

ened to leave in a body unless he was recalled, and this, together with the influence of the wise and humane patroon De Vries, who had returned to Holland in disgust, led the chamber to remove Kieft and appoint Petrus Stuyvesant in his place. Over against the evil that Kieft wrought may be set much good that he did; for he certainly did much to make Manhattan more beautiful and habitable. He repaired the fort, erected public buildings, set out orchards and gardens and encouraged others to do so, straightened the streets and made laws for keeping them cleaner. One of his buildings was the great stone tavern which later became the Stadt Huys, or City Hall, and he began and nearly finished, within the fort, the large stone church which was for many years the city's only house of worship.

## V. PETRUS STUYVESANT.

It was over two years before a new governor came, so that long before his arrival his personal history, character, and appearance had been described and canvassed. He was a native of Friesland, it was said, son of a clergyman there. Bred to the profession of arms, he had early entered the service of the West India Company, and won renown in those brilliant battles, sieges, naval combats, and predatory descents on the Spanish-American coasts, which gained glory for the company and abundantly filled its coffers. Later, as governor of Curaçao, he undertook to conquer the island of Saint Martin, but having lost a leg in the action, he returned to Holland for surgical advice; and the directors, being then in search of a governor for their mismanaged colony, fixed upon this victorious commander and martinet.

The people of Manhattan were not very well pleased with his appointment; they feared he would be as tyrannical as Kieft, and regarded his selection as proof that the company meant to continue its despotic form of government. However, anything was to be preferred to their present condition, and they waited hopefully for the coming of their new master. He arrived on the 11th of May, 1647, with a fleet of four large ships and

a noble company: his beautiful and accomplished wife, his widowed sister, Mrs. Bayard, and her three boys, a vice director, a council which had been appointed by the chamber in Amsterdam as a check on the director, men at arms, and colonists. The fleet had been on the way since Christmas, having made a detour to the West Indies on some affair of Stuyvesant's.

As the director came to land, the fort thundered a salute, the people waved hats and handkerchiefs, and Kieft, advancing, read an address of welcome, to which the new ruler responded.

Neither his words nor his manner pleased the people; the latter, they said, seemed too much like that of a prince addressing conquered subjects. In his speech he said to them: "I shall be in my government as a father over his children, for the advantage of the privileged West India Company, the burghers, and the country."

Stuyvesant assumed the reins of government on the 27th of May, and his words and manner on that occasion were still less to their liking. "He kept the people standing more than an hour with their heads uncovered, while he wore his chapeau as though he were the Czar of Muscovy," said an eyewitness. At the same time he announced his council, which had been appointed in Holland, as we have seen. The former secretary and schout fiscal were retained; two new offices had been created, a master of equipage and an English secretary and interpreter. He further told them that the company had established a court of justice, of which Van Dinclage was to be judge, but from whose decisions an appeal might be taken to himself.

Stuyvesant ruled with a high hand. Almost his first official act showed the people that they could expect little more liberty under him than under Kieft. There was living in New Amsterdam at this time a very respectable gentleman named Cornelis Melyn, who had been president of that council which had been appointed by the patroons and chief men under Kieft. He had lost heavily in the Indian war at that time, and now, with Joachim Pietersen Kuyter, also a member of the same council, petitioned that the causes of that war might be inquired into, and that the testimony of citizens might be taken under oath.

Stuyvesant believed that the government should be upheld, right or wrong; he appointed the commission as desired, but himself went before it and said that in his opinion "the two malignant fellows were disturbers of the peace, and that it was treason to complain of one's magistrates, whether there was cause or not," whereupon the commission refused the petition. At this, Kieft, seeing that the director was on his side, had the two burghers arrested on a charge of "rebellion and sedition." Justice was pretty swift in those days, so the two unfortunates were quickly haled before the newly created court, where Stuyvesant sat with Judge Van Dinclage to try them. There were then no lawyers in New Netherland, and the prisoners pleaded their own case, and did it ably too. They proved the truth of their charges against Kieft, and that in making them they were not moved by vindictive motives. Yet in spite of this, and against law and evidence, the judges declared them guilty. Melyn declared that he would

appeal to the States-General. This threw Stuyvesant into a violent rage. He stamped about on his wooden leg, with "the foam on his beard," and said to Melyn: "Were I persuaded that you would bring this matter before their High Mightinesses, I would have you hanged on the highest tree in New Netherland." Next he pronounced sentence: for Melyn seven years' banishment and a fine of three hundred guilders, and for Kuyter banishment for three years and a fine of one hundred and fifty guilders.

A few days after the trial the banished men were put aboard the ship *Princess*, bound for Holland. With them sailed over one hundred souls. Kieft was among them, and Domine Bogardus, with many who were dissatisfied with the government as administered by the new director. But the *Princess* was wrecked in a great storm on the wild Welsh coast. Kieft and Domine Bogardus went down in the swirling waters. Only Melyn, Kuyter, and some eighteen others escaped.

When Melyn and Kuyter, after long delay, brought their case before the States-General, Stuyvesant's judgment was revoked, and Melyn and Kuyter were sent back with a summons to him from the Prince of Orange and the States-General ordering him to appear and answer before them, either in person or by his attorney; but the matter seems to have been compounded, as we hear no more of it.

The great event of Stuyvesant's reign, save perhaps the last, was the granting of the charter which made New Amsterdam a city, and which was given in 1652, in answer to repeated complaints and petitions of the

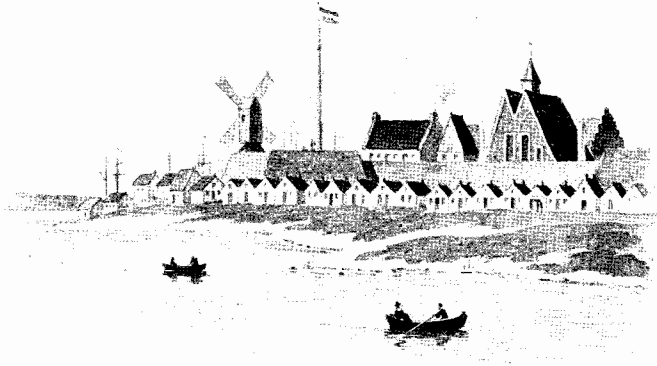
citizens. It was on the plan of the ancient charter of old Amsterdam, which provided for the election by the people of a schout, four burgomasters, nine schepens, and an advisory council of thirty-six men. The first fourteen constituted a body similar to the English mayor and common council, and made and executed the laws by which the city was governed. They were also a court for the trial of civil and criminal cases. In this charter of New Amsterdam, however, the company limited the number of burgomasters to two and of schepens to five, but declared expressly that they should be elected by the people.

Stuyvesant, however, largely nullified the charter by appointing the city fathers instead of allowing the people to elect them, and after he had appointed them told them plainly that he should preside at their meetings whenever he deemed it necessary, and advise them in matters of importance. And so with an autocratic, self-willed military commander as governor, the people found the piece of parchment of little avail. They had the shadow of self-government, however, if not the substance.

The old stone tavern built by Kieft was cleaned, remodeled, and set apart as a *stadt huys*, or city hall, and there the burgomasters and schepens held their sessions.

Stuyvesant proclaimed the city on the 2d of February, 1653. It then comprised some fifteen hundred inhabitants and about three hundred houses, mostly of wood, with a few of stone. It had no trade of its own, and there was scarcely cleared land enough about it to supply it with vegetables. Is it not wonderful that in

two centuries and a half this village has grown to be the metropolis of the western continent and the second



City of New Amsterdam, 1653.

largest city in the world? In 1654 Stuyvesant presented the city with its long-delayed seal, the occasion being a banquet held in the council chamber by the burgomasters and schepens on the eve of his departure for a visit of ceremony to the West Indies. The guests all crowded round to view it. It bore the arms of old Amsterdam, three crosses saltire, with a beaver for a crest, and above, on the mantle, the initial letters C. W. I. C., meaning the "Chartered West India Company." Within a wreath of laurel was the legend, *Sigillum Amstelodamensis in Novo Belgio* ("Seal of Amsterdam in New Belgium").

Stuyvesant returned in July, and shortly after,

under orders from Holland, embarked with an army of seven hundred men to drive off certain Swedes who, in the year 1638, had settled on the banks of the South River, on lands claimed by the Dutch. A few days after the fleet sailed, the ex-sheriff, Van Dyck, discovered an Indian woman stealing peaches in his orchard, and shot her dead on the spot. Her people at once sent swift runners to all the river tribes, to the Connecticut and Long Island Indians, praying for vengeance, and apprising them that the director and all the able-bodied men of the city were absent.

The savages at once sprang to arms, and just before daybreak on September 15, 1655, appeared before the city in sixty-four canoes bearing nineteen hundred warriors. They quickly spread through the town, and broke into a few houses on pretense of looking for hostile Indians, but really to see if the murderer Van Dyck was in the city. The burgomasters and schepens, aroused, went among them, gathered the chiefs into the fort, and with soothing and persuasive words induced them to draw their men out of the city. They retired to Nutten (now Governors) Island, but quickly returned, hurried to the house of Van Dyck, and killed him. The schepen, Van der Grist, who lived next door, hastened to the sheriff's aid, and was stricken down with an ax. By this time the alarm had been given; the burgher guard sprang to arms, and drove the Indians off, killing several.

Stung to fury by this loss, the savages hurried to Hoboken and Pavonia, across the Hudson, killed every person they could find, and ravaged the plantations,

then hastened to the unfortunate settlements of De Vries on Staten Island, where the same scenes were enacted—a heavy price to pay for one man's rash and cruel act.

Stuyvesant had just received the submission of the Swedes when a courier brought the news of this Indian foray, whereupon he returned at once, but acted with much more wisdom than Kieft had shown on a similar occasion. He called the chiefs together, and by kind words and presents allayed their just resentment and restored confidence.

The later years of Stuyvesant's term were marked by religious persecution, before unknown in New Netherland. "Allow all the free exercise of their religion in their own houses," had been the command of the company; but the director would recognize only the Dutch Reformed Church. He persecuted both the Lutherans of Holland and the Quakers and Baptists of New England. These and other cruelties so incensed the people that Stuyvesant had scarcely a friend in his government outside of his official family.

He was very soon to feel the effect of this hostility. England, as we have remarked, had never yielded her claim to the territory covered by New Netherland. By the year 1664 she believed the time had come for gathering it to herself.

All through the reign of Stuyvesant events had been leading up to this end. Charles I. of England had been deposed and beheaded. Cromwell had had his day as Protector, and after his death the monarchy had been restored in the person of Charles II., who was now king.

He was a weak man, and the management of foreign affairs had fallen largely into the hands of his abler brother James, the Duke of York, and of the strong, statesmanlike men whom the king had selected as his ministers. From the moment that Charles felt secure on his throne, aggressions against this little strip of Dutch territory began. In 1664, ignoring some former grants, Charles gave to his brother James the entire territory claimed by the Dutch; and at once that energetic nobleman set about getting possession of the grant, a work in which he had the active aid and encouragement of King Charles's ministers.

That the seizure might cause a war with Holland did not trouble him in the least; he disliked the Dutch for various reasons; besides, a war would focus national attention upon himself, and already he had his eye on the throne of England. Four men-of-war, the *Guinea* of thirty-six guns, the *Elias* of thirty, the *Martin* of sixteen, and the *William-and-Nicholas* of ten, were borrowed from the government, and, manned with four hundred and fifty men at arms, were placed under command of Colonel Richard Nicolls, a veteran officer and a courteous, humane gentleman.

This fleet left Portsmouth, England, about the middle of May, 1664, having on board a form of government and laws for the territory when it should be taken. So sure were they of capturing it that Nicolls bore orders to the governors of the New England colonies directing them to aid in the movement. The fleet reached Boston late in July, and its commander asked for the aid of Massachusetts and Connecticut in carrying out his

design. Massachusetts had little love for King Charles, and responded somewhat tardily, but Connecticut, which had had a great deal of trouble with the Dutch on her western border, gladly aided the enterprise.

Stuyvesant was away on a visit to Fort Orange when news that the English were about to attack his capital reached him, and he at once hurried back. Twenty-four hours after reaching home, as he paced restlessly the parapet of the fort, he saw far down in the lower bay the dim outlines of a man-of-war from whose peak floated the red cross flag of Saint George; it was the *Guinea*, leading the fleet to the attack. Never before had a commander been caught so unprepared: there were no provisions for a siege; of the thirteen hundred pounds of powder in the fort six hundred were useless; of the garrison of one hundred and fifty regular soldiers and two hundred and fifty militia the director was not sure of the loyalty of one.

Stuyvesant fumed and stamped about on his wooden leg. He swore that he would hold the town against all odds, and he began active though tardy preparations for defense. He mustered his four hundred men, and ordered every third man among the citizens to repair to the defenses with spade, shovel, or wheelbarrow.

But the latter murmured at this. Was the director crazy, they asked, that he thought of defense? Suppose he held the fort, did he not know that the frigates could pass up the river and rake the town on either side?

Many refused to go. Perhaps a third of the population were English-speaking people, in sympathy

with Nicolls, and these now went about the city spreading disaffection and working on the fears of the people. Nevertheless, Stuyvesant continued his preparations: he placed a guard at the city gates; he ordered the brewers to cease making grain into malt, and set his slaves to thrashing grain at his farm and conveying it to the fort.

Meantime the fleet anchored in the bay and sent a summons to the director to surrender. Stuyvesant called a council of the burgomasters and schepens, who advised delay and the sending of commissioners to argue the matter with the invaders. This was done. But Nicolls told them plainly that he was not come to argue, but to execute. The council then asked three days to consider, which was at once given, as it gave the humane commander the opportunity he desired. He took advantage of the delay to move his vessels abreast of Governors Island, where he disembarked five companies of soldiers and sent them to effect a junction with a party of horse and foot from Connecticut and Long Island, after which the allied force encamped on the Brooklyn shore by the present terminus of Fulton Ferry. Nicolls was very desirous of taking the place without bloodshed, as his object was to placate the Dutch and make them contented and orderly subjects of the King of England. He now issued a proclamation offering to all who would submit life, liberty, property, and the fullest enjoyment of every right whether of person or estate. This paper he distributed throughout the city by means of his agents, and awaited the result. The people read it or heard of it, and urged the di-

rector to submit; but he refused, and hurried on his preparations for defense.

The original demand had been made on Saturday, August 30. The three days' grace would expire on Wednesday morning, September 3. On Tuesday morning a rowboat was seen approaching from the fleet. It contained six dignified gentlemen of commanding presence, conspicuous among them the noble figure of Governor Winthrop of Connecticut, whom Stuyvesant had several times met at banquet board and council table—an embassy bent on effecting a bloodless surrender. They were met at the wharf with due courtesy, a salute being fired in their honor, and conducted to the Stadt Huys, where Stuyvesant and his council were waiting to receive them. Winthrop broached their mission, and with his well-known eloquence urged the director to give over a hopeless struggle and spare useless shedding of blood by yielding the city to the English.

But the lion-hearted director swore he would never submit. Winthrop then delivered a letter from Colonel Nicolls, which was read to the council, in which he promised that the Dutch should have full liberty equally with the king's subjects to settle in New Netherland and to trade with their own country or return thither.

A great crowd of citizens had gathered outside to hear the result, and the burgomasters now asked that the letter might be read to them; but Stuyvesant, who feared its effect, refused. A war of words ensued, and in the midst of it the choleric director seized the letter and tore it to pieces. At this Cornelis Steenwyck, a member of the council, roundly denounced him, and

with his fellow-officials quitted the place. On gaining the street they told the people what had taken place, and the latter presently deputed three prominent men among them to call upon the director and demand the letter. In reply the latter showed them the fragments, but on the delegates still demanding the letter, he went out to the people and tried to reason with them; but his voice was drowned in angry shouts for the letter.

"That," said Stuyvesant, "was addressed to the officers of government, and does not concern you." But the people were not to be placated, and amid bitter curses and threats Stuyvesant withdrew to the fort, while Nicholas Bayard, the politic courtier, pieced the torn fragments of the letter together, and from it made a copy which he read to the people, who were little appeased by it, and still clamored for submission. Meantime Stuyvesant, in the fort, was writing another letter to Nicolls, in which he gave an exhaustive account of the Dutch discovery and settlement of New Netherlands, and forcibly stated their claims to it. He sealed it and sent it by four of his most trusted friends.

"Nay," said Nicolls, when the envoys reached his ship, "I stand on no question of right; if my terms are not accepted I must carry out my orders and attack."

The delegates still wished to argue, but Nicolls cut them short. "On Thursday I shall speak with you at the Manhattans," he said significantly.

"Thou wilt be welcome if thou comest as a friend," replied the envoys.

"I will come with my ships and my soldiers, and he

will be a bold messenger who will dare to come on board and solicit terms," said Nicolls.

"What then is to be done?" they asked.

"Hoist the white flag over the fort, and I may take it into consideration," was the reply. He promised that he would not fire upon the city without warning, but refused their request not to move his troops nearer the city. "To-day I shall arrive at the ferry," he added; "to-morrow we can agree with one another."

That same day he landed three companies of regulars at Gravesend, and marched overland at their head to the Fulton Ferry, where he formed a junction with the troops already there. While this was being done two of the frigates sailed up past the fort with ports open and guns shotted, ready to pour in a broadside if its guns should open. Stuyvesant stood on the parapet as they passed, and would have ordered his gunners to fire, no doubt, for he was not lacking in courage, had not Domine Megapolensis at the critical moment laid his hand upon his shoulder. "It is madness," said he. "What can our twenty guns do against the sixty-two pointed toward us from yonder frigates? Will you be the first to shed blood?"

Once they were past, however, the director's resolution returned, and taking one hundred soldiers, he hurried up into the city to resist any attempt of the English to land. But as he came into the town he was met by a petition signed by ninety-three prominent citizens, including the magistrates and clergy, begging him to accept the generous terms of the English and save the city from burning, and the people from the sword.

Women and children also came and pleaded that he would save them from the violence of a sack, until at last the grim old veteran, hero of a hundred battles, gave way.

"I had rather be carried to my grave," he said, but he ordered the white flag raised on the fort.

And thus peaceably fell New Amsterdam in the year of our Lord 1664.

The articles of capitulation were agreed on next morning. They provided that free intercourse with Holland was to continue, that citizens of every race and creed were to be secured in person, property, customs, and religion. Stuyvesant and his men were to march out with drums beating, colors flying, and matchlocks lighted, and embark on the vessel which was to bear them to the fatherland.

This program was fully carried out on the 8th of September, 1664. As the Dutch marched out the English entered, and raised their red cross flag over the fort and public buildings. Nicolls was proclaimed governor, the fort rechristened James, in honor of the duke, and the province named New York for the same reason.

The United Provinces exclaimed loudly against the injustice of the conquest, and waged a long and bloody war with England because of it. Stuyvesant, too, was blamed for yielding up the fort, but hurried to Amsterdam and made a strong defense. Afterwards, his family, his property, and friends being in New York, he returned, and lived many years in his fine old country-house, which stood near the corner of what is now Third Avenue and Twelfth Street. There he died in 1672,



one of the heroic figures of his age. His house, garden, and bouvery continued to be for many years one of the landmarks of the city. The house was of wood, two stories high, with projecting story, and stood about one hundred and fifty feet east of Third Avenue and



Stuyvesant's Pear Tree.

forty feet north of Twelfth Street. In front of it was the garden, laid out in quaint old Dutch style with formal paths and flower beds describing almost every geometrical figure. In this garden, near the house, Stuyvesant planted a pear tree, which for more than two hundred years kept his memory green and indicated to passers-by the site of his dwelling. Generation after generation of his descendants grew up and passed away. Year by year the city crept steadily northward, invaded his farm, and caused streets to be laid out through his garden; then the old pear tree, still green, vigorous, and fruitful, found itself at the corner of Third Avenue and Thirteenth

Street. Then careful hands placed an iron railing about it to protect it. At last, after it had stood on the corner for sixty years, it was blown down in a great storm in February, 1867, and the last memento of the lion-hearted governor ceased to exist.

His widow, Judith Bayard, lived on in the old mansion until her death in 1687, and founded by will the present Saint Mark's Church, which stands on a part of the Stuyvesant farm, and in which the ashes of the governor rest.