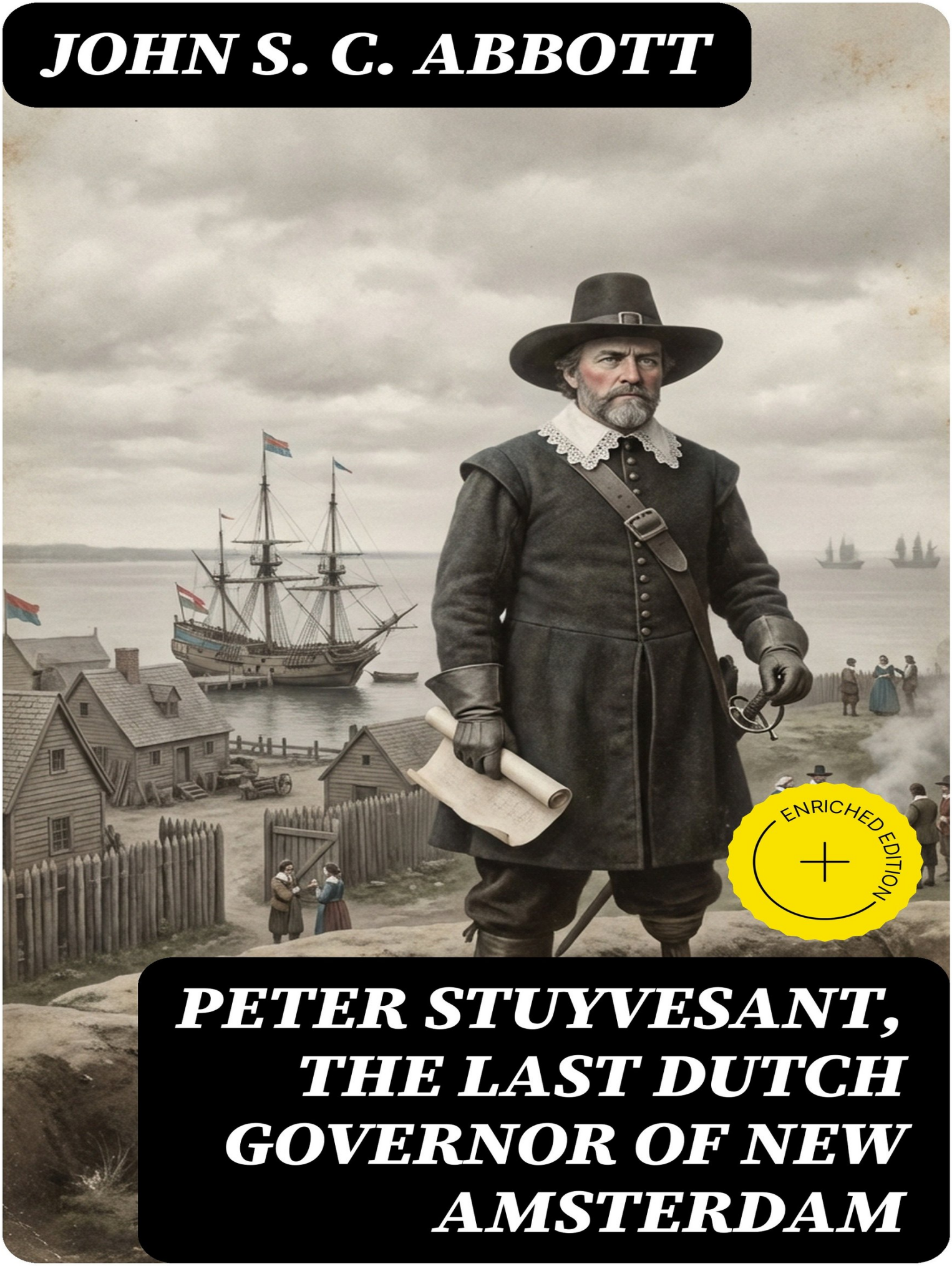
JOHN S. C. ABBOTT



PETER STUYVESANT, THE LAST DUTCH GOVERNOR OF NEW AMSTERDAM

John S. C. Abbott

Peter Stuyvesant, the Last Dutch Governor of New Amsterdam

Enriched edition.

Introduction, Studies and Commentaries by Tyler Ashford

EAN 8596547240938

Edited and published by DigiCat, 2022

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Introduction

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At the heart of John S. C. Abbott's Peter Stuyvesant, the Last Dutch Governor of New Amsterdam lies the drama of a resolute magistrate striving to impose discipline upon a bustling, multilingual port, as corporate directives, religious certainties, mercantile ambitions, and the unpredictable energies of settlers, sailors, soldiers, and neighboring nations converge in a precarious experiment of governance poised between opportunity and upheaval, where tides of migration swell the streets, wind and water carry rumors of war, every ordinance tests the contested boundary between civic order and personal liberty, and distant directors calculate profit even as empires edge toward collision.

This volume is a work of nineteenth-century American historical biography, focusing on the seventeenth-century colony of New Netherland and its capital at the southern tip of Manhattan. Abbott, a prolific writer of popular histories, presents the career of Stuyvesant within a narrative aimed at general readers rather than specialists, emphasizing character, incident, and civic development. The book situates New Amsterdam among Dutch Atlantic enterprises, commercial networks, and colonial rivalries without adopting the technical apparatus of academic historiography. Composed for an era fascinated by national origins and moral exemplars, it frames the Dutch period as an instructive prelude to the city that would become New York.

Abbott traces Stuyvesant's rise to the directorship of New Netherland and his attempts to stabilize a growing, heterogeneous settlement under the auspices of the Dutch West India Company. The narrative proceeds chronologically, moving from administrative reforms and street-level vignettes to diplomatic entanglements at the edges of the province, all rendered in clear, measured prose. Readers should expect an accessible voice that favors scene-setting and moral reflection over archival debate, with episodes chosen to illuminate public order, commerce, worship, and law. The book builds steadily toward a moment of imperial transition while keeping its focus on the pressures of everyday governance.

Running through the account is a central inquiry into authority and liberty: how far a governor may go in enforcing uniformity, and how far a diverse populace can press for accommodation without fracturing civic peace. Abbott explores the interplay of corporate power and community life, the conflicting claims of conscience and conformity, and the fragile diplomacy required where European settlers and Indigenous nations meet. Questions of taxation, militia, trade regulation, and worship become case studies in balancing principle with practicality. The narrative also considers how laws, markets, and customs begin to shape an urban identity that outlives any single administration.

Stuyvesant emerges as a figure of energy and conviction, marked by administrative rigor, personal courage, and a temperament molded by duty. Abbott's portrait emphasizes the challenges inherent in leading a small colony exposed to maritime competition, fluctuating directives from across the ocean, and the ambitions of neighboring powers. Without dwelling on later outcomes, the book shows how decisions about fortifications, trade policy, and religious gatherings

ripple through streets, farms, and harbors. The result is a study in character under constraint, attentive to the textures of civic life and to the uncertainties that accompany any borderland between commerce and sovereignty.

For contemporary readers, the narrative resonates with enduring questions about pluralism in cities, corporate influence in public affairs, and the ethics of security and surveillance in times of perceived threat. The colony's mix of languages, creeds, and livelihoods anticipates urban complexities that define modern life, while its experiments in regulation and tolerance offer lenses for evaluating present policies. Abbott's emphasis on leadership choices amid limited information and contested authority invites reflection on governance in crisis. Without anachronism, the book encourages readers to consider how rules take root, how dissent is channeled, and how communities negotiate belonging under competing sovereignties.

To approach this book today is to gain an intelligible path into the formative years of a world city, conveyed by a writer committed to narrative momentum and moral clarity. Its focus on the practical art of governing a plural society, and on the civic habits that enable coexistence, makes it a useful companion to more specialized studies. Readers may also note the vantage point of a nineteenth-century author and bring their own critical awareness to questions of source and perspective. Even so, the portrait remains a compelling invitation to think carefully about power, responsibility, and the making of communities.

Synopsis

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John S. C. Abbott’s Peter Stuyvesant, the Last Dutch Governor of New Amsterdam is a nineteenth-century biographical history that situates its subject within the broader story of Dutch colonial ambition in North America. Drawing on printed chronicles and official records available to his era, Abbott sketches the institutions of the Dutch West India Company and the mercantile ethos that shaped New Netherland. He frames Stuyvesant as a figure through whom questions of authority, civic order, and religious policy can be examined, signaling a narrative that moves from European power politics to the daily work of building and defending a vulnerable Atlantic outpost.

Abbott begins with Stuyvesant’s origins in the Dutch Republic and early service for the Dutch West India Company, emphasizing the training that produced a disciplined, orthodox administrator. The biography recounts his Caribbean campaigns and the failed attack on St. Martin in which he lost a leg, a wound that became emblematic of his unbending will. Called to higher responsibility, he was appointed Director-General of New Netherland, tasked with restoring order, securing revenues, and protecting scattered settlements. Abbott presents the transatlantic passage and the expectations placed upon him as the threshold moment that defines the book’s central portrait of resolve under constraint.

On arrival in New Amsterdam, Stuyvesant moves to regularize civic life and strengthen defenses. Abbott follows

his efforts to enforce trade rules, repair fortifications, support the Dutch Reformed Church, and clarify relations with powerful patroons upriver. A key chapter traces the granting of municipal institutions to New Amsterdam, giving form to an urban administration while keeping ultimate authority in company hands. Throughout, Abbott portrays a governor who links prosperity to discipline, pressing for revenue collection and orderly markets. The narrative balances administrative detail with glimpses of a polyglot port, where merchants, artisans, and farmers negotiate the limits of corporate rule.

Domestic tensions occupy a sustained section of the book, particularly conflicts over religious practice and local representation. Abbott describes petitions for broader rights and the governor’s resistance to sectarian diversification, including disputes involving Lutherans and the arrival of Quaker missionaries. The Flushing Remonstrance appears as a landmark protest from a Long Island community, illuminating how conscience claims collided with directives from a confessional state. Abbott neither romanticizes dissent nor excuses severity; instead he uses the episodes to probe the practical boundaries of toleration in a small colony where unity was argued to be inseparable from security and commercial stability.

External challenges draw Stuyvesant beyond Manhattan. Abbott narrates the rivalry with New Sweden on the Delaware, culminating in a decisive expedition that brought the Swedish outposts under Dutch control. He also recounts the near-simultaneous eruption of violence with Native groups around New Amsterdam, underscoring the fragility of frontier relations and the risks of overextension. In New England, negotiations and protests over borders and trade signal the colony’s diplomatic entanglements. These chapters foreground the governor’s strategic instincts and

limits, as he juggles military action, treaty-making, and fiscal scarcity while attempting to secure a place for New Netherland amid aggressive neighbors.

Abbott then turns to the mounting English pressure that reframes every domestic and regional policy. He situates the colony within imperial rivalries and the fluctuating priorities of the Dutch West India Company, showing how local grievances intersected with transatlantic calculations. The arrival of an English fleet forces a test of leadership, with town officers and citizens weighing costs and expectations. Abbott emphasizes process—councils, negotiations, and the calculus of preservation—rather than sensational battle scenes, presenting a climax defined by political judgment. The outcome, while historically well known, is treated for its terms and implications more than for drama, keeping attention on civic continuity.

In closing, Abbott assesses Stuyvesant’s character and legacy: a rigorous, often inflexible administrator whose convictions helped build institutions even as they provoked resistance. The biography reflects on how corporate colonization shaped early urban life and how debates over conscience, commerce, and authority prefigured later American controversies. Abbott’s measured, documentary tone underscores the endurance of these questions, inviting readers to consider the costs of order and the claims of liberty in a plural society. Without dwelling on private epilogue, the work’s resonance lies in connecting a provincial governorship to the lasting foundations of a city and the evolving ideals that would define it.

Historical Context

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John S. C. Abbott’s biography of Peter Stuyvesant situates readers in the mid-seventeenth-century Dutch colony of New Netherland, governed by the chartered Dutch West India Company. The narrative centers on New Amsterdam, a fortified port at the southern tip of Manhattan, and its hinterlands along the Hudson, Delaware, and Long Island. Abbott, a nineteenth-century American popular historian, presents Stuyvesant’s tenure (1647–1664) within the broader Atlantic contest among Dutch, English, Swedish, and Native polities. The book’s setting includes civil and ecclesiastical institutions—Company councils, municipal courts, and the Dutch Reformed Church—that structured colonial life and framed debates over authority, commerce, and conscience.

The Dutch Republic chartered the West India Company in 1621 to wage war against Iberian rivals and to exploit Atlantic trade. In New Netherland, Company agents pursued the beaver fur trade along the Hudson River and authorized patroon estates under the 1629 Charter of Freedoms and Exemptions. New Amsterdam, anchored by Fort Amsterdam, became a multilingual entrepôt tied to European, African, and Native networks. Company-owned and privately held enslaved Africans labored on construction, farms, and public works, shaping the town’s growth. These commercial, legal, and social frameworks precede Stuyvesant in Abbott’s account and provide the institutional stage upon which his governance unfolds.

Before Stuyvesant’s arrival, misrule and bloody conflict under Director Willem Kieft—especially Kieft’s War (1643–1645) with surrounding Native communities—had damaged trade and trust. Appointed Director-General after service in the Caribbean, where he lost a leg during a 1644 expedition, Stuyvesant reached New Amsterdam in 1647 to reassert order. Abbott emphasizes his stern, disciplined style and reliance on the Director-General and Council. Under pressure from colonists seeking representation, Stuyvesant accepted a municipal charter in 1653, creating burgomasters and schepens for New Amsterdam. The town raised a defensive palisade along present-day Wall Street and tightened regulations on taverns, trade, and militia service.

Regional rivalries forced negotiation and war. In 1650, Stuyvesant and English colonial leaders reached the Hartford agreement to mark contested boundaries, though English settlements continued to press onto Long Island and up the Sound. To the southwest, the Dutch confronted New Sweden on the Delaware; in 1655 Stuyvesant led a successful expedition that absorbed Swedish forts, including Fort Christina. That same year, allied Native attacks devastated outlying Dutch farms in the so-called Peach Tree War, exposing vulnerabilities. Later, the Esopus Wars (1659–1660, 1663) around Wiltwyck prompted campaigns and treaties. Abbott traces these episodes to show security shaping policy and civic cohesion.

Religious life revolved around the Dutch Reformed Church, yet the colony’s trading character brought diverse faiths. In 1654, Jewish refugees from Dutch Brazil reached New Amsterdam; Stuyvesant sought their removal, but Company directors in Amsterdam insisted on their limited residence and trade. His administration fined and banished Quakers and dissenters, provoking the Flushing Remonstrance

(1657), in which English-speaking townspeople appealed to traditions of conscience and Dutch toleration. Abbott underscores how metropolitan instructions gradually moderated colonial zeal, revealing a tension between order and liberty. These disputes inform the book’s treatment of leadership, law, and the emergence of broader ideas of toleration.

Stuyvesant’s government regulated commerce through port duties, licenses, and ordinances meant to steady revenues for the Company and the garrison. The colony’s economy mixed fur, provisioning, small-scale agriculture, and coastal trade, as merchants and artisans multiplied on Manhattan and in outlying villages. Enslaved labor remained integral; Company slaves maintained roads and built fortifications, and enslaved workers labored at the farm later remembered as the Bowery. Legal forums—Council sessions and the municipal court—handled debts, contracts, and disputes, while militia musters and night watches enforced order. Abbott presents these everyday mechanisms to explain both the efficiency and the friction of Company rule in a growing town.

Anglo-Dutch rivalry eventually overwhelmed New Netherland. In 1664, an English squadron under Colonel Richard Nicolls, armed with a patent for the Duke of York, demanded surrender of New Amsterdam. After negotiation with town leaders, Stuyvesant accepted Articles of Capitulation that preserved residents’ property, language, and worship while transferring sovereignty. The colony became New York, and English law and institutions advanced alongside continuities in commerce and society. Abbott situates the handover within maritime wars between the Dutch and English; the 1667 Treaty of Breda confirmed English possession, cementing Stuyvesant’s place in history as the final Dutch director-general in Manhattan.

Writing for a broad nineteenth-century American audience, Abbott blends biography with civic history, using accessible prose and moral judgment. Drawing on translated colonial documents and contemporary compilations of New York records, he stresses Stuyvesant’s integrity, energy, and imperious temper while tracing how municipal rights, commercial habits, and debates over conscience took root. The book appears in an era fascinated by colonial origins and New York’s rapid urbanization, often reframing earlier satirical images of the Dutch with sober narrative. By highlighting both Dutch contributions to pluralism and the costs of authoritarian policy, Abbott’s work reflects and gently critiques the priorities of his own time.

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PREFACE

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It is impossible to understand the very remarkable character and career of Peter Stuyvesant, the last, and by far the most illustrious, of the Dutch governors of New Amsterdam, without an acquaintance with the early history of the Dutch colonies upon the Hudson and the Delaware. The Antiquarian may desire to look more fully into the details of the early history of New York. But this brief, yet comprehensive narrative, will probably give most of the information upon that subject, which the busy, general reader can desire.

In this series of "*The Pioneers and Patriots of America*," the reader will find, in the "Life of De Soto," a minute description of the extreme south and its inhabitants, when the Mississippi rolled its flood through forests which the foot of the white man had never penetrated. "Daniel Boone" conducts us to the beautiful streams and hunting grounds of Kentucky, when the Indian was the sole possessor of those sublime solitudes. In the "Life of Miles Standish, the Puritan Captain," we are made familiar with that most wonderful of all modern stories, the settlement of New England. "Peter Stuyvesant" leads us to the Hudson, from the time when its majestic waters were disturbed only by the arrowy flight of the birch canoe, till European colonization had laid there the foundations of one of the most flourishing cities on this globe.

In these Histories the writer has spared no labor in gathering all the information in his power, respecting those Olden Times, now passing so rapidly into oblivion.

JOHN S. C. ABBOTT.

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CHAPTER I.—DISCOVERY OF THE HUDSON RIVER.

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The Discovery of America.—Colonies.—The Bay of New York.—Description of the Bay.—Voyage of Sir Henry Hudson.—Discovery of the Delaware.—The Natives.—The Boat Attacked.—Ascending the Hudson.—Escape of the Prisoners.—The Chiefs Intoxicated.—The Return.—The Village at Castleton.—The Theft and its Punishment.—The Return to England.

On the 12th of October, 1492, Christopher Columbus landed upon the shores of San Salvador, one of the West India islands, and thus revealed to astonished Europe a new world. Four years after this, in the year 1496, Sebastian Cabot discovered the continent of North America. Thirty-three years passed away of many wild adventures of European voyagers, when, in the year 1539, Ferdinand de Soto landed at Tampa Bay, in Florida, and penetrating the interior of the vast continent, discovered the Mississippi River. Twenty-six years more elapsed ere, in 1565, the first European colony was established at St. Augustine, in Florida.

In the year 1585, twenty years after the settlement of St. Augustine, Sir Walter Raleigh commenced his world-renowned colony upon the Roanoke. Twenty-two years passed when, in 1607, the London Company established the Virginia Colony upon the banks of the James river.

In the year 1524, a Florentine navigator by the name of Jean de Verrazano[2], under commission of the French monarch, Francis I., coasting northward along the shores of the continent, entered the bay of New York. In a letter to king Francis I., dated July 8th, 1524, he thus describes the Narrows and the Bay:

"After proceeding one hundred leagues, we found a very pleasant situation among some steep hills, through which a very large river, deep at its mouth, forced its way to the sea. From the sea to the estuary of the river, any ship heavily laden might pass, with the help of the tide, which rises eight feet. But as we were riding at anchor, in a good berth, we would not venture up in our vessel without a knowledge of the mouth. Therefore we took the boat, and entering the river, we found the country, on its banks, well peopled, the inhabitants not much differing from the others, being dressed out with the feathers of birds of various colors.

"They came towards us with evident delight, raising loud shouts of admiration, and showing us where we could most securely land with our boat. We passed up this river about half a league, when we found it formed a most beautiful lake three leagues in circuit, upon which they were rowing thirty or more of their small boats, from one shore to the other, filled with multitudes who came to see us. All of a sudden, as is wont to happen to navigators, a violent contrary wind blew in from the sea, and forced us to return to our ship, greatly regretting to leave this region which seemed so commodious and delightful, and which we supposed must also contain great riches, as the hills showed many indications of minerals."

In the year 1609, a band of Dutch merchants, called the East India Company, fitted out an expedition to discover a northeast passage to the Indies. They built a vessel of about eighty tons burden, called the Half Moon[1], and manning her with twenty sailors, entrusted the command to an Englishman, Henry Hudson. He sailed from the Texel in his solitary vessel, upon this hazardous expedition, on the 6th of April, 1609. Doubling North Cape amid storms and fog and ice, after the rough voyage of a month, he became discouraged, and determined to change his plan and seek a northwest passage.

Crossing the Atlantic, which, in those high latitudes, seems ever to be swept by storms, he laid in a store of codfish on the banks of Newfoundland, and, on the 17th of July, ran his storm-shattered bark into what is now known as Penobscot Bay, on the coast of Maine. Here he found the natives friendly. He had lost his foremast in a storm, and remained at this place a week, preparing a new one. He had heard in Europe that there was probably a passage through

the unexplored continent, to the Pacific ocean, south of Virginia. Continuing his voyage southward, he passed Cape Cod, which he supposed to be an island, and arrived on the 18th of August at the entrance of Chesapeake Bay. He then ran along the coast in a northerly direction and entered a great bay with rivers, which he named South River, but which has since received the name of the Delaware.

Still following the coast, he reached the Highlands of Neversink, on the 2d of September, and at three o'clock in the afternoon of the same day, came to what then seemed to him to be the mouths of three large rivers. These were undoubtedly the Raritan, the Narrows, and Rockaway Inlet. After careful soundings he, the next morning, passed Sandy Hook and anchored in the bay at but two cables' length from the shore. The waters around him were swarming with fish[1q]. The scenery appeared to him enchanting. Small Indian villages were clustered along the shores, and many birch canoes were seen gliding rapidly to and fro, indicating that the region was quite densely populated, and that the natives were greatly agitated if not alarmed by the strange arrival.

Soon several canoes approached the vessel, and the natives came on board, bringing with them green tobacco and corn, which they wished to exchange for knives and beads. Many vessels, engaged in fishing, had touched at several points on the Atlantic coast, and trafficked with the Indians. The inhabitants of this unexplored bay had heard of these adventurers, of the wonders which they brought from distant lands, and they were in a state of great excitement, in being visited in their turn.

The bay was fringed with the almost impenetrable forest. Here and there were picturesque openings, where Indian villages, in peaceful beauty, were clustered in the midst of the surrounding foliage. The natives were dressed in

garments of deer skin, very softly tanned, hanging gracefully about their persons, and often beautifully ornamented. Many of them wore mantles of gorgeously-colored feathers, quite artistically woven together; and they had also garments of rich furs.

The following morning a party from the vessel landed, in a boat, on the Jersey shore. They were received with great hospitality by the natives, who led them into their wigwams, and regaled them with dried currants, which were quite palatable. As they had no interpreters, they could only communicate with each other by signs. They found the land generally covered with forest trees, with occasional meadows of green grass, profusely interspersed with flowers, which filled the air with fragrance.

Another party of five men, was sent to examine the northern shore of the bay. They probably inflicted some gross outrage upon the natives, as the crew of the Half Moon had conducted infamously, at other points of the coast, where they had landed, robbing and shooting the Indians. The sun had gone down, and a rainy evening had set in, when two canoes impelled rapidly by paddles, overtook the returning boat. One contained fourteen Indians; the other twelve. Approaching within arrow shot, they discharged a volley into the boat. One of these keen-pointed weapons, struck John Coleman in the throat, and instantly killed him. Two other Englishmen were wounded.

The Indians seemed satisfied with their revenge. Though they numbered twenty-six warriors, and there were but two white men left unwounded, the savages permitted them to continue their passage to the vessel, without further molestation. The journalist, who records this assault, is silent respecting the provocation which led to it.

Hudson was alarmed by this hostility, and expected an immediate attack upon the ship. He promptly erected bulwarks along the sides of his vessel as a protection from the arrows of the fleet of war canoes, with which, he supposed, he would be surrounded the next morning.

But the night passed quietly away; the morning dawned, and a few canoes approached from another part of the bay, with no signs of hostility. These peaceful Indians had manifestly heard nothing of the disturbance of the night before. They came unarmed, with all friendly attestations, unsuspicious of danger, and brought corn and tobacco, which they offered in exchange for such trinkets as they could obtain. The next morning, two large canoes approached from the shores of the bay which was many leagues in extent, one of which canoes seemed to be filled with warriors, thoroughly armed. The other was a trading boat.

It is probable that those in the war canoe, came as a protection for their companions. It is hardly conceivable that the Indians, naturally timid and wary, could have thought, with a single war canoe containing scarcely a dozen men, armed with arrows, to attack the formidable vessel of Sir Henry Hudson, armed, as they well knew it to be, with the terrible energies of thunder and lightning.

The Indians were so unsuspicious of danger, that two of them unhesitatingly came on board. Sir Henry, we must think treacherously, seized them as prisoners, and ordered the canoes containing their companions, to keep at a distance. Soon another canoe came, from another direction, with only two men in it. Sir Henry received them both on board, and seized them also as prisoners. He intended to hold them as hostages, that he might thus protect himself from any hostility on the part of the natives.

One of these men upon finding himself a captive, leaped overboard and swam ashore. Sir Henry had now three prisoners and he guarded them very closely. Yet the natives, either from policy or from fear, made no hostile demonstrations against him.

The half Moon remained in the outer bay nine days. Several exploring tours had been sent out, visiting what is now known as the Jersey shore. None of these, with the exception of the one to which we have alluded, encountered any hostility whatever from the natives.

On the 11th of September, Hudson sailed through the Narrows, and anchored in the still and silent waters of New York harbor. These waters had never then been whitened by a sail, or ploughed by any craft larger than the Indian's birch canoe. The next morning, the 12th of September, Sir Henry again spread his sails, and commenced his memorable voyage up the solitary river, which has subsequently borne his name. Only here and there could a few wigwams be seen, scattered through the forest, which fringed its banks. But human life was there, then as now, with the joys of the bridal and the grief of the burial. When we contemplate the million of people, now crowded around the mouth of the Hudson, convulsively struggling in all the stern conflicts of this tumultuous life, it may be doubted whether there were not as much real happiness in the wigwam of the Indian as is now to be found in the gorgeous palace of the modern millionaire. And when we contemplate the vices and the crimes which civilization has developed, it may also be doubted whether, there were not as much virtue, comparatively with the numbers to be found, within the bark hut of the red man, as is now to be found in the abodes of the more boastful white man.

Sir Henry Hudson hoped to find this majestic river, inviting him into unknown regions of the north, to be an arm of the

sea through which he could cross the continent to the shores of the Pacific. It was not then known whether this continent were a few miles or thousands of miles in breadth. For the first two days the wind was contrary, and the Half Moon ascended the river but about two miles. The still friendly natives paddled out from the shores, in their bark canoes in great numbers, coming on board entirely unarmed and offering for sale, excellent oysters and vegetables in great abundance.

On the third day a strong breeze sprang up from the southeast. All sail was set upon the Half Moon. It was a bright and beautiful autumnal day[2q]. Through enchanting scenery the little vessel ploughed the waves of the unknown river, till, having accomplished forty miles, just at sunset they dropped their anchor in the still waters which are surrounded by the grand and gloomy cliffs of the Highlands.

The next morning, the river and its shores, were enveloped in a dense fog, so that one could see but a few yards before him. Taking advantage of this, the Indian captives, whom Sir Henry Hudson had so treacherously ensnared, leaped out of one of the port-holes, and swam ashore. As soon as they reached the land, they raised loud shouts of hatred and defiance.

The sun soon dispelled the fog, and the voyage was continued, and by night the Half Moon reached a point supposed to be near the present site of Catskill Landing. The natives were numerous, and very friendly. They came freely on board, apparently unsuspicious of danger. It was noticeable that there were many very aged men among them. The river seemed full of fishes, and with their hooks they took large numbers. The next day the Indians came on board in crowds, bringing pumpkins and tobacco. The vessel's boats were sent on shore to procure fresh water.

Notes

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1 The Half Moon was the small Dutch-commissioned vessel (about eighty tons, crewed by roughly twenty men) commanded by Henry Hudson on his 1609 voyage that explored New York Harbor and the river later named for him.

2 Jean de Verrazano (often anglicized Verrazzano) was a Florentine navigator sailing for France who, under commission of King Francis I, entered New York Bay in 1524 and reported on the region to the French court.

3 "Mauritius river" is an early Dutch name for the Hudson River, given in honor of Prince Maurice (Maurits) of Orange and used by some 17th-century Dutch explorers and traders.

4 The States-General was the governing assembly of the Dutch Republic (the United Provinces) in the 16th–18th centuries, responsible for national policy and for approving colonial charters and treaties.

5 A Patroon was a landholder under a charter of the Dutch West India Company who received large tracts in New Netherland and quasi-feudal rights (including jurisdiction and the obligation to settle a colony of a specified number of adult inhabitants).

6 Swaanendael (literally 'Swan Valley') was a small Dutch settlement established near the mouth of Delaware Bay about 1631 (near present-day Lewes, Delaware) that was destroyed and its colonists killed in 1632.