

olina had bet on her principles, and won from Lin the few dollars that I had lent the puncher.

"And what will you do now?" I said to Lin.

"Join the beef round-up. Balaam's payin' forty dollars. I guess that 'll keep a single man."

It may pacify the reader to learn that the experiment herein narrated is a fact.

I shall not expect him to believe, any more than I do, that Hilbrun brought about such a state of things by his own arts; but it is what all Cheyenne saw on a certain September 1st, well remembered by the townsfolk. A writer must see to it that his fiction is *less strange* than truth, else nobody would tolerate him. The above portents, then, are not fiction; I should not dare invent anything so divinely improbable.

NEW YORK SLAVE-TRADERS.

BY THOMAS A. JANVIER.

I.

FROM the very foundation of the New Netherland colony slavery was part and parcel of its economic organization. Under the conditions then existing this was a matter of necessity. A colonial establishment of that period, to be well equipped, required slaves in just the same way that it required horses and cows. In regions where the natives were tractable—as in the West India Islands and on the Spanish Main—the simple process was resorted to of converting into slaves the primitive land-owners and then setting them to tilling what had been their own soil: an arrangement which obviously possessed economical and practical advantages of a superior order. Where this plan could not be made operative—in regions where the natives were of a stiff-necked sort that declined to be enslaved and therefore had to be exterminated; as was the rule, for the most part, in our latitudes—the necessary slaves were brought from Africa: a continent that has been the recognized source of slave-supply for all people within reach of it from the earliest ages of the world. The Dutch in New Netherland did succeed in making slaves of a few Indians, but these creatures were of so perverse a disposition that using them on a large scale was impossible. Therefore—the matter being facilitated by the possession by the Dutch West India Company of trading-stations on the African coast—the New-Netherlanders drew from Africa, either directly or by way of the Dutch West Indies, their necessary supply of beasts of toil.

So normal an institution was slavery in those days—so like any of the unob-

served blessings of Providence, which are referred to only when they fail to occur—that I cannot determine from the records when slave-holding on this island began. The first formal mention of it that I have found is in the Charter of Liberties and Exemptions of 1629, the thirtieth clause of which instrument declares that "The Company will use their endeavors to supply the colonists with as many blacks as they conveniently can, on the conditions hereafter to be made"; and in the New Project of Liberties and Exemptions, of a slightly later date, the thirty-first clause provides that "In like manner the Incorporated West India Company shall allot to each Patroon twelve Black men and women, out of the prizes in which Negroes shall be found, for the advancement of the Colonies in New Netherland."

But before either of these promises to provide blacks was made, the blacks already were here. Under date of August 11, 1628, the hapless Dominie Jonas Michaëlius wrote "from the Island of Manhatas in New Netherland" to "the honorable, learned, and pious Mr. Adrian Smotius" in Amsterdam in these sad terms: "It has pleased the Lord, seven weeks after we arrived in this country, to take from me my good partner, who has been to me for more than sixteen years a virtuous, faithful, and in every respect amiable yoke-fellow . . . I find myself by the loss of my good and helping partner very much hindered and distressed—for my two little daughters are yet small; maid-servants are not to be had, at least none whom they advise me to take; and the Angola slaves are thievish lazy and useless trash."

I cite these words of the Dominie Michælius because of his reference to the presence in New Amsterdam of Angola slaves at that still early time—but five years after what may be regarded as the formal founding of the town. But 'twould be a cruelty of neglect not to accord in passing to this luckless gentleman—worn by love desolate, burdened with the care of his little girls, and most of all, I fancy, harried in his choice of a maid-servant by the too-overt suspicions and advice of all the old cats in the colony—a moment of sympathetic sorrow: even though the same be in the wake of his tribulations by nearly three hundred years.

Another bit of testimony, less tenderly appealing but more curious, carries back the establishment of slavery in New Amsterdam still nearer to the moment of the city's birth. This is the act of manumission by which Director-General Kieft gave liberty to certain slaves in the year 1644. The act declares that consideration has been given to the petition of certain negroes "who served the Company during eighteen or nineteen years....to be delivered from slavery and be manumitted: urging that they have been in the Company's service during a number of years, and have been long since promised that they should have their liberty; and, further, that their families are increasing by numerous children, for whom they are unable to provide if they must continue to serve the Company, as they all thus far have been obliged to do. Therefore," the act continues, "we, the Director and Council, do free said negroes with their wives from slavery, and place them on the same footing as all other freemen here in New Netherland....with the express condition that all their children already born or yet to be born shall be obliged to serve the Company as slaves."

Neither then nor later was the long service of a slave recognized as a sufficient reason for giving him his liberty; nor has it been customary even for slaves to be charged with the duty of providing for their children; nor possible that children of freed slaves, born after the freedom of their parents has been granted, should be relegated back into slavery. In short, this act of manumission so bristles with enticingly curious contradictions that I am persuaded that behind it lies hid in some shape or other a bit of genuine romance; that here, if only

we could follow it, is one of those happy turns of history which lead us away from the arid region of important events and for a thrilling moment place us in living touch with long-dead human hearts.

Some day, perhaps, I shall find the key to this alluring little puzzle; but for my present purposes the bare facts which it exhibits suffice: Inasmuch as these negroes had "served the company for eighteen or nineteen years" preceding the year 1644, it follows that slavery on this island practically was contemporaneous with the establishment in possession here of the Dutch West India Company; that, practically, it was a cardinal characteristic of the town of New Amsterdam—which was to be in the fulness of time the city of New York—from the very start.

II.

Actually, in those early days of the colony, the number of slaves in New Netherland was small. The promise of the West India Company to provide blacks for the colonists was so conditioned that it amounted to little; and at the same time the Company's laws forbade the despatch of slave-ships direct to Africa by the colonists themselves. Yet the need for laborers in the colony was very urgent indeed.

As a half-way measure, in the year 1647, the Board of Audit advised that the people of New Netherland should be permitted "to export their produce even to Brazil in their own vessels....and to trade it off there and to carry back slaves in return"; and at the same time the Board proposed that "orders should be made in Brazil that Jobbers and Jews who buy up the slaves for cash should not sell them on credit at a higher rate than one per cent. a month, the slaves being hypothecated to them for the full amount"—under which wise and beneficent arrangements, according to the forecast of the Board, it was hoped that the New Netherland might be adequately supplied with laborers, and that "the slave trade which hath so long lain dormant, to the great damage of the Company, might by degrees be again revived." But nothing seems to have come of this good plan—possibly because "the Jobbers and Jews," by openly accepting and secretly evading the one-per-cent.-a-month order, succeeded in cornering against the New Netherlanders the slave-market of the Brazils.

As to the slaves "out of prizes" so airily promised to the Patroons by the Company, the event by no means justified the expectation. I have found record of but two captures of ships with slaves aboard; and one of these turned out to be almost more plague than profit, because of the illiberal way in which the capture was regarded by the original owners of the vessel in which the blacks were found. Acting at the instance and on behalf of these narrow-minded persons, the Spanish Ambassador at the Hague made formal complaint, under date of December 11, 1655, that Captain Sebastian de Raeff, aided by his lieutenant, Jan Van Campen, "had committed piracies in the West Indies on the subjects of the King . . . having, among other things, captured near the Island of Jamaica, after a bloody engagement, a Spanish ship which he carried into, and sold with all its cargo at, New Netherland . . . whereby Juan Gallardo, pilot of the said ship . . . lost, exclusive of many articles of a considerable value, nine negroes, his own property, and thirty-six others, the property of Antonio de Rucia, who were under his care" —all of which negroes the Ambassador demanded should be returned to their original owners without delay.

Oddly enough, after taking a couple of years to consider the matter, the States General actually decided to comply with this extravagant request. Yet that it ever actually was complied with I gravely doubt. The last trace of the matter that I find in the records is near another year later—when the Spanish pilot is contending hotly for his property in the courts of New Amsterdam: with the result, apparently, of getting himself more and more entangled in the intricacies of Dutch colonial law. But even though the slaves were not surrendered, the bother of having to fight for them in the courts was excessive; and especially when ownership of them was acquired by virtue of seizure at sea.

But back of all this misfortune in the matter of slave-supply was mismanagement. To a large extent the lack of blacks in New Netherland was due to bad government—of which there was almost as much, proportionally to the number of people governed, in those early times on this island as there is at the present day. This general fact is brought out with much emphasis in the famous Remonstrance of

July 28, 1649—in which the City Club of the period assails the Tammany of the period with great vigor—and the particular fact just referred to is embodied in the pithy charge that "Even the negroes, which were obtained from Tamanderé, were sold for pork and peas. Something wonderful was to be performed with these, but they just dripped through the fingers."

The Remonstrance certainly did a good deal toward clearing the air in the colony; and probably it had its share in determining the Company to give the colonists a chance to try what they could do in the slave-trade for themselves—which permission was accorded under date of April 4, 1652, with the limitations that the New York ships should not trade to the eastward of Popo (that they might be kept at a safe distance from the Gold Coast), and that a duty of fifteen guilders should be paid precedent to the landing in America of each slave. Possibly this permissive act was not made operative immediately. Certainly the first action taken under it (of which I have been able to find record) is in the minutes of the Amsterdam College of the Dutch West India Company, under date of Thursday, 19 November 1654, when "appeared before the Directors Jan de Sweerts and Dirk Pietersen and asked liberty to sail with their vessel the *White Horse* to the coast of Africa to obtain a cargo of slaves and to import the same to New Netherland, provided they pay the customary duties. Which request being discussed, long deliberations followed which were at length concluded, and it was decided that by this means the population of the country was promoted and the situation of the inhabitants improved: whereupon the petition was granted."

The *White Horse*, presumably the first slave-ship, properly so called, that ever entered this harbor, arrived here in the late spring or early summer of the year 1655; and the choice pieces of her cargo, sold at auction, fetched about \$125 each—a large sum, it will be observed, for colonial regions in those times—whence the prices ranged downward. Yet were some of these purchases very bad investments indeed. When the sale was no more than ended several of the negroes "were found to have been infected with some fatal disorder"; of which the first case to declare itself was that of a girl bought by

Nicholas Boot: "whilst being led home along the shore of the East River, being opposite to Litschoe's tavern, she fell, crying 'Ariba!' She was taken up, and proceeding a few paces farther, again fell, her eyes being fixed in her head. Her owner coming up asked what was the matter? Upon which she cried 'Moa! Moa!' Some of the by-standers said: 'She is drunk. It will soon pass away. She is sound at heart.' At the city gate she was put in a wagon and taken to her master's house, but died in the evening."

It was on what now is Pearl Street, then the water-front, and—as is shown by the reference to Litschoe's tavern and to the city gate—a little to the south of what now is Wall Street that this poor purchase of Nicholas Boot's fell down a-dying: a tragedy not easily reconstructed mentally nowadays in that dingy thoroughfare in the twilight beneath the Elevated Railway and to the clanging accompaniment of rushing trains.

III.

Possibly the venture in the *White Horse* was the only private venture from Africa to New Amsterdam in the time of Dutch domination. Certainly the West India Company—the directors whereof were awake to chances of money-making—presently took the trade into their own hands.

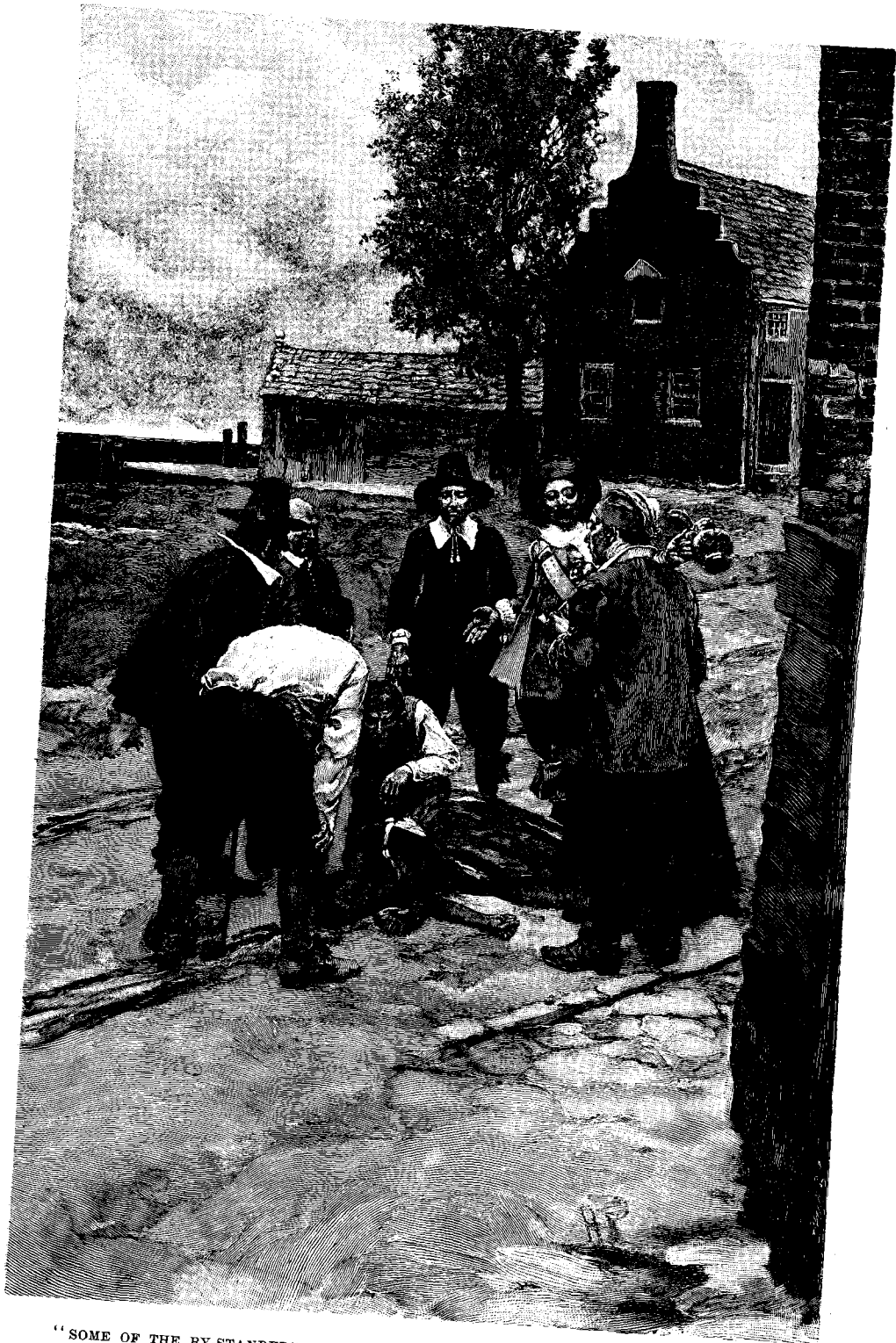
The first charter-party in the Company's name seems to be that with "Jan-ssen Eykenboom from Hoorn, master, under God, of his vessel named the *Oak Tree*"; which is dated "In the year of the birth of our Lord and Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ, 1659, the 25th of January," and which declares that "when the lading is on board, the vessel shall sail, with the first favorable wind and weather which God may vouchsafe, from the harbor direct toward the coast of Africa," and that the skipper "shall trade at all such places with his goods and merchandise, take in passengers, load and unload, and trade at the pleasure of the officers of the Company." It is worth while to note that the dimensions of this vessel, presumably a fair sample of the ships of the period, are stated in the charter-party to be: "in length 120 ft, in width 25½ ft, draft 11 ft, above the water-line 5 to 6 ft, with a poop-deck—that is to say, about the size of a small coastwise schooner of the present day. The ordinary lading seems to have been from 350 to 400 slaves,

of which (not unreasonably) from twenty-five to fifty per cent. were expected to die on the voyage.

The result of the venture in the *Oak Tree* is hidden away at Amsterdam in the manuscript archives of the West India Company; but there survives more openly, in the printed records, the log of another ship belonging to the Company, the *St. John*, which made a voyage to Africa under a like charter in the same year, 1659.

In its earlier portion this record is typical, no doubt, of the ordinary experience at that time of slaves on the West African coast. The *St. John* traded successfully at "Rio Real, before a village named Bavy" (presumably Bonny), where were taken on board "219 slaves, men women boys and girls"; which number was increased to 390 in the course of farther trade at "Rio Camerones" and at other points along the coast. But even while this good trading was going on difficulty was encountered in procuring food; and then, presently, "by reason of the excessive rains" and "through the bad victuals with which we were provided at Delmina" (the Elmina of the present day) "many of our slaves were affected by a malignant dysentery." Half of the cargo at once was transferred to "the yacht *Peace*," also a Company vessel; but the deaths among the slaves continued, and "our Master, his name was Martin Delanoy," died also. A little earlier the log notes that "our cooper died, his name was Pieter Claessen, from Amsterdam"—a death that produced more disaster when, on taking in water for the voyage, "among the water-casks about forty fell to pieces and could not be repaired, as our cooper had died at Rio Camerones." To make good the short water-supply, 5000 cocoanuts and 5000 sweet oranges were taken aboard; and then, on August 15th, a course was laid for Curaçoa. In some way or another the run of eleven weeks across the Atlantic was accomplished with no farther misfortune, saving, of course, the steady diminution of the cargo by death. The supercargo seems to have been an orderly person, his death-list having been kept with an admirable precision in this form:

	Men	Women	Boys
July 10.....	2	1	1
" 12.....		2	
" 14.....	1		
" 16.....	3	2	



"SOME OF THE BY-STANDERS SAID: 'SHE IS DRUNK. IT WILL SOON PASS AWAY.'"

and so on—with the parenthetical note following the single entry on August 14th, “(did spring overboard).” And then, at last, being come almost to the destined port, the log records: “On the 1st November, two hours before daylight, lost the ship on the Rocks of Rocus, and we escaped in the boat to the island of Curaçoa, leaving in the ship 85 slaves—as there was no hope of saving the slaves when we were compelled to leave the vessel in the heavy surge.”

In the end, the slaves actually were saved, but not in a way profitable to the Company. The last bit of information touching the matter is the deposition of the master of a sloop sent out from Curaçoa to attempt salvage—which reads: “Jan Rykartsen, skipper of the Company’s barque the *Young Spotted Cow*, says he received orders to go to Rocus to save the negroes on the ship *St. John*. When he arrived there he endeavored to approach the wreck, and succeeded in fastening a hawser to the wreck; when two negroes approached the boat, swimming, and were brought on board by the hawser. A short time after the hawser parted from the wreck, and through the violent surge it was found impossible to reach the wreck again; whereupon it was concluded to await the arrival of a vessel expected to be sent to their assistance. A few days after an English privateer made his appearance and captured the *Young Spotted Cow*, and, having transferred 84 slaves to her, sent her toward the continent.”

IV.

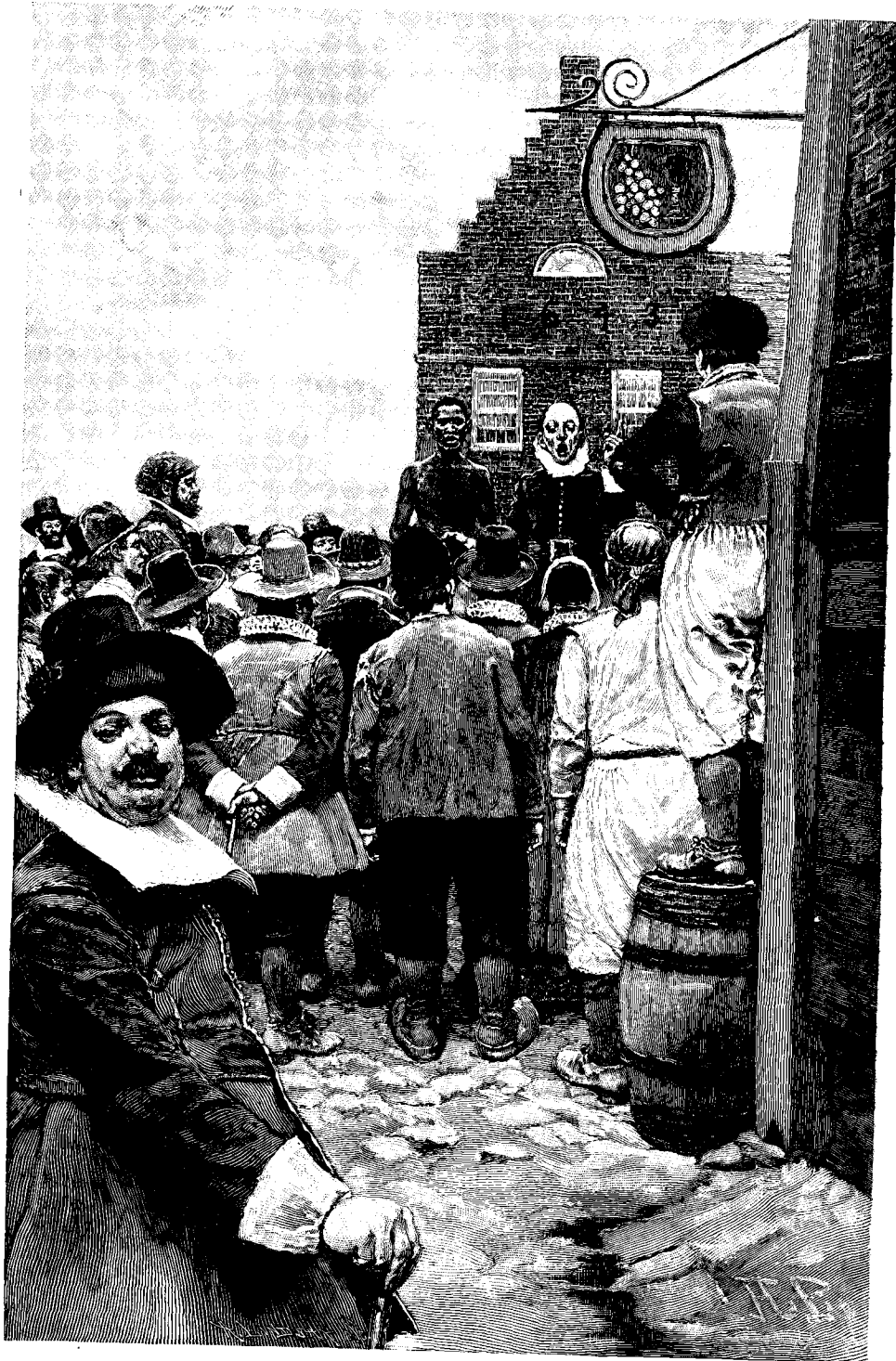
But even a total loss now and then, and the considerable loss by death which was a constant factor in the trade, mattered little—when the profits as a whole were so refreshingly large that every shareholder rubbed together his big hands comfortably as he pocketed the annual dividends which the company declared. As against this total loss just recorded, Mr. Vice-Director Beck, at Curaçoa, wrote to Mr. Director-General Stuyvesant, at New Amsterdam, in August, 1659, “The Company’s ship *King Solomon* arrived here on the 2nd July from Guinea with 331 slaves, of which I sold 300 for cash to a certain Spanish merchant to be paid on delivery.” And the Vice-Director, pleasantly elated by his good stroke of business, continues: “I expect every day a ship with negroes; and I wish they were

arrived here, even if they were a thousand in number, as I expect the return of the aforesaid merchant to take with him all, as he is able and willing to do.”

In this same letter the Vice-Director adds: “From the aforesaid negroes Frank Bruyn selected for your Honor two boys and a girl, who are conveyed in the same vessel that bears this. I endeavored as much as possible to secure them from the cold. Frank Bruyn also made a purchase of two others for the Commissary Van Brugggh, who are also shipped by this opportunity. The Commissary Laurens Van Ruyven also bought here two young negroes on account of his brother the Secretary in New Netherland. A similar parcel was sold here at \$150.”

Then, in due order, is given the following receipt: “I, Jan Pietersen, skipper, under God, of my vessel named the *Sphe-ramundi*, now lying ready before Curaçoa, to sail with the first wind with which God shall favor us, to New Netherland, where my unloading shall take place, acknowledge to have received, under the orlop of my aforesaid ship, from Francis Bruyn, five head of negroes, whereof one is a wench, all dry and well conditioned, marked with the following mark: **M**. All of whom I promise to deliver, if God vouchsafe me a safe voyage with the aforesaid ship, in New Netherland, to the Hon. Director-General Petrus Stuyvesant, or to his factor or deputies, provided the freight of the aforesaid articles is paid.”

There was trouble over this consignment when it arrived at New Amsterdam: partly arising from Mr. Commissary Van Brugggh’s selfishness, and partly from the inconsiderate manner in which one of the five head of negroes died on the passage—and so confused the Vice-Director’s, the Commissary’s, and the Director-General’s joint accounts. In the ensuing February the Director-General wrote to the Vice-Director: “To avoid dispute, I left, for this time, the choice to the Commissary, who took one black girl and one of the stoutest boys. But even this is not without difficulty, as one of the five died in coming hither, others fell sick on the voyage or shortly after their arrival, from which the difficulty in settling the account arises. To prevent which in future, the negroes ought to be designated by the seller by some name or mark.” And again, six months later, his suggestion



"THE CHOICEST PIECES OF HER CARGO WERE SOLD AT AUCTION."

not having been heeded, the Governor wrote: "Referring to the negroes recently arrived by the ship *Indian*, we recommend you that if hereafter negroes be sent by one vessel some for individuals and some for the Company, that they be marked by particular signs, either with a string in their clothes or some other manner, so that disputes may be prevented; inasmuch as during the voyage of the *Indian* some few of the slaves fell sick or died."

There is a kindly touch in Governor Stuyvesant's suggestion—at a time when slave-branding was looked upon precisely as we now look upon cattle-branding—that for a particular sign the slaves should have a "string in their clothes"; and it is pleasant to know that this gentle-heartedness of the founder of the family survived warmly into later times. When Petrus Stuyvesant, the Governor's great-great-grandson, in the year 1803, conveyed to the Corporation of St. Mark's Church the land lying between First and Second avenues and Eleventh and Twelfth streets for use as a cemetery, one of the clauses of the deed provided: "and upon the further trust that they, the said Rector, Church Wardens, and Vestry, their successors and assigns, shall at any time hereafter permit and suffer the interment of any person who now is or who has been the slave of the said Petrus Stuyvesant, and the children of all such persons, in the said burial-ground without the charge of any mortuaries, burial-fee, or other ecclesiastical duties whatsoever." In the course of an address delivered more than thirty years later before the Historical Society, Mr. Benjamin Robert Winthrop, adverting to this condition of his grandfather's gift, told how he himself had been present at the interment in this cemetery of many of the old family slaves, and then continued: "I call up to memory now, though so many years have elapsed, the names and the persons of these faithful adherents of the family altar. Well do I remember 'Old Jonno' and 'Mammy Isabel'; 'Daddy Dick' and 'Mammy Dinah'; 'Mammy Sarah' and 'Bessy'; 'Mary' and 'Bowery John' and 'Lucy' and 'Hannah'; but especially do I call to mind dear old 'Mammy Mary'."

Some of these slaves, no doubt, were of the direct lineage of that lot of "five head of negroes" shipped "under the orlop" of the *Spheramundi* from Curagoa

to New Amsterdam in the year 1659. And how it would have turned their African heads—admitting the violently improbable supposition that in the very least degree they could have comprehended the matter—could they have known of the mortuary honors which would come to their descendants in the fulness of a happy time! I hope that they know all about it now; and especially do I hope that "dear old Mammy Mary" (as Mr. Winthrop called her, with a ring of real affection in his tones) comes back to earth now and then and enjoys—in the thorough-going way that only a dear old darky mammy could enjoy such a self-ennobling spectacle—the dignified delight of looking at her own tombstone right in among the white folks's graves. Other and grander monuments there are hereabouts, but not one of them will excite in gentle hearts, humane as well as human, a warmer glow of kindliness than does this good old soul's gravestone (now in the St. Mark's plot of Evergreens Cemetery), with its simple yet dignified inscription that flourishes off into a line of real Latin at the end.

Sacred

TO THE MEMORY OF

MRS. MARY BAY,

FAMILIARLY CALLED MAMMY MARY.

BORN

SEPTEMBER 14TH, 1747.

DIED

FEBRUARY 14TH, 1843.

To which follows: "She was born beneath the roof of Gerardus Stuyvesant, where she dwelt until his death in 1777. After that event she remained the faithful servant and friend of the same family; and thus passed her long life of near a century among the same kinsfolk, and in the same neighborhood, in which she was born. She has now gone to dwell where the distinctions of this World are unknown; and, being found worthy, to reap rewards which the proudest may be happy to share with her. *Nata serva in Christo vivit libera.*"

V.

The last Dutch slaver to enter this port before New Amsterdam fell into the hands of the English was the ship *Gideon*. Under date of October 23, 1663, "the Commissioners and Directors for the management of the South [Delaware]

River in New Netherland" expressed themselves to the Directors of the West India Company as "of the opinion, under correction," that at least fifty negroes should be sent to that region immediately."

In those blessedly easy-going days there attached to the word immediately very little of the fuming and worrisome meaning that attaches to it now. Easily the suggestion of the Commissioners went over seas—in a round-bellied high-sterned Dutch ship which stolidly butted its snub-nose into the waves with a broad splashing sound such as a wide-seated Dutchman of that period would have made had he sat down suddenly in a full wash-tub, and which for every mile of headway was for drifting a good two miles down the lee. Easily the Directors in Holland considered the Commissioners' suggestion, passing it in divers ways back and forth through their substantial brains until at last they came to see the wisdom of it; after which, in due season, word was despatched to Governor Stuyvesant that a contract had been made with one Symen Gilde, master of the ship *Gideon*, to "take in a good cargo of slaves at Loango," and to proceed thence, *viâ* Curaçoa, to New Amsterdam—whence the slaves needed for the South River were to be forwarded and the remainder was to be sold on the Company's account.

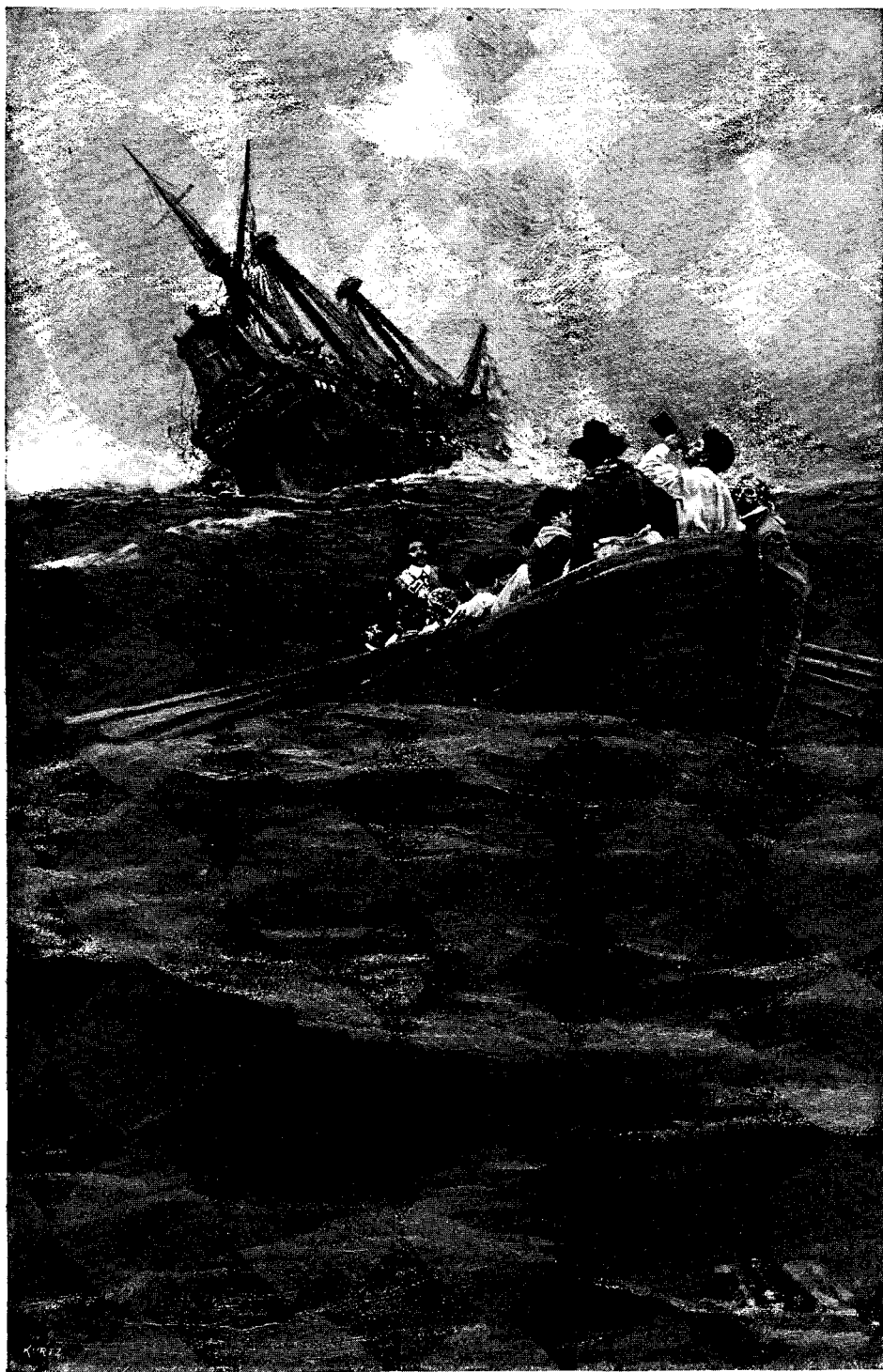
Thus gently advancing, the project of the South River Commissioners did at last materialize; and on the 17th of August, 1664, Governor Stuyvesant sent down to them, by "a Savage who carries it by Land," a letter in which was the announcement: "There arrived here in safety, God be praised, on the 15th inst. the ship *Gideon*, which left Curaçoa on the 21st July, with 300 slaves, vizt. 160 males and 140 females, of whom 9 died during the passage; the whole being a poor assortment." Yet would it have been better for the South River people had the march of events in this matter exhibited a little more celerity—inasmuch as, only nine days after the Governor had despatched his letter by the land-travelling Savage, there came sailing up through the Narrows that English fleet which was to pounce upon slaves and masters together, and at a stroke was to change the Dutch province of New Netherland into the English province of New York.

A couple of years later, when they were hauling the ex-Director-General over the coals in Holland for permitting his territory to slip away from him so lightly—a most unjust proceeding, for he seems to have been the one loyal man in the colony and the one man willing to fight for it—he accounted in part for the scarcity of provisions, which was among the causes compelling his surrender, by the statement that "about fourteen to sixteen days before the arrival of the [English] frigates there arrived and came in the ship *Gideon* between 300 and 400 half-starved negroes and negresses, who alone, exclusive of the garrison, required one hundred skepels of wheat per week." Therefore this last load of slaves for the Dutch colony had an appreciable influence in the downhaul of the orange, white, and blue ensign from above Fort Amsterdam and the uphaul of the Union Jack above what then became Fort James—in view of which transformation scene 'twas well for Messrs. de la Montagne and Van Rensselaer that they had refused the Governor's request to "negotiate a loan of five or six thousand guilders in wampum for the Honorable Company. . . to be reimbursed satisfactorily, either in negroes or other goods, in case the gracious God, as we hope and trust, will grant us a favorable result."

As for the ship *Gideon*, that vessel was used as a transport for the carriage back to Holland of the *bouffe* garrison which had played the part of an exceptionally weak-kneed chorus during this shifting of names and fealties and flags. And unless the ship *Gideon* was prodigiously well washed and fumigated before taking in her passengers the soldiers of that most unvaliant garrison assuredly had a justly disagreeable homeward voyage.

VI.

Under English rule the slave-trade received earnest encouragement, both for the sake of the colony in America to which slaves were brought and of the colony on the Guinea coast from which they came. This last pertained to the Royal African Company (an evolution from the African Company formed by London merchants in the year 1588 for purposes of slave-dealing and general trade), of which the essential business was the exportation of slaves; and that this organization was in a flourishing condition at the time of the



"WE ESCAPED IN THE BOAT."

English capture of New Netherland is testified to, incidentally, by the Dutch ambassador then resident in England—who informed his government, under date of May $\frac{13}{9}$, 1665, that “1200 negroes were sent by the factors of the Royal Company in Guinea to Barbadoes, mostly on Spanish account.”

Of the conduct of the Company's business, a glimpse is given in a letter written by one of its factors on the coast, Francis Moore, about the year 1730. “When the King of Barsalli wants Goods or Brandy,” wrote Moore, “he sends a Messenger to the English Governor at James's Fort to desire he would send up a Sloop with a Cargoe of Goods, which the Governor never fails to do. Against the Time the vessel arrives, the King Plunders some of his Enemies' Towns, selling the people for such Goods as he wants—which commonly is Brandy or Rum, Gunpowder, Ball, Fire-arms, Pistols and Cutlashes for his Soldiers, &c, and Coral and Silver for his Wives and Mistresses;” to which interesting facts Moore adds that about 2000 slaves were brought down each year to the coast, and that about 600 merchants were engaged in the trade; and concludes with the statement that if the Barsalli potentate “is at war with no neighboring King, he falls upon one of his own Towns, and makes bold to sell his own miserable Subjects.”

William Bosman, who was a factor for the Dutch West India Company at the near-by station of Elmina, has left a record of the trade contemporaneous with Moore's, and in certain directions supplementing it. “The inhabitants of Arda,” he writes, “are so diligent that they are able to deliver a thousand Slaves every month. . . . Our surgeons examine them, and those which are approved as good are set on one side. In the mean while a burning Iron, with the Arms or Name of the Companies, lies in the Fire, with which ours are marked on the Breast. When we are agreed with the Owners of the Slaves they are returned to the Prisons, where from that time onward they are kept at our Charge—costing us Two-pence a Day a Slave, which serves to subsist them like our criminals on Bread and Water; so that, to save charges, we send them on board our Ships with the very first Opportunity; before which their Masters strip them of all they have on their Backs, so that they come on board stark-

naked, as well Women as Men: In which condition they are obliged to continue if the Master of the Ship is not so charitable (which he commonly is) as to bestow something on them to cover their nakedness.” Mr. Bosman adds to his pleasant picture the statement that “Six or seven hundred of them are sometimes put on board a Vessel, where they lie as close together as possible for them to be crowded”; and concludes with the philosophical reflection: “I doubt not that this Trade seems very barbarous to you; but, since it is followed by meer necessity, it must go on.”

That the English government at the beginning of the eighteenth century held, with Mr. Bosman, that slave-dealing “must go on” is made evident by the repeated instructions given to the colonial authorities to foster the trade. Of such, the following, issued to Governor Robert Hunter of New York, under date of December 30, 1709, may be taken as typical: “You are to give all due encouragement and invitation to merchants and others who shall bring trade into our said Province, or any way contribute to the advantage thereof, and in particular to the Royal African Company of England. And as we are willing to recommend unto the said Company that the said Province may have a constant and sufficient supply of merchantable negroes, at moderate prices in money or commodities, so you are to take especial care that payment be duly made, and within a competent time, according to their agreements.” And ten clauses farther on—with a nice regard for the welfare of such negro souls as might not be let loose from their encasing black bodies by branding, or starving with cold or hunger, or tight packing between decks, or other of the amenities of the Royal African Company's personally conducted excursions to America—Governor Hunter is charged: “And you are also, with the assistance of the Council and Assembly, to find out the best means to facilitate and encourage the conversion of negroes and Indians to the Christian Faith.”

How suggestions of this sort were received by the colonists is stated by Lord Bellomont—a very frank nobleman—under date of April 27, 1699, in the following terms: “A bill for facilitating the conversion of Indians and negroes (which the King's instructions require shall be endeavored to be pass'd) would not go downe

with the Assembly; they having a notion that the negroes being converted to Christianity would emancipate them from slavery and loose them from their service, for they have no other servants in this country but negroes." This phase of the matter, however, is aside from my present purpose—in that it pertains not to slave-trading afloat but to slavery ashore.

VII.

After the English fairly were in the saddle, at the fag-end of the seventeenth century, three spirited forms of industrial endeavor were united in contributing handsomely to the prosperity of this town. There was privateering: which for the most part, at that period, was but a genteel form of piracy; there was piracy pure and simple: which was not genteel, but which (much in the way that we are disposed, two hundred years later, to regard the professional occupation of a seat in the United States Senate) was a business which paid so well that those engaging in it were tolerated by respectable people; and there was "the Red Sea trade": which last, a sort of vicarious piracy, was a cross between running a "fence" and sneak-thieving on the high-seas. And side by side with these dashing ways of marine money-making, and most intimately associated with the last-named variety, the slave-trade jubilantly flourished: being well thought of by conservative business men because, while ranking below privateering and far below either form of piracy in point of profits, it did at that time pay fairly well, and was comparatively free from dangers, absolutely respectable, and wholly inside the law.

Yet what gave slave-trading its strongest hold upon the affections and interests of New-Yorkers in those last few years of the seventeenth century was the opportunity that it afforded to those avowedly engaging in it to carry on unavowedly the profitable Red Sea trade—this last, in detail, being the despatch hence of goods likely to hit a pirate's fancy, such as strong liquors and wines and ammunition and arms, to the island of Madagascar; where they were bartered at extravagant rates with practising pirates for the articles of value which these latter had removed professionally from Arabian merchantmen and from the coming or going East Indian fleets.

It will be observed, by reference to the statement cited above of Mr. Francis Moore, that the more urgent wants of the King of Barsalli—which may be regarded as exemplary of the wants of African sovereigns of that period in general—were identical with the more urgent wants of a pirate in active business; that is to say, each wanted a profuse supply of the materials for personal intoxication and for impersonal murder. It was an easy matter, therefore, for the New York merchants of that enterprising time to freight with arms and strong drink professedly for the Guinea coast and a live cargo, and yet to do some highly profitable trading before taking in the live cargo by slipping around the Cape to Madagascar and getting aboard from the pirate vessels in waiting there a noble ballast of stolen goods. Presently, indeed—Madagascar being full of potential slaves, to be had for the hunting—the Royal Africans were given the go-by and no pretence was made of calling at the West Coast at all. This change is noted, incidentally, in ex-Governor Fletcher's "Answers to the Complaints against Him" (in the compilation of which document he spent melancholily the Christmas eve of the year 1698), in his effort to explain away his share in the scandalous doings of the ship *Fortune*. "The case (as I recollect it) was thus," he writes: "There were several English and Dutch merchants of New York who had hired the ship *Fortune* to fetch Negroes from Madagascar, as was every year usual with them."

In the easy-going time of Governor Fletcher a polite acceptance was accorded to this sort of harmless subterfuge—which really deceived nobody, yet pleasantly smoothed away the asperities of official objection to doings a little outside of the law. But a dismal sea-change set in when Lord Bellomont's bleak rule began: for this energetic gentleman so harried and hustled and generally bedeviled the sea-adventurers of this town that the New York market for stolen goods was broken up forever; some of our best pirates and Red Sea men incontinently were hung; and 'twas touch and go, even, that his Lordship was not for yard-arming two or three of our ablest privateers. Not for near two centuries—when a later New York Governor fell afoul quite as vigorously of the freebooters of the Erie Canal—was there heard in these regions

such a reformatory rattling of nautical dry bones.

Yet one quite unanticipated change (his Lordship would have been the last man to call it a reform) flowed from Governor Bellomont's radical measures for curbing the too-exuberant marine enterprise of our townfolk—the gradual extinction of the direct slave-trade between Africa and New York. Being no longer useful as a cloak to highly profitable barter with pirates, this trade fell away by natural gravity from Africa to the British West Indies: with which islands New York had established such close commercial relations during the fat years of the flour monopoly that slaves could be bought at Barbadoes, though at a higher price, more cheaply than in Guinea or Madagascar—for the reasons that the shorter haul after purchase cost less and assured a lower death-rate, and that the business could be more economically conducted in all its details by thus making it a part of a general system of trade. Therefore it was that from the beginning of the eighteenth century onward our supply of slaves from the West Indies increased steadily, while our African supply proportionately fell off—a fact brought out with marked clearness in Collector Kennedy's statement (December 16, 1726) that in the years 1701–1726, inclusive, 2395 slaves had been imported into the colony, of which 1573 had come from the West Indies and 822 from Africa direct.

Probably in the interest of the Royal African Company, an effort was made in the year 1728 to check this shifting of the New York trade by imposing a customs charge at this port "on every negro of four years and upwards imported from Africa 40 shillings, and for every negro imported from every other place £4." Yet, in point of fact, the Royal Africans were none the worse for New York's nicety in preferring to buy its negroes seasoned rather than green. As Sir John Werden concisely stated the case to the New York Collector, under date of November 30, 1676: "The Depty Gov^r of ye Royall Company tells me that y^e Company only pretends to ye first empcōn or transportacōn of Negroes out of Guiny, and when they are once sold in Barbadoes, Jamaica, &c, by them or their factors they care not whither they are transported from thence: for ye more are carryed of, ye more again wilbe wanting"

—in which statement is apparent the fact that Sir John Werden understood the logic of trade.

VIII.

The climax of slave-importation into New York must have been reached between the years 1730 and 1735. According to a report made by Governor Hunter (June 23, 1712) the population of the colony in the year 1703 consisted of "Christians, 7767, Slaves, 1301"; and in 1712 of "Christians, 10,511, Slaves, 1775." Collector Kennedy's figures (1726) show importation only, and not until we come to the census of 1731 do we find a total of the slave population, then amounting to 7202. This figure covers, of course, both importation and natural increase; as, likewise, does the return in the census of 1737 of 8941—a gain of near 2000 in only six years. This was the high-water mark. From this time onward the urgent need for importation ceased—as the natural increase of the blacks, together with the very considerable increase by births and by immigration of the white laboring class, provided more and more abundantly for the colony's needs. Indeed, there must have been sale for exportation, inasmuch as the slave population given in the census of 1746, only 9107, is not sufficient to account for natural increase. That there was a near-by market is apparent from Lord Cornbury's statement (1708) that even in his time the demand for slaves was much keener in the Virginia and Maryland plantations than it was in New York.

And so, gradually and pleasantly—not because anybody in the least objected to it, but because it had served its purpose and no longer could be continued profitably—the slave-trade out of this port came naturally to an end. So far as public opinion went, it might have been continued for a good half-century longer without encountering any very emphatic objections on moral grounds. So far as the law went, it might have been continued until the trade formally was abolished by the United States government—twenty-six years in the wake of Austria, fourteen years in the wake of France, and a year in the wake of England—by the act which became effective January 1, 1808. But long before either of these obstacles was encountered, the New York slave-trade stopped for the reason (ever in this city a final reason) that it did not pay.

THE MIDDLE HALL.

A SEQUEL TO "THE DIVIDING-FENCE."

BY RUTH McENERY STUART.

THE dividing-fence was all in bloom. Lady-bank roses overlapped honey-suckle vines over long sections of its rough-hewn pickets, while woodbine and clematis locked arms for the passage of the amorous love-vine, that lay its yellow rings in tangled masses here and there according to its own sweet will.

The atmosphere was teeming with the odors of romance, musical with its small noises. Pollen-dusted bees and yellow-bellied moths—those most irresponsible fathers of hybrid blooms and remote floral kinships—flitted about in the sunshine, passed and repassed in mid-air by their rival match-makers, the iridescent humming-birds. And there were nests—real birds' nests—in the vines that clambered on both verandas, the widow Carroll's and that of her neighbor, the widower Bradfield. And from one porch to the other flitted bee and bird and moth, stopping for a sip or a brief wing-rest on the vine-clad fence, while the flowers on either side responded to their amenities in answering hues and friendly conformity.

It was late in the summer afternoon, and the evening twitterings were setting in in a lively chorus, which, to the casual listener, was quite drowned by the voices of children who played "tag" or "prisoners' base" down in the front yards, passing at will from one to the other by certain loose pickets hidden among the vines, known to the small-fry of both families.

Bradfield sat alone upon his porch in the shadows of the foliage, but though he was listening he heard none of these noises of nature. The truth was Bradfield was listening, though with no eaves-dropping intention, to a scarcely perceptible hum of voices in the corner of his neighbor's porch. The widow had "company," and the voice that came to Bradfield, alternating with hers, was one he knew.

Elder Billins was now a regular visitor at the widow's home, always presenting himself with a flourish, with the avowed intention of paying a formal visit—a thing Bradfield had not yet found courage to do. He had felt sometimes that if he

could just get out of sight of her house to "get a start," he might "make a break for her gate," and go in. Indeed, he did once try this, and found such momentum in the experiment that he had really passed his own gate, and would have entered hers, had not the whole drove of children swooped down upon him with the inquiry, "Where you goin'?" Where you goin', pop?" to which he had quickly replied: "Oh, no place! Where *was* I goin', shore enough?" And so he had turned back, only to meet Billins riding up to the widow's gate with a great bouquet of flowers in his hand.

Bradfield wouldn't have been caught offering her a leaf or flower for anything in the world, unless, indeed, it were such a matter as a bunch of alder flowers, a sprig of mint, or a bunch of mullein, for medicinal uses.

No one knew what Mrs. Carroll's attitude toward Billins was, but everybody laughed at him, and of course there were those who blamed her for accepting his attentions, unless, indeed, she intended to marry him—a thing that such as knew her best were morally certain she would never do.

"Mary Carroll jest can't help likin' to have men a-hangin' 'round 'er, no more'n any other woman o' her colored hair can help it," was the verdict, compounded equally of apology and censure, by such of her friends as were managing to worry along through life fairly well without such accessories. But, of course, they had "other colored hair"!

If Mrs. Carroll's main pleasure in Billins's devotion was in its putting Bradfield's prosaic courtship to shame, she never told it.

On the evening with which this chapter opens we have seen that the situation was typical of the real condition of things—Bradfield alone on his porch, cogitating, moody; Billins talking with the widow on hers, full of words and bombast; the children of both houses playing, within range of her vision, from one yard to the other.

Up to this time Bradfield had had the satisfaction of knowing that although Billins was a regular visitor, he had ex-