceful lithe-footed maidens often crept up to gaze at them with wondering, half-pitying eyes. Every night they lay down upon the pile of skins that formed their beds, expecting it to be their last, and every morning they looked into each other's faces, surprised that they were still alive.

On the third day of the march, baby Marie began to droop. Like a fragile little flower she faded from sight, and one sultry evening Catherine Dubois laid down the light burden she had borne so willingly, beneath a protecting willow, and left it there on the loving bosom of our great Mother Earth.

"Better so, far better so," she said, with a resigned smile that was sadder than tears, as Lois and Leon sobbed beside the tiny green mound. From that moment, too, she was the consoling angel of all the rest.

"Never, never, could we have lived through that awful summer, had it not been for the good Huguenot," was reported by many in after years. The Indians called her the "Swan," from her long neck and gliding walk, and paid her more deference than they accorded any of the others.

More than any one, unless it was Jannekin, Mistress Van Imbroeck chafed at the wearing confinement.

"What do these copper skitimylinks mean to do with us? Will they, at last, let us go, or will they put us to the torture? Can it be that our husbands and fathers and brothers dare not come to our rescue?" she asked twenty times a day; and when nobody could answer she paced restlessly up and down, like a panther in a cage.

"I think, dear *moeder*, that mine *vader* does not know where the Redskins have carried us, or he would have been here with his musket, long ere this," suggested Guysbert, one morning.

"I think so, likewise *mijn zoon*, and word ought to be sent him. There must be some way it could be done and that way shall I find out. For you, my darling boy, and for our good friends here I mean to try and get news back to the village. Yes, though I have to brave untold dangers myself, and though an Indian arrow it puts through my heart." Verily, too, the intrepid woman was as good as her word.

Feigning illness and extreme weakness she was often left guarded only by an ancient crone who, happily, was blessed with the gift of sleep. Watching her chance, then, she crawled, on hands and knees, without the palisades and made off into the trackless forest, while one early dawn, the word was passed from mouth to mouth,—“Rachel Van Imbroeck is gone. She escaped under the shadow of night.”

“May the Lord protect and speed her on her way,” said Catherine devoutly, while a wee ray of hope sprung up in the breasts of our three girls. Alas, though, this hope was quickly crushed by an order from Papequanchen to move further on. The Indians hastily pulled up stakes, and



"SHE PACED RESTLESSLY UP AND DOWN"—Page 154.

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes that this is crucial for ensuring transparency and accountability in the organization's operations.

2. The second part of the document outlines the various methods and tools used to collect and analyze data. It highlights the need for consistent and reliable data collection processes to support effective decision-making.

3. The final part of the document provides a summary of the key findings and recommendations. It stresses the importance of ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure that the organization remains on track with its goals and objectives.

4.



away the captives were borne, into deeper and denser wilds.

"Alack, alack! no chance is there of the men finding us now! No chance whatever! As sly and cruel as wolves are our enemies, and we shall all be buried in the lonely wilderness," moaned Jannekin.

"At New Amsterdam, they will wait and watch in vain for the girls never to return and our kindred will be broken-hearted," added Rychie.

"And my poor *vader!*" sobbed Elspeth. "No *vrouw*, no *kinderen* left! Oh, surely he will die of the black grief!"

It was the middle of the forenoon in New Amsterdam, and Governor Stuyvesant, seated in a snug little office within the Fort, his wooden leg stretched out on a chair before him, was examining a pile of documents sent in from the City Hall, when two fleet couriers, travel-stained and spent, dashed up, demanding an immediate audience with his Excellency.

Scowling angrily at being disturbed, the Director turned reluctantly to receive them; but he soon pricked up his ears at the dire tidings they brought. After, too, being closeted with them for some ten minutes, he flung wide the door and shouted excitedly, "Crygier! Crygier! Where de duyvel is Crygier?"

As it chanced, the day being sultry, the gallant Captain was at that moment about to refresh the "inner man" with a cool tankard of foaming beer at Metje Wessel's Inn, but an orderly flying to summon him, he waited for naught, but scuttled off post-haste and soon appeared before his superior, steaming and panting like a race-horse.

"So, leaden heels, you have seen fit to come hither at last!" growled the testy Governor, the veins on his temples

standing out like purple whip-cords, and his arched eyebrows peaking more than ever.

"In truth, my Lord Director, not one instant did I linger, after your message reached me," stammered the officer, sighing as he remembered the creamy bead wasting its sparkle and life on that interrupted nut-brown glass.

"Well, no matter. Tie up thine tongue now, for we have rare bad news from Esopus. The red devils have broken out again and made a fine bloodthirsty coil up yonder."

"The Indians!" and Captain Crygier paled as much as his bronzed skin would permit, though not from fear.

"*Ja*, the rascally, untrustworthy, old Papequanchen and his braves. They have burned houses, tomahawked and scalped men and women, and carried off more than two score prisoners, which they are holding for a ransom. They declare that only for a ruinous amount of rum and tobacco, and a treaty of peace without compensation, will they return them. *Donder* and *blitzen*! Who would have thought that for the miserable dozen sent to the Caribbean, they would have kicked up such a rumpus."

"And what, your Highness, am I to do?"

"Do, do!" roared the Governor. "Why, get together a company, you splutterkin. Get together a company, and put off for the Cat mountains, as fast as you can say '*Hans Van Dondespiegel*.'" Those copper fiends must be treated to a fine blast of leaden pellets and the *vrouws* and *kinderen* fetched back to their homes."

"Ay, that is best, and not one single hour will I lose," saying which the captain withdrew to carry out his orders.

Meanwhile, throughout the town the news spread like wildfire, creating a positive panic. The narrow streets were quickly filled with an excited throng. Heer Van Couwen-

hoven, however, with a white set face, sought the director at White Hall.

"Well, Schepen, what can I do for you?" inquired that worthy, who had just sat down to a belated dinner. "For I warrant you don't want to go to Esopus."

"Ay, but honored Mynheer, you have struck the nail on the head at the first crack. I wish, indeed, to be one of Crygier's company, for my heart is torn into rags with anxiety. Last March there went to Esopus the niece of mine vrouw, and—and—my own little Maritje." He could say no more, but the suppressed emotion in the strong man's voice and the tear in his honest eye touched the Governor strangely.

"By my soul, Van Couwenhoven," he cried, jumping up and slapping his friend on the shoulder. "Sorry enough am I to hear this. Go, of course you shall go, and bid Crygier not to let the clover grow under his feet. But cheer up, man, cheer up! Mayhap it will prove that things are not so black as we fear."

So, leaving a mourning household in Pearl Street, the Schepen was one of the small force which journeyed up the *Goot Rivier*, to lend a helping hand to their unfortunate compatriots. Followed by many tear-dimmed eyes and fervent prayers they set forth, forty-three able-bodied Hollanders, armed to the teeth; while they were accompanied by forty-six friendly Indians, from the Long Island tribe of Marespincks, seven negroes, and a motley collection of raw recruits hastily gathered together.

That they were enthusiastically welcomed in the valley of desolation, may well be believed. Heer Van Couwenhoven lost no time in seeking out Mynneer Jansen." He found that once jovial worthy suffering from a severe wound in the leg, inflicted by an Indian battle-axe, and looking the pic-

ture of misery. His usual genial countenance seemed but a caricature of its former self, and his flesh hung in loose, flabby folds upon his inert limbs.

"O Wolfert," he groaned, at sight of his friend, "Thou hast come hither to ask for thine poor little one; put she is gone—gone like all the rest."

"Not—not—dead?" The Schepen could hardly gasp out the dreaded word which kills all hope.

"No, no, I do trust not. Put my gude vrouw has joined her forefathers and mine. Tinalikewise. O wee! O wee! The hand of the Lord has been very heavy upon us all."

"It has, old comrade; it has, in truth. But, tell me, what it is you know of Rychie."

"Only that, together with my Elspeth and Jannekin Bergen, she was taken captive and carried off into the mountains, while here, helpless as a trapped rabbit, was I left, and even now cannot stir one finger to aid in the search for them. Was there ever such cursed luck?"

"There, there, Dorigeman, fret not thyself on that score. Whatever can be done Crygier will do," cried the newcomer, recovering his spirits on learning that his daughter had, at least, not been slain in the first massacre. "We would soon have them back if only there was a guide to give us some inkling as to the sly rascals, hidden lair."

"Maype the merciful God will send us one."

And, verily, it appeared like a miracle when, a few hours later, a ragged and haggard-eyed woman staggered into the wrecked village,\* and fell exhausted into the arms of Surgeon Van Imbroeck, who, with Dominie Blom, had for weeks put his private woes aside and performed a hero's work among the wounded, the dying and the sorrow-stricken.

\* A fact.

"Guysbert, dost thou not know me?" she wailed.

"Ja, sweetheart, always and forever." For this bedraggled creature was no other than his deeply-mourned wife who, through a thousand perils, had at length succeeded in reaching her home. The handful of neighbors that remained gave her almost an ovation, and the good doctor's face fairly scintillated with joyful pride as he declared: "Well, I might have known that out of any scrape my Rachel could find a way. Plucky, indeed, is she, and, verily, I do believe there never was such a woman since Heer Adam and Vrouw Eve did the apple share in the Garden of Eden."

He then hastened to compound a reviving potion, after partaking of which Mevrouw Van Imbroeck was soon able to stand upon her feet, and was feverishly eager to lead the rescuing party to the retreat of the savages.

"For our boy is there, Guysbert," she urged, when her husband would have restrained her. "Many, too, of our good friends, and time is precious."

Preparations then were hurried forward, and on an afternoon in late July the little band started out; the most impatient one among them being Louis the Walloon, who was half crazed by the loss of his family. Never for an instant did he flag. He hastened the others on with so much persistence and vigor, over the rugged mountain paths, high hills and turbulent streams, that the second sunset saw them nearing the rude fortress in the wilderness. Sore and bitter, then, was the disappointment to find it deserted.

Poor Mistress Van Imbroeck broke down and sobbed outright, and, but for their manhood, Louis Dubois and Heer Van Couwenhoven would fain have mingled their tears with hers. Hope slightly revived when, next morning, a Mohegan squaw, who had ventured back for some cherished trifle

left behind in the hurried departure, was captured and forced to point out the road by which her people had fled.

Following her directions, they pursued the new trail for a few days, but all in vain, and, at length, disheartened and furious at being baffled, they took a somewhat unworthy but natural revenge. Returning to the Indian fort and block-houses they took possession of a goodly supply of provisions there stored away, and wantonly trampled down the flourishing fields of ripening grain.

"If nothing more, we can, at least, destroy their harvest. Starvation, then, may rid the earth of a few of the murderous fiends," quoth Captain Crygier.

In truth, it was a loss which would be severely felt by the Indians at the approach of winter, and, as the white men were reveling in their labor of destruction, four dark-hued figures suddenly appeared upon a neighboring hill. Threateningly, too, they raised their stone hatchets and shouted: "To-morrow we will come and fight you, for now must we all die of hunger."

The first of August found all the colonists back at Esopus, sad and despairing, and feeling that the unhappy captives must be resigned to their cruel fate. Bereft parents, like Rachel, bowed themselves and would not be comforted: "mourning for their children because they were not."

## CHAPTER XVIII

### DEERFOOT

“Too gentle of mien he seemed, and fair,  
For a child of those rugged steeps.  
His home lay down in the valley, where  
The kingly Hudson rolls to the deeps ;  
But he wore the hunter's frock that day,  
And a slender gun on his shoulder lay.”

W. C. BRYANT.

“RYCHIE, have you marked how one of the Mohawk lads stares at you ?” asked one white, wan maiden of another white wan maiden, as they sat in the shade of a green-wood tree. “I think he is a stranger lately come hither ; and for two days has he watched us, seemingly as fascinated by your aspect, as a bird is fascinated by a snake.”

“No, Lois, I have not observed it, and believe it is but a fancy of your imaginative little brain,” replied Rychie languidly. “Why, pray, should he gaze at me ? Unless, indeed, he can feel a spark of compassion for our sorry fates. Verily, though, I begin to agree with Jannekin that in the savage breast there is no soft spot whatever.”

More than two months had now elapsed since the outbreak at Esopus, and the helpless prisoners, hurried from place to place, harassed by home-sickness and the dread of what the near future might have in store for them, appeared but shadows of their former selves. Over thirty-six miles of the roughest, wildest country had they traversed on

foot. Then they reached another half-finished fortress of palisades on the Shawangunk Kill, where a final halt was called, and where, being so far from civilization of any sort, they were permitted rather more liberty than before, for even should any one succeed in effecting an escape, without guide, compass or firearms, he would certainly fall a prey to the beasts of the trackless forest. They, therefore, frequently wandered through the wood or by the sparkling stream, within sight of the camp.

A favorite haunt of our girls was a frolicsome little cascade called the Fawn's Leap. It was, indeed, a picturesque spot, and there they loved to lie on the grass, dabbling their hands in the bubbling water and talking in hushed tones of bygone childish joys and the chance of their ever seeing home and friends again,—a chance, alas ! that grew less and less probable every day. Meanwhile, some of the older women succumbed completely to the "hope deferred" and the hardships they were forced to endure ; and there were whisperings abroad that the native warriors were waxing weary of their white charge, and were impatient to come to some treaty with the Dutch Governor, which would give them a rich ransom, beside ridding them of this burden of war.

It was of this that Rychie and Lois were chiefly thinking, as they sat beneath the wide-spreading tree, on an emerald bank below the baby waterfall.

Suddenly, the former turned ashy pale and crying out : "O Lois ! so very, very ill do I feel !" sank back upon the moss.

Much alarmed, her companion flew to fetch her mother, but when the two hastened back to the brookside, they were astonished to see a slim, dark figure, in the dress of an Indian hunter, bending over the swooning girl with tender



solicitude, gently sprinkling her face with water from his "*hock hack*," or drinking bottle, formed of a yellow gourd. When, however, she began to revive, he abruptly disappeared.

"Oh, how I wish you had stolen a peep at him from under your lashes," said Lois, when her friend was able to sit up and talk. "Just brimming over with curiosity am I to know why he shows such un-Indian like interest; for it is the same Redskin who gazes at you from behind the palings."

"The Mohawk women call him Deerfoot," spoke up Mistress Dubois. "Very handy and kindly, too, does he seem. Not at all like a child of the forest. Surely he must have a white nature, if a dusky skin."

"A half-breed most likely," answered Rychie, but the subject scarcely interested her, so weak and indifferent had she grown, as well as given to the long fainting-fits—which annoyed her excessively. "For never had I such foolish, fine lady airs, at home," she often declared apologetically.

"It is because of the shock, that you received at the capture," the good Catherine assured her, while she helped the pale, drooping lassie back to the camp and to the low wigwam, fashioned of small trees and boughs tied together, which she shared with Jannekin and a sharp-eyed, cross-grained, old squaw, and where she was glad to lie down on a shaggy bearskin and drop into a doze, a doze that lasted until Twilight was wrapping the hill country in his soft gray mantle. Then, all at once, she awoke with the vague impression that she was not alone.

Yes, truly, a figure which was neither that of her cousin nor of the ancient Powanee, stood in the opening of the hut, between her and the fading light. The form, apparently, of a young Mohawk "buck," in skirt, shirt, and moccasins of

decorated doe-skin. "*Itah!*" he grunted, giving the Indian salutation, "Good be with you," to show that he came in peace.

But the nervous girl started up with a frightened shriek, exclaiming, "Oh, who are you and what is it you want?"

"Hist! Red men have long ears!" Then, darting forward and falling on his knees, the youth clasped her hands, and whispered in a suppressed vibrating tone, "Rychie, Rychie Van Couwenhoven! Can it be that thou hast forgotten Franz!"

"Franz! Franz De Milt!" The trembling maid thought she must still be dreaming, but no! now she looked more closely, those features, swarthy and sun-burned though they were, were not those of any of the Iroquois tribes, and certainly, there was something familiar in the mild, dark eyes, and gravely smiling lips.

"Can it be? Can it really be so?" Then drawing back, "But what brings Franz De Milt hither? Clad, too, in the garb of our bitter foes?"

"Why? Because the Red people are now my people. A Frenchman was I born, but an Indian the Great Spirit has decreed I am to die."

"Never, mine friend! And oh, how glad I am to behold you again, in any dress! It is a gleam of sunshine in the Egyptian darkness. But, tell me, are you not grieved to find us in so sore a plight?"

"Ay, that I am, and mourn it as the mother bird mourns over her slain fledgling."

Franz had entirely lost his slight, foreign accent, but had acquired somewhat of the lofty metaphorical language of those among whom he had dwelt for nearly two years. "Still, Rychie, the same question you ask, must I put to you. How comes it you are here so far from Manhattan? Scarce



"CAN IT BE THAT THOU HAST FORGOTTEN FRANZ!"—Page 164.



could I believe my eyes when, three sunrises back, they fell upon you among the white captives. How, pray, came the Heer Schepen's ewe lamb in the clutches of the red wolf?"

As briefly as possible the girl told, in the ever darkling gloaming, of her bright, happy sojourn in the pleasant valley, and of its terrible ending, while, during the recital, the lad sat with bowed head, and downcast, thoughtful mien.

"A bad, sad business," he said, when she paused. "All, too, because the white man will never understand the nature of the forest savage. 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth' is as much the Indian's creed as it was of the ancient Jews. His revenge will follow a wrong as surely as the night follows the day. But you, at least, must not remain here. Every hour, Papequanchen waxeth more and more wroth with the Dutch Director, and, in a moment of anger, may snuff you all out as Dinorah used to snuff the candles. I will consult with Owano, and try to plan some way for you to escape."

"Oh, you blessed Franz! But is Owano here too?"

"Yes, and would brave even the Sachem's displeasure, for the 'sunny-haired Swanekin squaw,' we both loved at Manhattan. But hark! I hear footsteps without, and must away. It would not do for us to be seen talking together."

"But, dear Franz, I have so much to say to you."

"And I to you. Wait! Can you not slip away to-morrow, to the rocks above the Fawn's Leap?"

"I will try."

"Then, I will meet you there. Mind, though, come alone!

"And with these parting words, the boy vanished, almost brushing past old half-blind Powanee, who came hobbling in with a calabash of *yoekey*—a mixture of pounded corn, and cider, and grumbling in her own tongue at the "bothersome pale-faces."

"If I were the Great Chief, you would all be tossed into the fire, like dry brushwood," she snarled as she pushed the food toward Rychie, — a remark not calculated to increase the girl's appetite. But nothing could quite crush the feeling of renewed hope and protection which the knowledge of her quondam friend's presence had inspired. She slept better than usual that night, and awoke stronger, and more refreshed.

Youth is ever impatient, and scarcely had the morning sun kissed the dewdrops from the grass, when Franz came springing up the rocks from which the "Fawn" took its wild leap into a rough, stony bed below. He came with an agile lightness that plainly showed why his adopted people bestowed upon him the name of Deerfoot, while, with an ejaculation of satisfaction, he flung himself upon the ground above the water-fall. For, afar off, in the direction of the rude rondout, his keen sight caught glimpses of a golden head and blue petticoat threading the bushes, and he felt sure they belonged to his little friend of other days.

In fact Rychie was as eager for the meeting as he, and, eluding her companions, she stole away at the earliest possible opportunity.

The boy appeared older than his sixteen summers, and was possessed of a gravity beyond his years. He was far sturdier, however, than formerly, the free, natural life of the woods and hills having not only dyed his cheek to almost the same hue as Owano's, but had overcome a delicacy of constitution, inherited from his unfortunate mother. He, therefore, gave promise of developing into a stronger and more perfect manhood than would, otherwise, have probably been his.

"So, here you are before me!" gasped Rychie when,

having slowly clambered up the cliff, she stopped breathless on the high rocks. "Ach, what a tiresome tug that is! But can we not be seen from the camp, in this exposed place?"

"Not if you sit down behind this projecting ledge. Besides, of matters of deep import are the Mohawks and Mohegans thinking to-day, and will hardly pay much heed to the movements of a little white squaw."

The youth spoke significantly, and, taking off a mantle he wore, he folded it into a cushion for his companion's back.

"There, is not that easy?"

"Ja, it is fine! And oh, dear Franz, how good it is to see you once more! though not at all do you seem like yourself, in that barbarous attire."

"Nor you, with that face like unto a snow-drift. If the poor, captive bird be not soon restored to the home-nest, I fear she will spread her white wings, and fly off to the Summer Land of the Great King! That, too, without the aid of Papequanchen and his braves."

"You mean I shall die? Well, sometimes I think so myself, and am not so very sorry. Only, I do so long to see mine vader, and mine moeder first." And the soft eyes of forget-me-not blue grew misty with unshed tears.

"So you shall, too; cheer up, little sad-heart! And now tell me of those I left behind me on the bay. How goes it with Dirck, and Dinorah, and all the rest? Did the gay pirate captain grind his teeth when he discovered I had eluded him?"

"That I do not know, for he sailed away the very night you went, and we never saw him again. As for Dirck—do you not know?—Dirck Van Boot is dead."

"What. Dead! Is it possible?"

"Ay, and what is more, to ease his conscience he left all his belongings to you. Those, however, proved to be just

nothing at all except the tumble-down old shop on the canal, and the slave Dinorah. But wait,"—As Franz was about to interrupt her with wondering ejaculations,—“I have stranger things yet to recount. Dost thou recall the deserting soldier from Fort Orange, to whom I gave the New Year krullers?”

“Yes, indeed.”

“Well, Hendrick has met him in Holland, and they have held much converse together. He is a very well-born Old England man, and—now open your eyes. He turns out to be your *very own father*, who wearies sorely to embrace his long-lost son.”

Almost speechless with astonishment, the lad hearkened to these unexpected revelations, but—a shuttlecock of fate almost from infancy—he quickly fitted into the new niche, and, with something of the self-control of his adopted race, presently began to review the events calmly, and to ask many questions which showed he was revolving his future destiny in his mind. He was questioning whether to return to civilization, and claim his own, or to live and die among the heathen natives who had received him in his hour of need.

As for Rychie, her nimble tongue ran gaily as she spun her little newsy yarns, and answered interrogations, while a faint, wild-rose pink flushed her pale cheeks, making her look more like the happy Knickerbocker girl of yore.

“A great burgher will you be, Franz,” she said, “And a great artist as well. Such big, grand pictures as you will paint!”

“Instead of the warrior’s noses, and chins,” he laughed, “Oh, Rychie, you do not know what a face painter the red men consider me already!

“Really? But the canvas portraits will be altogether



different from the frightful red and yellow war daubs. Ach, I do not see how you could bear to do it! I shall be proud as a peacock of my famous friend,—but no—I forgot—” and a shadow clouded the animated countenance. “I forgot that I am a prisoner, and will likely never, never see dear New Amsterdam again.”

“Tut, tut! Do not speak such despairing words,” cried Franz, springing up. “For even now, the moment of release is at hand. When the sun touches the zenith, it will be here, I would not tell you before for fear your heart might fail you. But only a little courage is needed, and you will be free as yon squirrel frisking among the pine boughs. Owano has secreted food for the journey, and at noontide will await our coming in the mountain notch, one mile to the east. That mile is the only risk; for beyond that you shall ride like a princess, on a chair formed of our joined hands. We will bear you safely to Esopus, for swift indeed must be the Indian arrow that can catch Deer-foot, and his Manhattoe brother. Come, let us start without delay.”

“Now, Franz? This very moment? Oh, surely you mean not now?”

“Ay, upon the instant. There is no time to lose. Black clouds threaten, and ere they break you must be leagues and leagues away. Have no fear, Owano knows the path well, and see! the gun which the good Heer Bayard set beside my St. Nicholas stocking so long ago, will prove your trusty friend, as it has oft proved mine.”

“I am not afraid, but—but—”

“’Tis not an hour to speak of buts. Owano must not be kept longer in suspense. Come,” and catching her hand in his, he would have dragged her down the hill, had not, at that moment, a neighboring clump of elder bushes been

violently ren. asunder, and Jannekin, with torn frock and disheveled locks, almost tumbled at their feet.

"No, no, you shall not go! You shall not go without me," she screamed. "I have heard every word of your fine plans and implore you to take me with you?"

"Oh, may I?" Rychie turned beseechingly to Franz, who was scowling angrily.

He shook his head. "We could not carry both, and to crawl at a girl's pace would be to endanger all our lives. Besides, at sight of Jufvrouw Bergen, Owano would be turned to stone. Not one step would he stir."

"And pray, why not?" demanded Jannekin fiercely.

"Because, mistress, he cannot forget that it was across the back of his kinswoman your father once broke his oaken stick. He remembers, too, the contemptuous glances you once cast at him yourself. Often have I heard him say: 'Like to the old bear is the young cub, and both do I hate to the death.'"

"But those are not right words, Franz," interposed Rychie softly.

"To Owano they are right, and we would be like ships without a compass if he did not guide us across the mountains. No, you alone can I take, and I beg, Jufvrouw Bergen, that you will detain us no longer."

But at this decision Jannekin became hysterical and shrieked wildly: "O Rychie, Rychie! surely you would not be so cruel as to leave me alone in the power of these dreadful savages. If you do, I shall kill myself. Yes, unless you promise to remain where you are, I will straightway jump into the waterfall below and be dashed to pieces before your very eyes."

In truth, the girl was half-distracted and, running to the edge of the precipice, might, indeed, have carried out her

mad threat, had not her cousin pulled her back and held her fast.

"Hush, Jan. You talk like one of the silly wenches," chided Rychie severely, while a determined expression, such as she had worn when she made up her mind to brave the phantom of the Maiden Lane, crept about her pale lips. "But, Franz, in truth, I fear she is right. It was selfish in me to think of leaving her and poor Elspeth. Together were we taken and together should we cling, unless all can be saved."

"Ugh! That is the rarest foolishness. Because two lambs are devoured by the fox, a third must walk up and pop her head into his jaws! Surely, Mistress Jannekin, you will not let your cousin thus sacrifice herself?"

"Ay, that I will; and fancy she will be as well off here as with you and your Indian dog of a companion. What is more, too; if you do succeed in conjuring her away, I will at once shout out your treachery to the whole camp. Then, forsooth, I warrant you will soon be brought back and put to the torture."

"Little viper!" muttered Franz, "Could a heathen squaw do more?"

Rychie, deeply distressed, cried: "O Jan, hush, hush! Do not heed her, Franz. Our troubles have made her beside herself. But you see how it is. I cannot escape. Mayhap, though, Papequanchen will relent, or his High Mightiness, the Lord Director, send and ransom us all."

"Trust not in panthers and beer barrels."

"Alack, now thou art cross, dear Franz! Dost thou not believe that I appreciate thy kindness and realize all thou art willing to risk for my sake? Verily, I do; and fain would fly with thee to Esopus. But since I cannot, one promise would I have of thee. Give me thy word, I beg,

that should we all perish here in the lonely wilderness, thou wilt return to Manhattan, bear my dear love to the mother and all the other so loved ones ; give up this savage life ; claim the little fortune left thee by Dirck, and go to rejoin thy father over the sea. Wilt thou promise me this, good, faithful friend ?”

And looking into her sweet, imploring eyes, the youth could not refuse. “Yes, Rychie, I promise.”

But, as he watched the two girls descending the rugged path in the direction of the Indian fort, Jannekin tightly clutching her cousin’s gown, as though she feared a sudden vanishing, he clenched his fists and stamped with rage. “Foiled by a miserable little sharp-tongued wench. By the Great Rabbit, I wish she were a boy, that I might knock her down !” he exclaimed. Then, turning, he disappeared the opposite way and sought Owano, patiently waiting at the appointed rendezvous.

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE SWAN'S SONG

“The low Dutch captive boy amid the forest wild,  
With hunger, grief and sorrow, when a little child,  
The Indian Minnisink and settler's tale is told.

\* \* \* \* \*

In which the pangs of war, of love, and deep distress,  
Shall thrill the reader's heart amid a wilderness.”

JOSIAH PRIEST.

PUFF, puff, puff ! Three circling wreaths of smoke floated upward from three short, fat pipes, and three honest Dutch worthies tipped back their chairs on Dominie Blom's snug little stoop, smoking and staring gloomily at the lovely purple shadows creeping over the mountain tops. Just so, the shadow of despair was creeping over their souls.

They were Captain Crygier, Mynheer Jansen and the Schepen Van Couwenhoven, the last two having been lodged for some weeks under the minister's roof.

For a time no one spoke. Then the Captain broke the silence :

“Shiver my skull-cap, if I don't believe that sly old fox of a Papequanchen has given us the slip for good and all ! Here for a full month have we been idle as the sails of Hardenbroeck's yacht in a dead calm, and are no nearer accomplishing our object than when first we set foot on 'Sopus soil.”

"By St. Anthony and his pigs, man, thou has put all our thoughts into words," sighed the schepen. "Naught, I fear, is left us but to bow to the will of Heaven as best we can. Soon, too, must I be turning my feet toward New Amsterdam. But O, mijn Maritje! mine little yellow-haired wench! It wrings my heart-strings to leave her behind, under the sod or in the power of those red devils."

"So, so!" crooned Dorigeman Jansen, who was just able to hobble on two sticks. "Pad is it, mine friend, very pad! Put my case is worse. For no vrouw and not one child have I left. Sometimes I think I shall become as crazy as Louis the Walloon, who walks the fields half the night and handfuls of hair pulls out of his head."

"Heer Captain, an Indian boy at the back door begs a few words with you." It was the Dominie's buxom hand-maiden who spoke, bobbing out from the kitchen in a flutter of excitement.

"An Indian dog, say you? What is his business?"

"Honored baas, I know not; but he looks a friendly red-skin."

"Well, if that be so, bid him step hither. Three are better than one to deal with these treacherous rascals."

A moment later, the trim Katchen ushered Owano into their midst.

"*Itah!*" he grunted.

Captain Crygier eyed him sternly. "Well, sirrah, from whence do you come?"

"From many leagues toward the setting sun, and me come as friend, not foe. Me come to lead the white man to the pale captives. To where fire and tomahawk hang over their heads."

At this announcement, all three listeners sprang to their feet and gathered about the travel-stained messenger.



"WHERE FIRE AND TOMAHAWK HANG."—Page 174.





"Think you they be true words he speaks, or is it some fresh trick of the old sachem to catch us, also, like rats in a trap?" asked Heer Van Couwenhoven.

"Swannekins can trust Owano," said the lad, with a grave dignity that gave weight to his assurance, turning his dark, half-scornful eyes reproachfully upon the speaker. "Owano is a Manhattoe. He sent by the white Franz. He has sat in the Dutch Father's lodge. He has eaten of the Dutch Father's corn, and milk and honey. He scorn to betray the Dutch Father."

A sudden light seemed to break upon the schepen, and he cried excitedly: "Can you mean that you are the boy who once to us fetched clippers from Coney Island and stick-wood from the forest? Are you the one whom folks say disappeared with the French youth, De Milt?"

"It is so.

"Astounding! Then where now is that same Franz?"

"He—Deerfoot—hovers with open eyes and ears near to the little pale squaw, Rychie. He watch, watch ever, till Owano brings the Swannekin warriors to the Mohawk's fort."

"Then the prisoners are still alive?"

"Two suns back they were. To-night, only the Great Spirit knows."

"Merciful powers! Why?" asked the captain.

"White men burn the East rondout; trample the green maize; steal from the Iroquois. Papequanchen hear it. He bristle like the hedgehog. He fling away the calumet; call for the war-paint, the fire-brand. Wise Indian say: 'Wait! For these prisoners the big sachem at Manhattan will send much guns, much powder, much rum.' He wait one moon. Now, Mohawks and Mohegans go near Yengie village. No want pale-faces. Papequanchen say, 'All must die!'"

"Then, by Johannes de Douper, no longer must our toenails grow in this spot!" shouted the captain. "So, my fine fellow, reel off, without delay, the trail we are to follow."

"By one, two, three waters, by the rondout creek, by the Walkill and one more. On the sunrise side of the Shawangunk stands the Indian fort. But Owano go. He show the path."

"Thanks! Now I will be off to summon my men, and I warrant the very first to shoulder his firelock will be Louis the Walloon."

"Happy splutterkin! While I must stop behind here, like a sick, puling puppy!" groaned Mynheer Jansen, thumping his injured limb angrily; and he fairly howled when, in the noontide glare of a bright September day, he watched his friends march away, with newly-revived hope in their hearts and shining in their determined faces.

\* \* \* \* \*

Patient resignation had given place to dire horror and grief among the unhappy captives in the wilderness. The girls crouched together with affrighted countenances, and even merry, irrepressible Guysbert lay on the ground, his face hidden in the long grass.

The threatening doom was about to fall. As Owano said, Papequanchen's long-simmering wrath had at length boiled over. He vowed that a million schepels of corn and fifty butts of "Dutch dare-devil" would restrain him no longer. His braves should have the orgie for which they thirsted, and the first victim should be the best beloved of all the white squaws, the sweet, angelic "Swan."

Hastily, then, a funeral pyre of dry wood was prepared within the circle of palisades, and night had hardly brought

out her stars when Catherine Dubois was roughly torn from the clinging arms of her screaming little ones, borne thence and bound to a stake. Then, dozens of fantastically-attired and tattooed savages, with flaming torches in their hands, performed a fiendish, blood-curdling dance around her, while grim old chieftains, women and children squatted near by, to view the thrilling spectacle. The other Christian captives were, likewise, forced to be unwilling witnesses. That was part of the heathen code of torture.

"Too dreadful is this; too dreadful to bear!" sobbed Rychie, cowering and shuddering beside one of the block-houses. "Ach, but our turn may come next, while even Franz has left us to our fate!"

"No, he has not; he is here. But call him Deerfoot, it is safer," breathed a low voice out of the shadows behind her, for that faithful young soul had no thought of deserting his unfortunate friend, in spite of her refusal to flee. He kept ever near her, ever on the alert, ready, should a general outbreak occur, to rescue her at all hazards. "He is close at hand, but alas! naught whatever can he do to save the poor vrouw."

"Then she must perish?"

"Unless help come very speedily, as I did hope it might. Bend low your head, and hearken! It is now five days since Owano started for Esopus. He went to guide the Director's men hither. They must come soon. If only the burning could be delayed!"

"Oh, let us pray it may! See, too, Deerfoot, see! They have not yet fired the wood. They stop the dance, and a tall brave speaks."

"It is Snake-in-the-grass."

"Yes, and surely I have seen his scowling countenance before! It was shown me by the Spirit of the Mist! It is

the very warrior I saw reflected on the clouds at High Rock ! But what does he say !” For the Indian spoke in his own tongue.

“ He says always does a swan die to the sound of her own voice. He says this swan warbles like the bright-winged birds which fly over the happy hunting grounds of the blessed. He asks that she be made to sing now.”

“ Oh, the miserable Catherine ! Never can she do it ! ”

But the ancient chief bowed assent. An interpreter conveyed his command to the doomed woman, who, with clasped hands, marble-like features, and long, black hair streaming upon her shoulders, calmly awaited her fate. To the surprise of her friends, she readily obeyed. The dusky executioners stepped back, and presently, a sweet sad melody rose, and fell upon the balmy September air, hushing even Lois's long-drawn, gasping sighs.

They were familiar words to the white listeners, a psalm often sung in the old Dutch kerck.

“ By Babel's stream the captives sate,  
And wept for Zion's hapless fate :  
Useless their harps on willows hung,  
While foes required a sacred song ! ” \*

Truly “ music hath charms to soothe the savage breast ! ” Torches, and battle-axes fell to the ground ; stern, set features softened, and Papequanchen, eagerly cried. “ More ! more ! ” when the plaintive dirge, finally, died away.

Again, then, the courageous Huguenot burst forth into her “ swan's song ” and not only twice, but thrice, in response to her strange, barbaric *encore*.

Not for long, though, would the warriors be cheated of their sport. The ghoulish dance, wild whoops, and mad

\* This incident of Catherine Dubois is an old tradition of Ulster County.

leaps recommenced, and the firebrands had actually been applied to the dry, crackling wood, when a sound without brought every alert, keen-eared Indian to his feet, just as three big, baying creatures dashed through the palisades, and right into the flame-lighted circle.

"White man's dogs! white-man's dogs!" squealed a Mohegan squaw.

"Ach, it is Penuckle! dear, darling old Penuckle!" shrieked Elspeth, in a transport of delight, as a shaggy yellow monster bounced upon her, and the skin of her cheek was almost lapped off by a warm, moist, affectionate tongue.

"Ho, ho, ho, ye brown duyvels! That's right! Run for your lives!"

In a twinkling, the fortress was changed into a veritable pandemonium, while the rattle of firearms sent the startled savages, thus taken unawares, flying pell-mell to the woods and creek. Many, also, of the frightened prisoners joined in the stampede, not knowing whether this was a rescuing party or another warlike heathen tribe that had made a descent upon them.

But Franz bade Rychie keep perfectly still, and ere long she was clasped in her father's arms. Meanwhile, Louis Dubois, uttering a volley of execrations, sprang forward, and cut the thongs which bound his wife, just as wee tongues of flame twisted, and curled upward, licking at her loose garments, and flowing hair.

Oh, the mingled joy, terror, and confusion of that September night! Many recalled it afterward as a distracted dream. But when day dawned, happiness dawned with it, for twenty-two pale, emaciated women and children looked once more into the loving faces of kindred and friends, and knew that their long three months of captivity were at an

end. Papequanchen, and fourteen of his followers had been sent to the happy hunting grounds of Indian braves, and several squaws had perished. Among the last was old Powanee who, crazed with terror, precipitated herself into the swiftly flowing stream, and was washed away.

Captain Crygie inspected the handful of warriors who had been taken prisoners, and was the proudest man in all the New Netherlands that sunshiny morn. He held his head high, and walked like a drum major.

"Help yourselves, my fine fellows," he shouted. "Help yourselves to the spoils of war—the elk hides, and deer skins, and other peltries, the wampum, and the gunpowder here stored in the block-houses, for they have all been hardly won."

Richly laden, then, was the party which gaily took up its homeward march. Rychie "rode like a princess," borne by Deerfoot and Owano, while her father walked beside her, keeping his hand on her shoulder, as though to assure himself that she was, indeed, safe.

"Oh, sweetheart, it seems almost too good to be true!" he exclaimed many times a day.

"But for the dear Franz, it would not be," she replied. "Always is he at hand in time of danger, and does it not appear as though he had been sent among the savages, like Joseph into Egypt, on purpose to be the savior of us all?"

"It was Owano, however, who came to warn and guide us."

"Ay, the good lad! But it was to please and satisfy his brother, Deerfoot, that he went, and now both must return with us to New Amsterdam."

"Ja, that they must, and Franz will find a pretty nice fortune awaiting him—a pretty nice fortune, indeed."

"An old house and an old slave?" asked the boy, with one of his rare quizzical smiles.

"Those and a considerable bit more into the bargain. What do you say to bags of golden guineas, and enough seawant to make you a great burgher and a burgomaster as well?" And the jolly schepen related with great gusto the story of the earthquake and the treasure that convulsion of nature shook out of Dirck Van Boot's secret chamber.

"It sounds like one of old Natto's fables," said Lois, who had drawn near to listen to the tale, "Only this is better, because we know it is true. Oh, Deerfoot, aren't you glad?"

"Not so glad as I am, that I warrant," shouted Louis the Walloon, whose volatile spirits had rebounded like a rubber ball. "I have my Catherine once again, and more is she to me than all the gold and silver that the Indians say lie buried under the Cat Mountains." Mistress Dubois, also, quietly receiving her husband's kiss, felt thankful and content, though she could not forget "*la petite Marie*," left in the depths of the green, waving forest.

"Elspeth, dear, you will leave this place of sad memories and go with us for a visit to Manhattan; will you not?" asked Rychie of her friend, when, for some days, they had rested and recuperated at Esopus, rehearsing again and again the trials and adventures of that eventful summer.

But Elspeth shook her head. "No, I think not. Hardly can my poor *vader* bear me out of his sight, and I am sure it is mine duty to stop by his side. Nor do I feel much fear, for a strong guard is now to be stationed at the rondout, and the new houses are to be built close together. So, you see, there cannot be so great peril as formerly."

"I do hope that is so."

Nevertheless, neither Rychie nor her cousin drew a free breath until they had turned their backs on the picturesque valley and, with Heer Van Couwenhoven, Franz, Owano, and several others, were sailing down the fair, blue Hudson.

"Never, never, do we wish to see the Cat Mountains again!" they declared, as they watched the violet-hued peaks fade in the distance.

During the trip, all observed a change in quick-tempered, pert-tongued Jannekin. Rarely had she ever been so affable, so gentle, so agreeable, while she often sat apart by herself, gazing soberly and thoughtfully into the rippling water. The fact was, she was trying to make up her mind to an unpleasant task, "humble pie" being a most distasteful dish to the proud young Knickerbocker.

At length, however, when within about twenty hours of home, she sought the boy who had done them such good service, as he was standing alone in the stern of the small vessel.

"Deerfoot—Franz de Milt—Morrow,—whatever it is you are now to be called," she said, somewhat diffidently. "I want, before we part, to beg your pardon and to tell you that I realize now how cruelly selfish I was to my cousin, and how insulting to you, both in Pearl Street and at the Fawn's Leap. It fills me with real sorrow to remember it, but mayhap you can find it in your heart to forgive me, and will, sometime, be my friend, as you are Rychie's."

"That I will, right willingly," cried Franz, taking the girl's proffered hand, while he had never liked her so well before. "An apology, like charity, covers a multitude of sins, and you need not now fret over the wrong done to your kinswoman, since good has come out of evil, and you are all saved instead of one."

"Thou art gracious to say so," sighed Jannekin, turning away to hold out an olive branch of peace to Owano as well, but it must be confessed that stolid youth received it somewhat charily.

Quite a crowd met the party at the small quay jutting out



into the bay, and Franz, his uncouth deerskin garments cast aside with his Indian name, and decently arrayed in regulation jerkin and ten-broecks, soon hunted up old Dinorah, who welcomed him as one returned from the dead.

"Now, Lord, dis chile am ready to depart out ob dis troublesome world," she sobbed, wiping the tears of joy from her eyes.

"Tut, tut, do not talk so!" cried the happy boy. "Now is the time to live. Now, when your papers of freedom are to be writ out at once, and when, for the string of wampum given poor Franz De Milt, you are to dwell like a lady in the house of rich Franz Morrow."

Nor were these idle words; for the faithful negress was made easy and comfortable for the rest of her days, in the old shop on the canal. Ere, too, the lad went to join his long lost father across the sea, he endeavored to induce Owano to renounce his barbaric life and accompany him.

But this was too severe a test of the Indian's devotion. "No, no, Deerfoot," he said. "Me love pale brother, but me no love white man's ways. Owano die in those,"—pointing to his companion's jacket and trousers. "Owano stay with his own people, hunt, fish, wear his blanket."

So Franz had to content himself with showering the gifts he liked best upon this child of nature. But in a few weeks he bade farewell to the good colonists of the New World and started to meet the fresh changes that were to take place, in his odd, shifting, panoramic career.

Not only in Broad Street, however, was there rare rejoicing. Beneath the Bergen, and Van Couwenhoven roof-trees, kinsfolk gathered from far and near, and the most fervent and heartfelt thanksgivings went up for the return of the fair young daughters of the house and hearthstone.

## CHAPTER XX.

### RYCHIE TO HENDRICK.

“Hail, mighty City—high must be his fame  
Who round thy bounds at sunrise *now* shall walk,  
Still wert thou lovely—whatsoe'er thy name,  
New Amsterdam, New Orange or New York,  
Whether in cradle sleep, on sea-weed laid,  
Or on thy island throne, in queenly power array'd.”

MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

NEW YORK.

IN THE NEW NETHERLANDS.

### MINE BROTHER HENDRICK,

It is a long, long time since I have writ thee a letter, but thine heart, which knows me so well, will speak, and say that it was from no lack of affection. For, dear Hendrick, very ill was I for many weeks after our so wonderful deliverance from the cruel savages of the upper Hudson, and too weak to hold the quill in my hand. Then, since I have again waxed stronger, the events have been so stirring in our little town that one could do nothing but talk, and *janker*, and exchange bits of public news.

Alack, mine brother! As thou may'st know, no longer do we live in dear Dutch New Amsterdam, but in the English City of New York. No more, from my dormer window, can I see the Prince's flag floating from the rondout's outermost bastion, but the British banner waving over Fort James. Everything now, forsooth, is named for James, the Duke of

York, and through the streets his men continually do roll and swagger, with their fine uniforms, and blustering airs quite turning the heads of the Holland boys. But not so fast! A whole year must I go back. Before this reaches you, you will have seen Franz, and heard news of us all, for when he sent word of his safe arrival in Old England, and his cordial meeting with his father and grandparents, who welcomed him with open arms and tears of joy, he mentioned that he should soon go to Rotterdam. He said it was for the book learning and picture-painting he was going there, and hoped to enter the same school with you. He will have told you, then, of his Indian life, of our rescue, and the blissful return to Manhattan. Of the grand fortune, too, which came like a Godsend, and was revealed by the earthquake that gave the New Netherlands such a churning up. I trust he has informed you, likewise, how comfortable and happy he has made old Dinorah, of the vendue at which Dirck Van Boot's stock of tobacco and snuff, as well as some very rich stuffs left behind by the pirates, was sold at excellent advantage; and of the fine gifts he gave to us all, especially to Pieter, and the little Blandina, who discovered the gold.

And oh, Rick! what wonders money does work! I never so realized it before; but, though wrong, it is a stubborn fact. Franz was just the same good, kind Franz, when he wore his leather apron, and weighed out the brown Virginia as when he walked to the kerck, dressed in the silk coat with silver buttons, and the new trousers made for him by the tailor, Cornelis Andriessen Hoogland. Quite differently, however, the girls seemed to think, and I could not repress a smile at the way they treated him. Why, Metje De Groot really seemed proud to be seen chattering with him, and even Katrinka invited him to her birthday fete. It was all

so beautiful ! But, before Kerstydt, he had to go, and many tears of regret did we shed at the parting. He, too, showed much sorrow when he set sail.

Then came the long months when on the settle I had to lie from drum-beat to curfew-bell, and Deborah was almost my hands and my feet. Three times a week, too, Jannekin would come across the passage-place to fetch me nice nourishing dishes concocted by Aunt Bergen, while so sweet and sympathizing was she, that I learned to love her better than ever I did.

Indeed, Hendrick, you would scarce know our cousin, so changed is she from the peppery Jan of old. Esopus transformed her into another girl, and pretty as a peach does she grow.

The lilacs were in bloom in the garden ere my strength began to return, but, by my sixteenth birthday, I was almost as well and gay as ever I was. This was lucky, for otherwise I could ill have borne the late excitement.

It commenced some time back with one John Scott, who declared that he had been made Governor of Long Island by the English king. Like a Grand Mogul, then, he marched his followers from New Utrecht to Oyster Bay, and at last had the rare impudence to claim Breucklyn for his own. When this occurred, little Hans Crygier—the son of the brave captain sent to rescue us from the Iroquois—was standing near by, and Mynheer Scott, turning to him, bade him take off his wool hat to the British flag.

“No, that I will not,” retorted Hans, bristling with indignation ; at which the Englishman up with his gun and hit him a crack with the butt end.

To all this our Cousin Teunis Van der Grist was an eyewitness, and scornfully cried out : “Ach, then, if you have blows to give, you should strike men, not boys !”

Instantly, Scott's soldiers waxed very wroth, and four flew at Teunis like snarling wolves. Surely, too, would he have been killed had he not had an axe with which to defend himself ; while, finally, he slipped round a tree and made off. Meantime, there stood the upstart Governor, jabbering in English, like a mountebank.

The New England colonists, who had removed thither, all sided with him, and they kicked up such a hubbub that, at last, for peace sake, the Heer Director granted to the rebels, Flushing, Jamaica, Hempstead and Gravesend, which we all think was a great pity. For if to such folks you give one inch, they are sure to take a whole ell.

See, now, what really happened ! King Charles said to his brother, the Duke of York : " Look you, James, all the land and the streams of water from the west side of the Connecticut River, to the east side of the Delaware Bay, will I bestow upon you. Go you over to the New World and take it." Which was just as though I should say to you : " Rick, I will give you all Franz's gold guilders and fathoms of seawant. Step up, and fill your trousers' pockets."

" Thank you, I will do so," answered the duke. But he took precious fine care not to come himself ; only despatched four frigates and a ranting, seize-all Colonel Nicholls to do the work for him.

It was about two months ago, one very hot August noon-time, that the father came in to dinner with a cloud on his brow. " What ails ye, Wolfert ?" asked the *moeder*, as she set the succotash on the table.

" That which ails the whole West India Company," he sighed ; " and may soon ail all Manhattan. A British squadron is anchored down in the Narrows, and much I fear they mean mischief."

.. Bless you, they were too true words he spoke, for the

very next day—which was Saturday—up comes a delegation demanding that New Amsterdam be surrendered, and on Monday, the Jaker Governor, Winthrop, follows, with a letter of terms for the Heer Director.

When Headstrong Peter, as the people call him, read this epistle, he almost stood on his bald pate with rage. He stormed, and he stamped, and, tearing the paper into bits, trampled it under his feet.

This pleased not the burghers at all, and they swarmed round Whitehall, and the Fort, insisting that they must see the letter, while many dreadful threats and swear words sounded on all sides. At length, then, the scraps of paper had to be fitted together and a copy made from it. It promised protection to every one. But Petrus Stuyvesant was for war, not peace, and a message to that effect was returned to the saucy English colonel.

Oh, what a week that was ! One morning, as I was braiding my hair, I saw the vessels sailing up Buttermilk Channel, and in rushed Elsje, screeching : “ Dey’s a-comin’ ; de Britishers is a-comin’ , wid deir big guns, to blow us all into smithereens ! ”

Debby and Clytie hid under the bed ; Blandina began to cry, and even the father looked white and stern, as he hurried out of the house.

The loyal *vader* would have held out to the last, but many of the citizens—even Hollanders—were for yielding, because they were tired of our governor. They liked not his strait-laced ways, the stopping of the Pinxter and Shrovetide sports, and his mistakes in dealing with the natives.

Some bad, grasping splutterkins even cared not which side won, if only they could have an opportunity to plunder and fill their wallets. Such a one was Rip Van Clomp, for I, myself, overheard him say : “ Now we hope for a chance



"AS I WAS BRAIDING MY HAIR."—Page 188.





to pepper those devilish Dutch traders. They have salted us long enough. We know where their booty is stored, and we know, also, where the young girls live who wear the gold chains."

Was not that a mean, contemptible speech for a Manhattan lad? But always was Rip rough and untrustworthy.

Forsooth, every one was considerably frightened, and Dominie Megapolensis went to Heer Stuyvesant and advised him to submit rather than risk a bombardment of the town. But no; Headstrong Peter held out, though from the longel we could see the British gunners, burning matches in hand, waiting for the order to send a rain of shot and shell down upon us.

Then the women besieged the Director, imploring him to yield, and save them and their children; while the men drew up a petition, signed by many burghers, even by his son, Balthazar. Poor man, what could he do? While in his heart he must have known we stood but a slim chance, with only one little mud fort, and scarce one hundred soldiers, against that mighty force of intruders.

So, at last, the white flag, which means "surrender," was run up, and dropping into a chair, he cried: "Have your way! Though I would rather be carried a corpse to my grave, than to give up the city!"

The next Lord's day was the saddest, and the solemnest, that ever I knew. The Dominie preached a sermon an hour and a half in length, and Governor Stuyvesant sat throughout with his head bowed upon his hands. Much *jammer* did I feel for him, for 'tis whispered that he will likely be summoned back to Fatherland, and that much fault will there be found with his action. But the truth is, he would have held out to the bitter end, had the people let him have his own way.

So, mine brother, now you know these ups and downs, you must pardon my not writing, and before closing, I will turn to pleasanter subjects. The very pleasantest of all, then, is the roly-poly, little Nicholas, at the Bayard bouwerie. Ja, Hendrick, you and I have now a small nephew: and oh, such dimples, such chubby arms and legs, such a perfect baby altogether, was never seen in the colony before! Grietje reminds me of poor Elspeth Jansen's speckled hen clucking around her brood of chicks, she is so very proud of "*mijn zoon*." So, likewise, is our worthy brother-in-law, though he does not fancy being dubbed "Old Nick." He declares it does not "sound seemly for the clerk of the Common Council," an honor to which he has just been appointed. Still, as Elseje says, "Baas Bayard must always have his little joke."

Schipper Hardenbroeck brings news from Esopus that the Jansens and Duboises have finished their new houses, and that Elspeth is as famous a home-maker as her so unhappy mother, and is her father's veritable right hand. She cannot leave him, but, when order and quiet are here once more restored, I hope for a visit from Lois and Leon.

Pieter has taken thy place at the Latin School, and is turning out a fine scholar. His Heidelberg, too, can he rattle off, like the Dominie himself.

Already is Blandina looking forward to St. Nicholas Eve, and counting the coins and beads in her strong-box which, thanks to Franz, has more in it than usual.

You must give our friend many fond remembrances from us, one and all, as well as my respects to Uncle Diedrich and Aunt Marta. Across the sea I embrace thee. So do the vader and the moeder, Pieter and Blandina.

lip kisses thy hand.

Thine Sister,  
MARITJE.

October, 30, 1664, O. S.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### AFTER THREE YEARS.

“ Oh patience, Sister. Did you see  
A young man tall and strong,  
Swift-footed to uphold the right  
And to uproot the wrong,  
Come home across the desolate sea  
To woo me for his wife?  
And in his heart my heart is locked,  
And in his life my life.

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI.

THREE years and a half have rolled away, since the cosmopolitan little town, standing where two rivers meet, changed its name to the one by which it was destined to be known to all future generations. But not so readily can it change its fashions and manners, and the May Day of 1668 still sees a real Dutch May Pole raised upon the Bowling Green and many jocund men and maidens, in the picturesque Holland dress, joyously dancing about it, on the emerald sward.

The only difference from Springs of yore seems, that now there are British officers and English gallants with love-locks sweeping their shoulders, as well as Manhattan Mynheers, joining in the holiday frolic, and, verily, they appear as welcome to the fresh-faced jufvrouws, as do the more stolid youths with braided queues.

Merrily a blithe, tripping air is scraped out from a quartette of fiddles by a score of skilful black fingers, and nimbly little buckled shoes flash hither and yon, while gold and silver chains keep up a cheerful tintinnabulation, and gay-hued ribbons and short silken skirts mingle in a fantastic, rainbow confusion, pleasing to the color-loving eye.

It is an exhilarating sight, and so even thinks the ex-Director, who has wonderfully modified his views of late, and who, from his great bouwerie on the East river, has hobbled down to sit under the trees, and applaud some particularly agile dancer.

"Verily, now, your *gude vader* makes a far better burgher than he did a Governor," saucily remarks Maria Beeckman to her *fiancé* Nicholas Stuyvesant, as they circle round the festal pole. "See how he playfully pinches Jannekin Bergen's rosy cheek, and stoops to kiss Grietje Bayard's little Nick! Everyone now, too, loves the 'tap tap,' of his wooden leg, while once they were wont to almost tremble at the sound. It is a goodly transformation, and that is the truth."

Meanwhile, unperceived by the absorbed merrymakers, a small vessel had entered the channel and was making her way up the bay. Just, too, as the fun became more fast and furious, a tiny, elfish creature, in green linsey-woolsey, suddenly darted in and out of the spectators and sought a flaxen-haired little damsel standing on the outskirts of the crowd.

"O missy, mine dear missy," she ejaculated, in short, broken gasps: "I tink de *Angel Gabriel* be come. He almos' in de slip, and nobody but sailors dar to see.

"Ach, Clytie, is that so? Well, then, tie up thy tongue and lisp never a word to any of the others. It will make for them such a fine surprise, and then I want to be the very first one to give our brother Hendrick the home greeting."

So saying, off sped the little roguish girl down to Coentje's Slip, her light braids flying out behind her in the wind. But she paused in some embarrassment at sight of the elegant young gentleman who came stepping briskly across the gang-plank. Could this be the long-expected brother Hendrick,—the one whom she faintly remembered as a rollicking, rather clumsy boy? This seemed a dandified maccaroni, in blue coat and long silk hose, extending above the knee outside his breeches; a fashionable, low-crowned black hat covering his fair head, and his white shirt-sleeves turned back in laced cuffs about his wrists.

But she was not long left in doubt, for with a shout the gay youth sprang forward and caught the small waiting figure in his arms.

"Ho, ho, mine Rychie! Here thou art! Well did I know that the earliest of them all wouldst thou be to bid me welcome, and glad, so glad, am I to be at home once again."

"Ha; ha, ha! What sport! He does not know me at all. For this is not Rychie; it is Blandina," cried the laughing sprite, highly diverted at his mistake.

"What is that? This tall wench, the baby Blandina! Bless mine soul! But, tut, I forget that it is seven years since I went away. Thou art, however, very like what Maritje was then, though, now I look more closely, I see thine eyes are brown and not the *himmel* blue."

"A big jufvrouw is Rychie now. Two twelvemonths back she made her first communion and wears a fine kerck girdle. At this moment she is treading the May dance, with Gerrit Rooseveldt. For, my brother, we did not look for you quite so soon."

"So? Well, we did have a rarely short voyage, with wind and waves all in our favor. But now let us hasten to find the mother."

Ere this, however, the news of the *Angel Gabriel's* arrival had spread from mouth to mouth, and sent all the Van Couwenhovens quickly speeding homeward from the green, yearning to embrace the long absent one. Joyous and enthusiastic, then, was the reunion in the old Pearl Street house, even the jolly little weathercock on the roof, gleefully flapping his wings, as the southern breeze careered about him.

"And now, if you have not squandered all your kisses and bear's hugs on me," laughed Hendrick, when the affectionate confusion had somewhat subsided. "There is a ship-mate of mine, who would also like to claim a welcome."

Then, stepping outside, he presently ushered in a tall, slim young man, who had lingered modestly in the garden. A young man with a dark, curiously-striking countenance. "Let me present to you my old schoolfellow and best friend, the artist, Morrow."

"Franz!" burst from every lip. Pieter and Blandina made a wild rush for the newcomer, and the schepen and his vrouw, as well as Mynheer and Mistress Bayard, accorded him as cordial a reception as though he had been another son of the house.

Only Rychie held somewhat aloof, gave her hand coyly and turned away with a blush when she caught the soft, black eyes, strange and yet familiar, often bent in wondering admiration upon her graceful figure and bright, intelligent face.

"I trust, sweet mistress, that the duke's conquest of New Amsterdam has not caused you to look with disfavor upon all who chance to have some drops of British blood in their veins." This Franz finally ventured to observe to the girl when, in the evening, all sat in the best parlor, to do honor to the occasion, and he leaned carelessly against the em-

broidered chair-back, over which Rychie had pricked her fingers so long ago.

"Oh, no, do not think that," said the candid maiden earnestly. Then, with more warmth of manner and a half-coquettish smile, which made her companion's heart beat a gay little *jubilate*. "In fact, because of one half-English boy, I believe I like the whole nation better than I otherwise should."

"Ah?"

"Yes, though it is odd how very well nearly all the Hollanders and the British agree. Like milk and water do they mingle. Why, Geertruyd Vanderen is to wed one of Colonel Nicholl's own officers, and the banns have been read for my cousin, Teunis Bergen, and an English girl dwelling at Gravesend."

"That is as it should be, for both are good Protestant folk! And there, that reminds me of a little book sent to you by my father—my kind, loving father! who, in spite of his wild early days, is now one of the best men that I ever knew. He is only too generous to me, and not long can I be absent from him."

"A book! Oh, that will be a prize indeed! So few books have we, and those have I read, until, almost, do I know them by heart."

"This one has made some stir in the Mother Country, because 'tis said to be aimed at the evil surrounding King Charles's Court. 'Twas writ by a low-born fellow, one John Bunyan, a tinker who, for preaching dissenting doctrines, was persecuted, much as the Quakers have been persecuted here, and was thrown into prison. In the jail, then, he writ this book, and so much does it please the common people, that it is like to go to a second edition. 'Tis a sort of story or romance, with a moral interwoven

But wait ! I will show it you." Thereupon, Franz produced a small volume of *Pilgrim's Progress*, above which the whole family was soon bending, the children crying out with terror and delight, over the execrable copperplates depicting the stanch, and heroic Christian thrusting his sword into Apollyon or writhing in the grasp of Giant Despair.

To these simple, young folks, brought up on the most practical realities, ignorant of all theatrical effects, novels, or even fairy tales—except as they took the form of Indian legends or Negro superstitions—this volume came like a revelation, a glimpse into an ideal world, and, for days they reveled in the House Beautiful, the Delectable Mountains, and the Enchanted Ground.

"A rare treat, forsooth, has the reading of this been," said Rychie to Franz, a week or two later, when each had become somewhat accustomed to the changes four years had wrought in the other. "I am most grateful, too, to the "Kruller man,"—as Blandina dubs your father—for making me acquainted with the brave Christian, Hopeful, Faithful, and Great Heart. I wish that Lois Dubois could, also, peruse the pretty tale; for I believe she would enjoy it even more than her favorite Book of Martyrs."

"Do you think so ? Well, I have another copy in my box, and that I will send to her by Guysbert Van Imbroeck, whom I met to day at the Coffee House, but who starts for Esopus on the morrow."

"Ah, I see thou art just the same thoughtful, generous Franz as of old," whispered Rychie gratefully.

"Tut, tut ! You rate me above my deserts. This is nothing, whatever. Though, indeed, were it a great thing, who should be so ready to confer a favor as I ?—I, the once poor, homeless waif, who received so much good from kindly hearts and hands, that he has been delivered from the





"COME, SWEETHEART."—Page 197.



Giant Despair; led out of the Valley of Humiliation, and can almost feel his feet on the Delectable Mountains? See, this has been my talisman!" and, throwing back his coat, Franz revealed a faded orange bow, pinned over his heart.

"Ach, but surely it is an old St. Nicholas ribbon!" exclaimed Rychie.

"Ay, it is, a St. Nicholas ribbon which dropped from a little girl's braid of hair, more than seven long years ago."

Softly, a rich, rose pink dyed the maiden's cheeks, as she said—"And you have kept it ever since?"

"Ever since,—in forest wild, at English Castle, and Holland school. Always and everywhere, by sea and by land. Look too, Rychie! The sunset clouds are, again, glowing with the selfsame tint. Let us walk down past the Fort, as far as the locust trees by the water's edge, just as we did on that happy festival when first I told you my sorrowful, childish history. There I wish to choose a view for the great picture I am to paint. I shall paint it for thee, dear one; for thee alone. Come, sweetheart!"

Thus then, slowly sauntering through the violet-hued, blossom-scented May gloaming, they fade from sight, the sweet, little Colonial dame, and her gallant young lover, while streaming pennants of orange light flash and blaze in the darkling western sky.

THE END.









# *A Little* COLONIAL DAME

by  
AGNES  
CARR-  
SAGE

