

VI. DUTCH MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.

IF in the preceding pages we have spoken little of the life of the people, it was from our desire to present a clear and connected idea of the founding of our noble city and of the causes which led up to it, and not because we deemed such details trivial or unimportant.

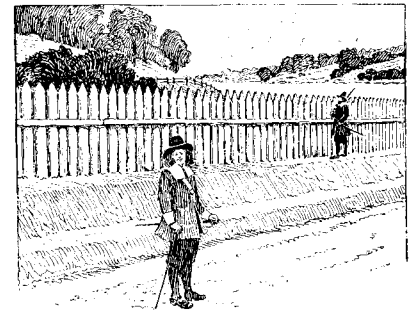
For a generation the life of the pioneers was rude and hard. They dwelt at first in tents and dugouts, later in small, one-room cabins with thatched straw roofs and chimneys of small, square sticks mortared with mud. There was much hard and rude work to be done; forests were to be cleared, lands drained, plowed, and sowed, quarries opened, a fort, brickkilns, houses, flouring mills, and sawmills built, and streets and roads laid out and paved.

By 1664, however, New Amsterdam had become a city with not a few of the amenities and refinements of civilized life. Let us imagine that we stroll through it some beautiful June morning in 1664, and look upon the burghers at their work and play.

We might have come over from Brooklyn by the rowboat ferry which then landed near the present Peck Slip. As we stepped ashore we should have seen both cleared fields and forests about us. Though the "ferry road" wound south, following the present line of Pearl

Street, which then ran along the pebbly beach of the East River, the streets now lying between—Water, South, and Front—were then crossed by the tide. At what is now Maiden Lane we should have come upon a foot-path which here crossed our road, coming down to the river from Broadway, and skirting the shores of several clear-water ponds fed by springs, their combined outlet being a little brook that came leaping gayly down to join the river; and here a pretty scene would have presented itself. A bevy of beautiful maidens, with bare, dimpled arms, are wetting linen in the basins, and spreading it in the sun on the verdant slope of the hill to the west, chatting volubly the while in their musical tongue. Their own fingers have spun the linen from the flax and woven it in the loom, and now they are spreading it in the sun to bleach. They and their mothers before them formed the path, hence called *Maagde Paatje* ("Maidens' Path"), which the English changed to our present Maiden Lane.

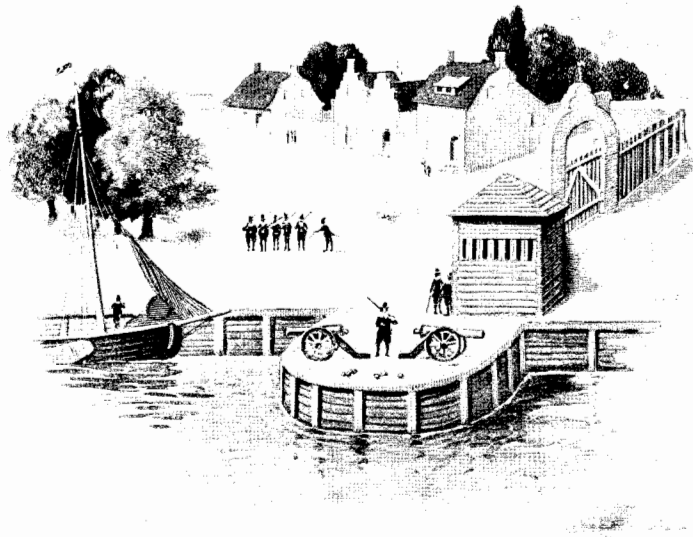
Pleased and interested, we should have journeyed on, and at the present line of



The Wall, 1664.

Wall Street would have been stopped abruptly by a blank wall of palisades—great timbers twelve feet high, set three feet deep in the earth, with stout posts at every rod, rising two feet above the palisades, to which split

rails were nailed, thus forming a fence two feet above the tops of the palisades. Before us would have been an arched gateway, the key of the arch being carved with strange-looking figures and crowned with a cupola and gilded weathercock. Let us imagine that the great nail-studded oaken gate is open, and we enter. Once within, we examine the wall more closely. At the water's edge on the east is a square blockhouse with holes between the timbers for muskets, and a "half-moon" or semicircular battery projecting into the water and mounting two cannon, one pointing up the river, the other down.



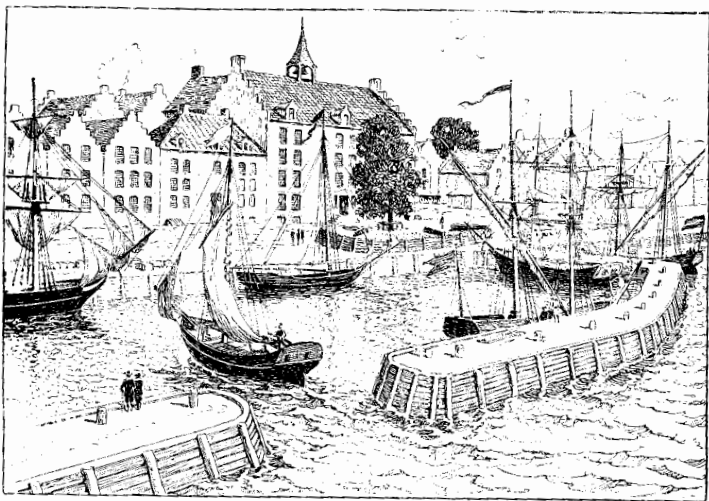
Foot of Wall Street, 1674.

There is a guard here, a single soldier in loose gray blouse and baggy breeches, with an ancient flintlock musket thrown over his shoulder. These blockhouses are placed at intervals along the wall quite over to the Hudson, while at Broadway there is another gate and arched gateway. Without is a chevaux-de-frise of stumps with their fanglike roots upturned, and within a broad ditch and a sod rampart.

The guard at the gate tells us that the wall is 2,340 feet long, that it cost 3,166 guilders, and was built in 1653, when the people feared a descent from the English and hostile Indians on the north. Thanking the sentry, we are about to continue, when we are beset by a half score of ragged, sooty urchins with their cry of "Sweep ho!" There is a wide lane flanking the wall (hence called Wall Street), and on its inner side is a row of rude thatched cabins, the Five Points of New Amsterdam, abodes of boatmen, sweeps, tapsters, and social outcasts.

We will walk slowly along the water front, staring at everything, as might be expected of curious travelers from a far country. Here are queer, half-moon docks with no vessels moored to them, but instead placid and substantial-looking burghers, talking, smoking, or watching fish lines thrown from the dock. Their stores and dwellings are across the street, quaint, peaked-roofed buildings with crowstep gables, store beneath and dwelling above, and, overtopping all, the great stone Stadt Huys, or City Hall, with its gallows in front. The busiest place of all is the city dock, the first built on Manhattan Island, precursor of the thirty miles or more

of busy wharves of the modern city. The merchants call it the "Hooft," and the water in front the "Road-



City Hall and Great Dock, 1679.

stead." There are scows, skiffs, periaguas, and canoes moored to it, but no large craft; they must anchor in the Roadstead, being forbidden to come alongside, in order to prevent smuggling, and also to keep the sailors from roaming through the city.

A fleet of scows and small boats is employed removing cargo to the dock from the ships of all descriptions anchored in the Roadstead. These are laden with divers articles, according to the port from which they sailed. Thus, a "Holland ship," as those from the mother country are called, has dry goods, wet goods, hardware, and perhaps a few of those "cow calves" and "ewe milk

sheep" mentioned by the old chroniclers as being staple articles of export to New Netherlands during this period.

One of the scows is laden with dried fish and English goods from a "snow" just arrived from Boston; a second with hogsheds of tobacco from a Virginia "ketch;" a third with savage, unkempt negroes from the west coast of Africa, on their way from the slaver *White Horse*, to be sold in the slave market at public auction to the highest

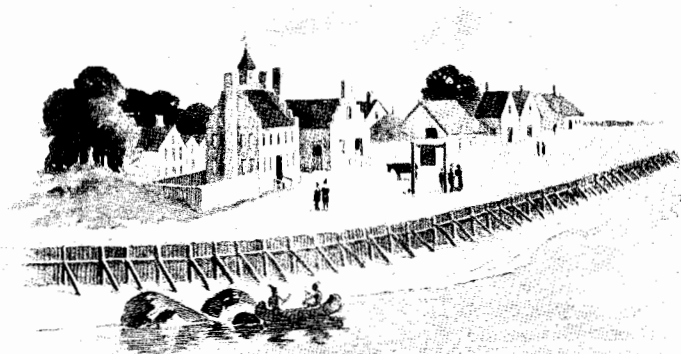


Leisler's House.

bidder. A galley from Curaçao is unloading costly dyewoods and tropical fruits into a fourth, while a fifth, tied to a "pincke" from Barbados, is receiving barrels of sugar and hogsheds of molasses, the latter exuding sweetness in the hot sun. Molasses smears the deck of the scow and now and then causes a fall among the barefooted slaves that man her. On the other hand, this sloop of the great patroon of Rensselaerwyck is sending ashore bales of costly furs—mink, otter, beaver, wolf, bear, and others. All must be landed at the city dock and pay duty; consequently the latter is a busy place, as before remarked. Gangs of Angola slaves receive the goods, and after they are duly entered

trundle them off across the street to the merchants' warehouses, or to the company's five great stone store-houses that stand in a row between what will be Bridge and Stone streets later.

The four great merchants of New Amsterdam at this period—Cornelis Steenwyck, Pieter Cornelissen Vanderveen, Govert Loockermans, and Isaac Allerton—are among them in their cloth coats with silver buttons and baggy breeches, to see that they get good weight and measure, and that the negroes keep to their task and practice no thievery; indeed, Cornelis Steenwyck is so



East River near Coenties Slip, 1658.

careful that he is followed by a negro woman with needle and thread, who sews up any rents in bags or bales that his sharp eyes detect.

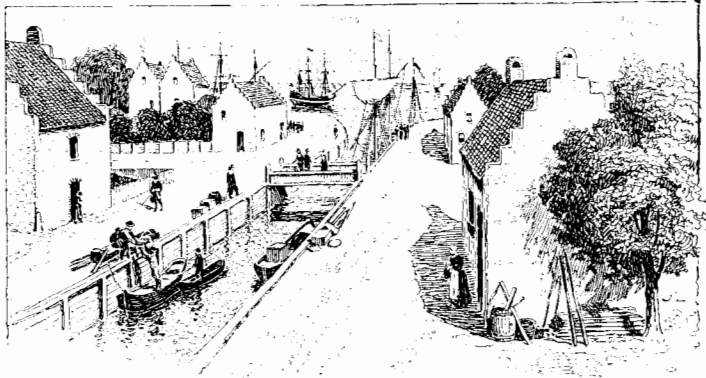
Turning again to the water front, we find a warning placard off the future Coenties Slip forbidding vessels of fifty tons or under to anchor between there and the fort under a heavy penalty. There is another near the future Fulton Street forbidding any vessel at all to moor above that point, thus collecting all the craft in the harbor into one locality. Quite a fleet there is, too, and such queer craft, with their square bows, broad beams, and sterns built so high you would think the first gale from astern would catch them up and bury them fathoms deep by the bows—very different from the craft of grace and beauty that later gathered at these wharves. Their names are quite as quaint and curious—*Flower of Guilder*, *Sea Mew*, *Little Fox*, *Blue Cock*, *New Netherlands Fortune*, *Little Crane*, *Great Christopher*, *New Netherland Indian*, and so on.

We are about to proceed, following the ferry road on to the fort, when we notice a stir on the dock, and looking up, see that the flag on the flagstaff has been hoisted to the masthead, which means that a Holland ship is standing in. Such an event will be too common for notice in later days, but to these good people it means tidings from home and kin, of fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, wives and sweethearts; news of the world, also, up to the vessel's sailing eight weeks before, and to the merchants news of ventures, fate of argosies.

So they hasten to the Battery and welcome the newcomer with waving of hats and handkerchiefs. By and by a gun from the fort brings the vessel to off the Battery. The haven master boards her, inspects papers and manifests, and she is then allowed to proceed to her

anchorage in the Roadstead, and to discharge her passengers.

At Bridge Street is a great bridge over the Heere Graft, or Principal Canal, which here enters from the East River, and extends along the line of Broad Street up to Exchange Place. No doubt the burghers built it



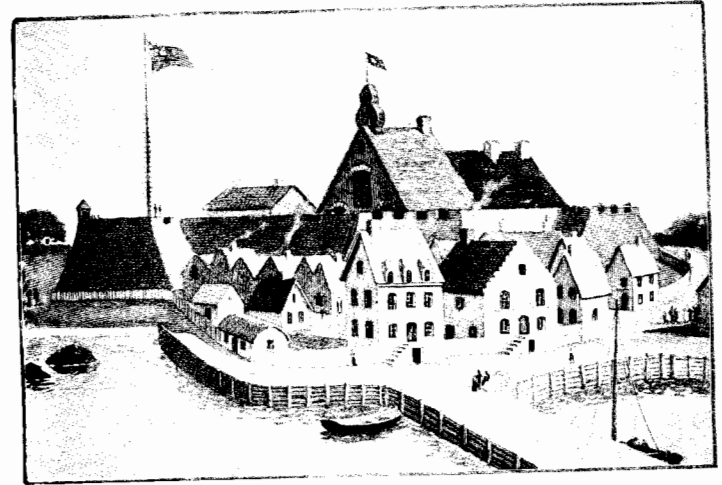
Canal and Bridge in Broad Street.

to remind them of Holland. They cherish it highly and take the utmost care of it. Its sides are protected by wooden piling. No one may throw refuse into it or defile its waters. There are broad sidewalks on either side of it, patrolled by a burly "Graft officer," whose duty it is to keep the siding in repair, prevent nuisances, and "lay the boats, canoes, and other craft that come therein in order."

There are many of the latter within it now—Long Island farmers laden with produce, Indians in canoes with furs and game to sell. The bridge near its mouth is a

famous meeting place for the merchants, the first Merchants' Exchange; at its mouth are the company's stores before mentioned, and opposite it the Roadstead.

Let us next turn into Whitehall Street, which will lead us to the fort. It is well built up on one side with solid stone and brick houses showing checkerwork



The Fort.

fronts and crowstep gables, and overlooking the Battery and the shining reaches of the bay. It is quite the patrician quarter. Here at the foot is Governor Stuyvesant's town mansion, known far and wide as the "White Hall," and giving the street its name. Behind each house is a garden gay with flowers, the wonderful tulip of Holland predominating, and in the rear of this an orchard of pear, peach, plum, apple, quince, and apricot trees well loaded with young fruit. Primeval

oaks and elms spared from the ancient forests shade this really beautiful thoroughfare.

It leads us up to the Bowling Green, or "Common," the first laid out by the city fathers. Whitehall Street enters this from the east, while Broadway leaves it on the north. On the south or seaward side stands the fort, a quadrangular earthwork having bastions faced with stone, and mounting twenty-two curious, wide-mouthed brass and bronze cannon. Bombards, serpentes, culverins, and so on, the soldiers call them, and they throw stone as well as iron balls.

The interior, or parade, is one hundred and fifty feet square, and in its center is planted the tall flagstaff we saw from the water front; and there proudly floats the white, blue, and orange flag of the West India Company. A quaint windmill, its tower turning on a pivot, stands on the northwest bastion, whence come the prevailing winds.

The principal object within the fort, however, is the great stone church built by Kieft in 1642, with its two peaked roofs, and the tower looming aloft between. The government house, a plain brick structure, also built by Kieft, stands beside it, and with the jail, barracks, and storehouses of stone completes the list of buildings within the fort.

There are many soldiers lounging about, while little groups of townspeople and sightseers promenade the ramparts, for the fort is one of the lions of the infant city.

A little wearied with our sightseeing, we will now cross the Green to the tavern of the worshipful Mar-

ten Cregier, president of the burgomasters and captain of the burgher guard, which tavern is the fashionable inn of the city. Whenever the governors of the neighboring colonies, titled visitors from abroad, military and naval officers, book-making travelers, and commissioners sent to treat on vexed questions of boundaries or runaway slaves or illicit trade, come to town, they are at once referred to the inn of the good burgomaster.

Scarcely have we drawn rein when the host appears to welcome us, and a hostler holds the stirrup while we dismount. Crossing the broad, brick-floored stoop, or porch, furnished with comfortable wooden benches, we pass through the two-leaved oaken door into the wide hall, on one side of which is the parlor, with oiled floor and ponderous stiff-backed Dutch furniture, and on the other the great public room of the inn. The floor of the latter has been freshly sprinkled with clean white sand brought from Coney Island by the "vlie boats," and it has been drawn into whorls and grotesque figures by Gretchen's tireless broom. The walls are graced by deers' antlers, on which hang the long "goose guns" of the landlord and his guests, by placards, and by funny Dutch prints of hunting scenes and the like. In one corner is a sideboard, rich with decanters, bottles, and glasses, and a rack stuck full of long pipes, each inscribed with the name of its owner; for the inn is the resort of the better class of citizens, the merchants and gentry, filling the place of the modern clubhouse and exchange. Two very fat merchants are already here, seated at a little table, sipping foaming Sopus beer, smoking contentedly, and now and then venturing a remark. The

placards give us a vivid idea of the iron rule of Stuyvesant, for most of them are ordinances telling what the tapsters and the people may not do. One commands the innkeeper not to give or sell any strong drink to the Indians; another commands him to report at once to the proper officer any one hurt or wounded in his house; another forbids him to admit or entertain any company in the evening after the ringing of the farmers' bell, or sell or furnish any liquors on the Sabbath, "travelers and boarders alone excepted, before three o'clock in the afternoon, when divine service is finished."

Does it not seem strange to read the following placard? "Whereas we are informed of the great ravages the wolf commits on the small cattle, therefore, to animate and encourage the proprietors who will go out and shoot the same, we have resolved to authorize the assistant schout [sheriff] and schepens to give public notice that whoever shall exhibit a wolf to them which hath been shot on this island on this side Harlem shall be promptly paid therefor by them, for a wolf fl. 20, and for a she-wolf fl. 30, in wampum or the value thereof." The thickets that cover the greater portion of the island are favorite retreats for these and other wild beasts.

After a substantial Dutch supper of wild fowl and game, we sit with the other guests on the stoop, where Phyllis, the barmaid, brings us spiced sangaree and pipes. The sun is sinking behind the noble forest that still lines Broadway on the west, and the people seek their stoops to enjoy the evening hour. Nearly all these have their burden of beautiful women and staid, taciturn men, the

former chatting among themselves or with acquaintances, who, strolling by, stop for neighborly gossip.

As strangers we are interested in the scene that



A Tea Party.

gradually unfolds before us. Carriages filled with ladies and gentlemen roll by, and among them the governor's state coach, with the ladies of his family bowing and

smiling. From the fort comes the measured tread of the sentinel. Lovers stroll by arm in arm on their way to the Bowling Green, the maidens of a beauty so marked that English travelers will note the fact in their books.

Nor are the common people wanting. There are laborers and artisans in toil-stained frocks and leather breeches, bare-armed servant girls in homespun waists and short gowns, turbaned negresses bringing "tea water" from the pump. Soon Gabriel Carpesey, the town herdsman, appears driving in the flocks for the evening milking from the common lands (at the present City Hall Park), where he drove them to pasture in the morning. At every gate he stops and blows his horn to tell the householder that his cow has come home.

By and by a little stir up the street attracts our attention, and looking up, there comes in view a hunting party of Indians, each warrior placing his foot in the footprint of the one preceding him, and gazing neither left nor right. They bear to market haunches of venison, wild turkeys, and the quarters of an elk. What a motley array! For instance, one sports a doublet of bearskin, another is clad in a blanket only, a third stalks along in a coat of raccoon skins, while a fourth is clad in a mantle made of the brilliant-hued feathers of the wild turkey.

The sight leads a stout burgher at our side to say: "Never was a people better fed. The woods swarm with game,—elk, deer, bear, hare, turkeys, partridges, quail,—and the waters with ducks, geese, and swans. An Indian will sell a buck for five guilders. The worshipful patroon De Vries once shot a wild turkey that

weighed thirty pounds. Hendrik de Backer killed once eleven wild geese at one shot of his big goose gun. As to fish, we have sturgeon, salmon, bass, drum, shad, cod, smelts, sheephead, herring, mackerel, blackfish, lobster, weakfish, oysters, clams, and scallops."

Scarcely have the Indians passed when a bell in the fort tolls heavily,—one, two, three, up to nine,—and with its last note the city gates close with a clang. It is the curfew bell—the "farmers' bell," the people call it, perhaps because after it egress to the farms without is shut off by the closing of the gates.

As its last melodious notes sink into the evening air, the lights in stores and houses fade, the streets cease to echo with footsteps, and New Amsterdam sinks into slumber.

At the first stroke of the bell comely Gretchen comes to show us to our chamber. It is a large, square room overhead, with a half-dozen bunks or berths set into the partition wall, and closed by a sort of trapdoor that lets down on hinges. She puts the tallow candle on the mantel and departs. We prepare for rest and then inspect our quarters. There are two feather beds in each bunk, a large and a small one. We jump in and pull the smaller one over us for a cover. By and by Gretchen returns, closes the trapdoor, and removes the candle, leaving us to sleep peacefully in our box. Next morning we rise early and go for a stroll on the Green. It is much larger than the Green of the modern city, with finer shade, and as we enter it we meet scores of little black boys, turbaned Phyllises, and stout peasant maids rosy of cheek, bareheaded and bare-armed,

bringing water from the town pump over there against the fort wall.

As it happens, next day is Sunday, and, with all



A Wedding in New Amsterdam.

respectable New Amsterdam, we go to church, hoping to see more of the people and their ways. The church is in the fort, and we are there at the first stroke of the

bell, being rewarded therefor by seeing the worshipers pass in review before us. There are two great columns that converge at the fort gate, one coming down Broadway, the other up Whitehall Street and the ferry road, while the Green rapidly fills with the wagons and carts of the country people who have come from the bouweries in the upper part of the island and on the Long Island shore.

They make a gallant show, this company of churchgoers, for great attention is paid to dress, at least by gentlemen, and the wealthy Englishmen and French Huguenots who have settled in New Amsterdam during the past twenty years have introduced rich and splendid costumes.

The ladies wear on their heads colored hoods of silk or taffeta instead of bonnets; their hair is curled and frizzled, and sprinkled with powder; on their fingers are gold and diamond rings, golden locketts on their bosoms, and attached to their girdles by fine gold chains are their Bibles and psalm books, richly bound in gold and silver. From beneath their quilted petticoats their feet, in low shoes and colored hose, "like little mice steal in and out." The petticoat is the most important article of feminine attire at this period. The rich gown is cut away in front to display it; in material it may be of cloth, silk, satin, camlet, or grosgrain, and of colors to please the fancy of the wearer, red, blue, black, white, and purple predominating.

The gentlemen display the latest London or Amsterdam fashions. Their heads are covered with powdered, full-bottomed wigs, and the wide brims of their soft hats

are looped up on the sides with rosettes. Their long coats have two rows of silver buttons in front, and the wide pockets are trimmed with silver lace; the material is colored stuff and black velvet and broadcloth. Their waistcoats, or doublets, are of bright-colored cloth or velvet, and embroidered with silver lace. Their breeches, generally of velvet, end at the knee in black silk stockings, and they wear on their feet low shoes adorned with large silver buckles. These are the gentry, of course, but the commonalty are well represented—honest Hans in loose blouse and baggy breeches of homespun, Katrina in linsey-woolsey gown and petticoat, with deep poke bonnet on her head.

The worshipers have nearly all entered when the carriage of Governor Stuyvesant, with its blazoned panels, dashes up, and the governor and his family alight—the governor, his wife, and his widowed sister, Mrs. Bayard. The former bears himself like a soldier in spite of the wooden leg, bound with bands of silver, which replaces the one lost in honorable fight with the Spanish at Saint Martin. Mrs. Stuyvesant, a beautiful French lady, daughter of a Huguenot clergyman of Paris, is famed for her beauty and her elegant toilets.

Let us follow this stately party into the church. It is a plain, bare interior, with a very high pulpit, and over it a sounding board like a bird with wings outspread.

Scarcely are we seated ere the burgomasters and schepens in their black official robes enter from the vestry, preceded by the "koeck," or bell ringer, bearing the cushion for the official pew, and followed by good

Domine Megapolensis, also in black robes. At the foot of the pulpit stairs he pauses and utters a silent prayer, while the people bow their heads. As he takes his seat in the pulpit, the zeikentrooster, or lay reader, rises and reads the morning lesson.

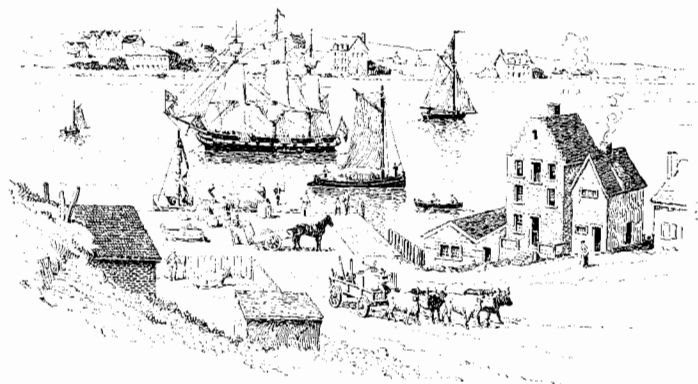
The orderly and decorous service proceeds. When the sands have all run out of the hourglass before him, the zeikentrooster announces the fact by three taps of his cane, and the domine brings his sermon to a close. Then the koeck inserts the public notices to be read in the end of his wand of office, and hands them up to the preacher. This being done, the elders rise in their pews, while the minister delivers a homily on the duty of remembering the poor, after which the elders pass through the church, and receive in a little black bag fastened to a long pole the alms of the worshipers.

Service over, the people proceed to their homes, and the poor schout-fiscal is relieved of his task of patrolling the streets, seeing that no taprooms are open, and no Indians or negro slaves gaming; for although Sunday afternoon is a holiday for the latter, an ordinance sternly forbids their playing or gaming "during the hours of morning service."

With the afternoon before us, we can follow one of the wagons which has come down from the Walloon village on the Brooklyn shore.

The wagon with the farmer and his stout, rosy-cheeked vrouw passes out the water gate by which we entered, and so along the woody road to the ferry house. The latter is merely an open shed roofed with thatch and extending into the water, so that the flatboat and

two or three skiffs that comprise the ferry fleet may be moored to it. Cornelis Dircksen and his strong-armed lads are at hand, since it is Sunday; had it been a week day we should have to take the long horn that hangs on



Ferry to Brooklyn.

yonder tree and blow a blast as loud as Roderick Dhu's in order to summon them from their work in the fields.

The ferry ordinances are posted in the house, together with the tariff of fares—a two-horse wagon or cart with the horses, 2 florins ¹ 10 stivers; a one-horse wagon, 2 florins; for every man, woman, Indian, or squaw, 6 stivers, but if there are more than one in the party 3 stivers each; children under ten years of age half fare; one horse or horned beast, 1 florin 10 stivers; a hogshhead of tobacco 16 stivers, a tun of beer the same, and smaller articles in proportion. One rule stipulates that the ferryman shall be bound to ferry over passengers from

¹ A florin is forty cents American money, a stiver one cent.

five in the morning until eight at night, "provided the windmill hath not taken in its sail."

The tide is ebbing swiftly toward Governors Island, and as the wind blows stiffly against it there is an ugly sea. Consequently the unwieldy boat is borne steadily toward the island, dancing and bobbing on the choppy waves, and we begin to fear that we shall be wrecked on its rocky shores, when the men succeed in getting her into the slack water on the Brooklyn side. Then comes the long pull up to the ferry landing at the foot of the later Fulton Street. We sympathize with Cornelis when he mops his heated brow and remarks that it is "a long pull and little money." The boat has been an hour in crossing.

There is a ferry house here also, a tavern, and a few small dwellings of laborers and workmen. The road runs diagonally up the Heights and on, passing scarcely a house on the way, until it reaches Flatbush, some five miles distant, where there is a considerable settlement. At the Wallabout (later the Navy Yard) the Walloons have a pretty village; but the modern patrician quarter, the Heights, is crowned with nature's temple, the primeval forest, as is almost the entire site of the modern city.

After a pleasant visit we return from Brooklyn and ride out by the Broad Way, or "land gate." The famous thoroughfare was first laid out as a cow path from the fort to the common pasture lands. Now it is lined with residences as far as the gate, and above that winds as a country road as far as the site of the modern City Hall, where it ends in primeval forest. The Dutch first called it Heere Straat (Principal Street),

later Breede Wig, which the English translated Broadway. Just without the gate is the West India Company's garden, afterwards the site of Trinity churchyard. Next above is the farm of Jan Jansen Damen, and next to that the company's farm, which later will be confiscated by the English, who will call it the "King's Farm" and grant it to Trinity Church. This farm lies between the modern Fulton and Chambers streets. Above this lies a rough tract of sixty-two acres, owned by Annetje Jans, the widow of Domine Bogardus. It will be sold in 1670 by a part of her heirs to Governor Lovelace, and he not being able to pay for it, it will be seized by his successor, Governor Andros, and known as the "Duke's Farm," and later granted to Trinity Church by Queen Anne.

At this time (1664) New Amsterdam contains two hundred and twenty houses and fourteen hundred people.

VII. THE ENGLISH COLONIAL PERIOD.

WE return now to take up the thread of later history. Henceforth for one hundred and eleven years, except for a brief period, New York was to remain a British colony. It must be admitted that the change was a beneficial one. Instead of a mere trading post, governed by a commercial monopoly and surrounded by hostile colonies, she now became one of several provinces under the same government, speaking the same tongue, and having the same general interests. She did not achieve full liberty, but she had *more* liberty. In treating of this period we shall have space for only the more important events, and shall give due prominence to the one great principle which underlay the rest—the struggle of the people for their rights, and especially for the right to govern themselves.

Twenty royal governors ruled New York during this period, under eight kings and queens—Charles II. and James II. of the Stuart line, William and Mary of the house of Orange, Queen Anne of the Stuart line again, and lastly the Georges I., II., and III. of the Brunswick line.¹ As a rule the royal governors were not noted for

¹ The names of these governors, with their terms of office, were: Richard Nicolls, 1664–1668; Francis Lovelace, 1668–1673; Sir Edmund Andros, 1674–1682; Thomas Dongan, 1683–1689; Henry Sloughter,