

# WASHINGTON IRVING

KNICKERBOCKER'S  
HISTORY OF NEW YORK,  
COMPLETE

**Washington Irving**  
**Knickerbocker's History**  
**of New York, Complete**

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*Knickerbocker's History of New York, Complete:*

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# Washington Irving Knickerbocker's History of New York, Complete

## VOLUME I

### INTRODUCTION

KNICKERBOCKER'S HISTORY OF NEW YORK is the book, published in December, 1809, with which Washington Irving, at the age of twenty-six, first won wide credit and influence. Walter Scott wrote to an American friend, who sent him the second edition —

"I beg you to accept my best thanks for the uncommon degree of entertainment which I have received from the most excellently jocose History of New York. I am sensible that, as a stranger to American parties and politics, I must lose much of the concealed satire of the piece, but I must own that, looking at the simple and obvious meaning only, I have never read anything so closely resembling the style of Dean Swift as the annals of Diedrich Knickerbocker. I have been employed these few evenings in reading them aloud to Mrs. S. and two ladies who are our guests, and our sides have

been absolutely sore with laughing. I think, too, there are passages which indicate that the author possesses powers of a different kind, and has some touches which remind me much of Sterne."

Washington Irving was the son of William Irving, a sturdy native of the Orkneys, allied to the Irvines of Drum, among whose kindred was an old historiographer who said to them, "Some of the foolish write themselves Irving." William Irving of Shapinsha, in the Orkney Islands, was a petty officer on board an armed packet ship in His Majesty's service, when he met with his fate at Falmouth in Sarah Sanders, whom he married at Falmouth in May, 1761. Their first child was buried in England before July, 1763, when peace had been concluded, and William Irving emigrated to New York with his wife, soon to be joined by his wife's parents.

At New York William Irving entered into trade, and prospered fairly until the outbreak of the American Revolution. His sympathy, and that of his wife, went with the colonists. On the 19th of October, 1781, Lord Cornwallis, with a force of seven thousand men, surrendered at Yorktown. In October, 1782, Holland acknowledged the independence of the United States in a treaty concluded at The Hague. In January, 1783, an armistice was concluded with Great Britain. In February, 1783, the independence of the United States was acknowledged by Sweden and by Denmark, and in March by Spain. On the 3rd of April in that year an eleventh child was born to William and

Sarah Irving, who was named Washington, after the hero under whom the war had been brought to an end. In 1783 the peace was signed, New York was evacuated, and the independence of the United States acknowledged by England.

Of the eleven children eight survived. William Irving, the father, was rigidly pious, a just and honorable man, who made religion burdensome to his children by associating it too much with restrictions and denials. One of their two weekly half-holidays was devoted to the Catechism. The mother's gentler sensibility and womanly impulses gave her the greater influence; but she revered and loved her good husband, and when her youngest puzzled her with his pranks, she would say, "Ah, Washington, if you were only good!"

For his lively spirits and quick fancy could not easily be subdued. He would get out of his bed-room window at night, walk along a coping, and climb over the roof to the top of the next house, only for the high purpose of astonishing a neighbor by dropping a stone down his chimney. As a young school-boy he came upon Hoole's translation of Ariosto, and achieved in his father's back yard knightly adventures. "Robinson Crusoe" and "Sindbad the Sailor" made him yearn to go to sea. But this was impossible unless he could learn to lie hard and eat salt pork, which he detested. He would get out of bed at night and lie on the floor for an hour or two by way of practice. He also took every opportunity that came in his way of eating the detested food. But the more he tried to like it the nastier it grew, and he

gave up as impracticable his hope of going to sea. He fastened upon adventures of real travelers; he yearned for travel, and was entranced in his youth by first sight of the beauties of the Hudson River. He scribbled jests for his school friends, and, of course, he wrote a school-boy play. At sixteen his schooling was at an end, and he was placed in a lawyer's office, from which he was transferred to another, and then, in January, 1802, to another, where he continued his clerkship with a Mr. Hoffman, who had a young wife, and two young daughters by a former marriage. With this family Washington Irving, a careless student, lively, clever, kind, established the happiest relations, of which afterwards there came the deep grief of his life and a sacred memory.

Washington Irving's eldest brothers were beginning to thrive in business. A brother Peter shared his frolics with the pen. His artist pleasure in the theater was indulged without his father's knowledge. He would go to the play, come home for nine o'clock prayers, go up to bed, and climb out of his bed-room window, and run back and see the after-piece. So come evasions of undue restraint. But with all this impulsive liveliness, young Washington Irving's life appeared, as he grew up, to be in grave danger. When he was nineteen, and taken by a brother-in-law to Ballston springs, it was determined by those who heard his incessant night cough that he was "not long for this world." When he had come of age, in April, 1804, his brothers, chiefly his eldest brother, who was prospering, provided money to send him to Europe

that he might recover health by restful travel in France, Italy and England. When he was helped up the side of the vessel that was to take him from New York to Bordeaux, the captain looked at him with pity and said, "There's a chap who will go overboard before we get across." But Washington Irving returned to New York at the beginning of the year 1806 with health restored.

What followed will be told in the Introduction to the other volume of this History of New York, by Diedrich Knickerbocker.

H.M.

# THE AUTHOR'S APOLOGY

The following work, in which, at the outset, nothing more was contemplated than a temporary *jeu-d'esprit*, was commenced in company with my brother, the late Peter Irving, Esq. Our idea was to parody a small hand-book which had recently appeared, entitled, "A Picture of New York." Like that, our work was to begin an historical sketch; to be followed by notices of the customs, manners and institutions of the city; written in a serio-comic vein, and treating local errors, follies and abuses with good-humored satire.

To burlesque the pedantic lore displayed in certain American works, our historical sketch was to commence with the creation of the world; and we laid all kinds of works under contribution for trite citations, relevant or irrelevant, to give it the proper air of learned research. Before this crude mass of mock erudition could be digested into form, my brother departed for Europe, and I was left to prosecute the enterprise alone.

I now altered the plan of the work. Discarding all idea of a parody on the "Picture of New York," I determined that what had been originally intended as an introductory sketch should comprise the whole work, and form a comic history of the city. I accordingly moulded the mass of citations and disquisitions into introductory chapters, forming the first book; but it soon became evident to me that, like Robinson Crusoe with his boat,

I had begun on too large a scale, and that, to launch my history successfully, I must reduce its proportions. I accordingly resolved to confine it to the period of the Dutch domination, which, in its rise, progress and decline, presented that unity of subject required by classic rule. It was a period, also, at that time almost a *terra incognita* in history. In fact, I was surprised to find how few of my fellow-citizens were aware that New York had ever been called New Amsterdam, or had heard of the names of its early Dutch governors, or cared a straw about their ancient Dutch progenitors.

This, then, broke upon me as the poetic age of our city; poetic from its very obscurity, and open, like the early and obscure days of ancient Rome, to all the embellishments of heroic fiction. I hailed my native city as fortunate above all other American cities in having an antiquity thus extending back into the regions of doubt and fable; neither did I conceive I was committing any grievous historical sin in helping out the few facts I could collect in this remote and forgotten region with figments of my own brain, or in giving characteristic attributes to the few names connected with it which I might dig up from oblivion.

In this, doubtless, I reasoned like a young and inexperienced writer, besotted with his own fancies; and my presumptuous trespasses into this sacred, though neglected, region of history have met with deserved rebuke from men of soberer minds. It is too late, however, to recall the shaft thus rashly launched. To any one whose sense of fitness it may wound, I can only say with

"Let my disclaiming from a purposed evil  
Free me so far in your most generous thoughts  
That I have shot my arrow o'er the house,  
And hurt my brother."

I will say this in further apology for my work: that if it has taken an unwarrantable liberty with our early provincial history, it has at least turned attention to that history, and provoked research. It is only since this work appeared that the forgotten archives of the province have been rummaged, and the facts and personages of the olden time rescued from the dust of oblivion, and elevated into whatever importance they may actually possess.

The main object of my work, in fact, had a bearing wide from the sober aim of history, but one which, I trust, will meet with some indulgence from poetic minds. It was to embody the traditions of our city in an amusing form; to illustrate its local humors, customs and peculiarities; to clothe home scenes and places and familiar names with those imaginative and whimsical associations so seldom met with in our new country, but which live like charms and spells about the cities of the old world, binding the heart of the native inhabitant to his home.

In this I have reason to believe I have in some measure succeeded. Before the appearance of my work the popular traditions of our city were unrecorded; the peculiar and racy customs and usages derived from our Dutch progenitors were

unnoticed, or regarded with indifference, or adverted to with a sneer. Now they form a convivial currency, and are brought forward on all occasions; they link our whole community together in good-humor and good-fellowship; they are the rallying points of home feeling; the seasoning of our civic festivities; the staple of local tales and local pleasantries; and are so harped upon by our writers of popular fiction that I find myself almost crowded off the legendary ground which I was the first to explore by the host who have followed in my footsteps.

I dwell on this head because, at the first appearance of my work, its aim and drift were misapprehended by some of the descendants of the Dutch worthies, and because I understand that now and then one may still be found to regard it with a captious eye. The far greater part, however, I have reason to flatter myself, receive my good-humored picturings in the same temper with which they were executed; and when I find, after a lapse of nearly forty years, this haphazard production of my youth still cherished among them; when I find its very name become a "household word," and used to give the home stamp to everything recommended for popular acceptance, such as Knickerbocker societies, Knickerbocker insurance companies, Knickerbocker steamboats, Knickerbocker omnibuses, Knickerbocker bread, and Knickerbocker ice; and when I find New Yorkers of Dutch descent priding themselves upon being "genuine Knickerbockers," I please myself with the persuasion that I have struck the right chord; that my dealings with the good

old Dutch times, and the customs and usages derived from them, are in harmony with the feelings and humors of my townsmen; that I have opened a vein of pleasant associations and quaint characteristics peculiar to my native place, and which its inhabitants will not willingly suffer to pass away; and that, though other histories of New York may appear of higher claims to learned acceptance, and may take their dignified and appropriate rank in the family library, Knickerbocker's history will still be received with good-humored indulgence, and be thumbed and chuckled over by the family fireside.

Sunnyside, 1848.

W.I.

# Notices

## WHICH APPEARED IN THE NEWSPAPERS PREVIOUS TO THE PUBLICATION OF THIS WORK

*From the "Evening Post" of October 26, 1809.*

**DISTRESSING.**

Left his lodgings some time since, and has not since been heard of, a small elderly gentleman, dressed in an old black coat and cocked hat, by the name of *Knickerbocker*. As there are some reasons for believing he is not entirely in his right mind, and as great anxiety is entertained about him, any information concerning him, left either at the Columbian Hotel, Mulberry Street, or at the office of this paper, will be thankfully received.

P.S. – Printers of newspapers will be aiding the cause of humanity in giving an insertion to the above.

*From the same, November 6, 1809.*

*To the Editor of the "Evening Post."*

SIR, – Having read, in your paper of the 26th of October last, a paragraph respecting an old gentleman by the name of *Knickerbocker*, who was missing from his lodgings; if it would be any relief to his friends, or furnish them with any clue to discover

where he is, you may inform them that a person answering the description given was seen by the passengers of the Albany stage, early in the morning, about four or five weeks since, resting himself by the side of the road, a little above King's Bridge. He had in his hand a small bundle tied in a red bandana handkerchief: he appeared to be traveling northward, and was very much fatigued and exhausted.

A TRAVELER.

*From the same, November 16, 1809.*

*To the Editor of the "Evening Post."*

SIR, – You have been good enough to publish in your paper a paragraph about *Mr. Diedrich Knickerbocker*, who was missing so strangely some time since. Nothing satisfactory has been heard of the old gentleman since; but a *very curious kind of a written book* has been found in his room, in his own handwriting. Now, I wish you to notice him, if he is still alive, that if he does not return and pay off his bill for boarding and lodging, I shall have to dispose of his book to satisfy me for the same.

I am, Sir, your humble servant,

SETH HANDASIDE,

Landlord of the Independent Columbian Hotel,  
Mulberry Street.

*From the same, November 28, 1809.*

LITERARY NOTICE.

INSKEEP and BRADFORD have in the press, and will shortly publish,

A History of New York,

In two volumes, duodecimo. Price three dollars.

Containing an account of its discovery and settlement, with its internal policies, manners, customs, wars, &c. &c., under the Dutch government, furnishing many curious and interesting particulars never before published, and which are gathered from various manuscript and other authenticated sources, the whole being interspersed with philosophical speculations and moral precepts.

This work was found in the chamber of Mr. Diedrich Knickerbocker, the old gentleman whose sudden and mysterious disappearance has been noticed. It is published in order to discharge certain debts he has left behind.

*From the "American Citizen" December 6, 1809.*

Is this day published,

By INSKEEP and BRADFORD, No. 128, Broadway,

A History of New York,

&c. &c.

(Containing same as above.)

# ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR

It was some time, if I recollect right, in the early part of the fall of 1808, that a stranger applied for lodgings at the Independent Columbian Hotel in Mulberry Street, of which I am landlord. He was a small, brisk-looking old gentleman, dressed in a rusty black coat, a pair of olive velvet breeches, and a small cocked hat. He had a few gray hairs plaited and clubbed behind, and his beard seemed to be of some eight-and-forty hours' growth. The only piece of finery which he bore about him was a bright pair of square silver shoe-buckles; and all his baggage was contained in a pair of saddle-bags, which he carried under his arm. His whole appearance was something out of the common run; and my wife, who is a very shrewd little body, at once set him down for some eminent country schoolmaster.

As the Independent Columbian Hotel is a very small house, I was a little puzzled at first where to put him; but my wife, who seemed taken with his looks, would needs put him in her best chamber, which is genteelly set off with the profiles of the whole family, done in black, by those two great painters, Jarvis and Wood: and commands a very pleasant view of the new grounds on the Collect, together with the rear of the Poor House and Bridewell, and the full front of the Hospital; so that it is the cheerfulest room in the whole house.

During the whole time that he stayed with us, we found him a

very worthy, good sort of an old gentleman, though a little queer in his ways. He would keep in his room for days together, and if any of the children cried, or made a noise about his door, he would bounce out in a great passion, with his hands full of papers, and say something about "deranging his ideas;" which made my wife believe sometimes that he was not altogether *compos*. Indeed, there was more than one reason to make her think so, for his room was always covered with scraps of paper and old mouldy books, lying about at sixes and sevens, which he would never let anybody touch; for he said he had laid them all away in their proper places, so that he might know where to find them; though, for that matter, he was half his time worrying about the house in search of some book or writing which he had carefully put out of the way. I shall never forget what a pother he once made, because my wife cleaned out his room when his back was turned, and put everything to rights; for he swore he would never be able to get his papers in order again in a twelve-month. Upon this my wife ventured to ask him, what he did with so many books and papers? and he told her, that he was "seeking for immortality"; which made her think, more than ever, that the poor old gentleman's head was a little cracked.

He was a very inquisitive body, and when not in his room was continually poking about town, hearing all the news, and prying into everything that was going on; this was particularly the case about election time, when he did nothing but bustle about him from poll to poll, attending all ward meetings and committee-

rooms; though I could never find that he took part with either side of the question. On the contrary, he would come home and rail at both parties with great wrath – and plainly proved one day to the satisfaction of my wife, and three old ladies who were drinking tea with her, that the two parties were like two rogues, each tugging at the skirt of the nation; and that in the end they would tear the very coat off its back, and expose its nakedness. Indeed, he was an oracle among the neighbors, who would collect around him to hear him talk of an afternoon, as he smoked his pipe on the bench before the door; and I really believe he would have brought over the whole neighborhood to his own side of the question, if they could ever have found out what it was.

He was very much given to argue, or, as he called it, philosophize, about the most trifling matter, and to do him justice, I never knew anybody that was a match for him, except it was a grave-looking old gentleman who called now and then to see him, and often posed him in an argument. But this is nothing surprising, as I have since found out this stranger is the city librarian; and, of course, must be a man of great learning; and I have my doubts if he had not some hand in the following history.

As our lodger had been a long time with us, and we had never received any pay, my wife began to be somewhat uneasy, and curious to find out who and what he was. She accordingly made bold to put the question to his friend the librarian, who replied, in his dry way, that he was one of the *Literati*; which she supposed

to mean some new party in politics. I scorn to push a lodger for his pay, so I let day after day pass on without dunning the old gentleman for a farthing; but my wife, who always takes these matters on herself, and is, as I said, a shrewd kind of a woman, at last got out of patience, and hinted, that she thought it high time "some people should have a sight of some people's money." To which the old gentleman replied in a mighty touchy manner, that she need not make herself uneasy, for that he had a treasure there (pointing to his saddle-bags) worth her whole house put together. This was the only answer we could ever get from him; and as my wife, by some of those odd ways in which women find out everything, learnt that he was of very great connections, being related to the Knickerbockers of Scaghtikoke, and cousin german to the Congressman of that name, she did not like to treat him uncivilly. What is more, she even offered, merely by way of making things easy, to let him live scot-free, if he would teach the children their letters; and to try her best and get her neighbors to send their children also; but the old gentleman took it in such dudgeon, and seemed so affronted at being taken for a schoolmaster, that she never dared to speak on the subject again.

About two months ago, he went out of a morning, with a bundle in his hand – and has never been heard of since. All kinds of inquiries were made after him, but in vain. I wrote to his relations at Scaghtikoke, but they sent for answer, that he had not been there since the year before last, when he had a great dispute with the Congressman about politics, and left the place in a huff,

and they had neither heard nor seen anything of him from that time to this. I must own I felt very much worried about the poor old gentleman; for I thought something bad must have happened to him, that he should be missing so long, and never return to pay his bill. I therefore advertised him in the newspapers, and though my melancholy advertisement was published by several humane printers, yet I have never been able to learn anything satisfactory about him.

My wife now said it was high time to take care of ourselves, and see if he had left anything behind in his room, that would pay us for his board and lodging. We found nothing, however, but some old books and musty writings, and his pair of saddle-bags; which, being opened in the presence of the librarian, contained only a few articles of worn-out clothes and a large bundle of blotted paper. On looking over this, the librarian told us, he had no doubt it was the treasure which the old gentleman had spoke about; as it proved to be a most excellent and faithful History of New York, which he advised us by all means to publish; assuring us that it would be so eagerly bought up by a discerning public, that he had no doubt it would be enough to pay our arrears ten times over. Upon this we got a very learned schoolmaster, who teaches our children, to prepare it for the press, which he accordingly has done; and has, moreover, added to it a number of notes of his own; and an engraving of the city, as it was at the time Mr. Knickerbocker writes about.

This, therefore, is a true statement of my reasons for having

this work printed, without waiting for the consent of the author; and I here declare, that if he ever returns (though I much fear some unhappy accident has befallen him), I stand ready to account with him like a true and honest man. Which is all at present —

From the public's humble servant,  
SETH HANDASIDE.

INDEPENDENT COLUMBIAN HOTEL, NEW YORK.

The foregoing account of the author was prefixed to the first edition of this work. Shortly after its publication, a letter was received from him, by Mr. Handaside, dated at a small Dutch village on the banks of the Hudson, whither he had traveled for the purpose of inspecting certain ancient records. As this was one of those few and happy villages, into which newspapers never find their way, it is not a matter of surprise, that Mr. Knickerbocker should never have seen the numerous advertisements that were made concerning him; and that he should learn of the publication of his history by mere accident.

He expressed much concern at its premature appearance, as thereby he was prevented from making several important corrections and alterations: as well as from profiting by many curious hints which he had collected during his travels along the shores of the Tappan Sea, and his sojourn at Haverstraw and Esopus.

Finding that there was no longer any immediate necessity for his return to New York, he extended his journey up to the

residence of his relations at Scaghtikoke. On his way thither he stopped for some days at Albany, for which city he is known to have entertained a great partiality. He found it, however, considerably altered, and was much concerned at the inroads and improvements which the Yankees were making, and the consequent decline of the good old Dutch manners. Indeed, he was informed that these intruders were making sad innovations in all parts of the State; where they had given great trouble and vexation to the regular Dutch settlers, by the introduction of turnpike-gates and country school-houses. It is said, also, that Mr. Knickerbocker shook his head sorrowfully at noticing the gradual decay of the great Vander Heyden palace; but was highly indignant at finding that the ancient Dutch church, which stood in the middle of the street, had been pulled down since his last visit.

The fame of Mr. Knickerbocker's History having reached even to Albany, he received much flattering attention from its worthy burghers; some of whom, however, pointed out two or three very great errors he had fallen into, particularly that of suspending a lump of sugar over the Albany tea-tables, which they assured him had been discontinued for some years past. Several families, moreover, were somewhat piqued that their ancestors had not been mentioned in his work, and showed great jealousy of their neighbors who had thus been distinguished; while the latter, it must be confessed, plumed themselves vastly thereupon; considering these recordings in the lights of letters

patent of nobility, establishing their claims to ancestry, which, in this republican country, is a matter of no little solicitude and vain-glory.

It is also said, that he enjoyed high favor and countenance from the governor, who once asked him to dinner, and was seen two or three times to shake hands with him when they met in the street; which certainly was going great lengths, considering that they differed in politics. Indeed, certain of the governor's confidential friends, to whom he could venture to speak his mind freely on such matters, have assured us that he privately entertained a considerable good-will for our author – nay, he even once went so far as to declare, and that openly too, and at his own table, just after dinner, that "Knickerbocker was a very well-meaning sort of an old gentleman, and no fool." From all which may have been led to suppose, that, had our author been of different politics, and written for the newspapers instead of wasting his talents on histories, he might have risen to some post of honor and profit: peradventure to be a notary public, or even a justice in the ten-pound court.

Besides the honors and civilities already mentioned, he was much caressed by the *litterati* of Albany; particularly by Mr. John Cook, who entertained him very hospitably at his circulating library and reading-room, where they used to drink Spa water, and talk about the ancients. He found Mr. Cook a man after his own heart – of great literary research, and a curious collector of books. At parting, the latter, in testimony of friendship, made him

a present of the two oldest works in his collection; which were, the earliest edition of the Heidelberg Catechism, and Adrian Vander Donck's famous account of the New Netherlands; by the last of which Mr. Knickerbocker profited greatly in this his second edition.

Having passed some time very agreeably at Albany, our author proceeded to Scaghtikoke; where, it is but justice to say, he was received with open arms, and treated with wonderful loving-kindness. He was much looked up to by the family, being the first historian of the name; and was considered almost as great a man as his cousin the Congressman – with whom, by-the-by, he became perfectly reconciled, and contracted a strong friendship.

In spite, however, of the kindness of his relations, and their great attention to his comforts, the old gentleman soon became restless and discontented. His history being published, he had no longer any business to occupy his thoughts, or any scheme to excite his hopes and anticipations. This, to a busy mind like his, was a truly deplorable situation; and had he not been a man of inflexible morals and regular habits, there would have been great danger of his taking to politics or drinking – both which pernicious vices we daily see men driven to by mere spleen and idleness.

It is true he sometimes employed himself in preparing a second edition of his history, wherein he endeavored to correct and improve many passages with which he was dissatisfied, and to rectify some mistakes that had crept into it; for he

was particularly anxious that his work should be noted for its authenticity; which, indeed, is the very life and soul of history. But the glow of composition had departed – he had to leave many places untouched which he would fain have altered; and even where he did make alterations, he seemed always in doubt whether they were for the better or the worse.

After a residence of some time at Scaghtikoke, he began to feel a strong desire to return to New York, which he ever regarded with the warmest affection; not merely because it was his native city, but because he really considered it the very best city in the whole world. On his return he entered into the full enjoyment of the advantages of a literary reputation. He was continually importuned to write advertisements, petitions, handbills, and productions of similar import; and, although he never meddled with the public papers, yet had he the credit of writing innumerable essays, and smart things, that appeared on all subjects, and all sides of the question, in all which he was clearly detected "by his style."

He contracted, moreover, a considerable debt at the postoffice, in consequence of the numerous letters he received from authors and printers soliciting his subscription – and he was applied to by every charitable society for yearly donations, which he gave very cheerfully, considering these applications as so many compliments. He was once invited to a great corporation dinner; and was even twice summoned to attend as a jurymen at the court of quarter sessions. Indeed, so renowned did he

become, that he could no longer pry about, as formerly, in all holes and corners of the city, according to the bent of his humor, unnoticed and uninterrupted; but several times when he has been sauntering the streets, on his usual rambles of observation, equipped with his cane and cocked hat, the little boys at play have been known to cry, "There goes Diedrich!" at which the old gentleman seemed not a little pleased, looking upon these salutations in the light of the praise of posterity.

In a word, if we take into consideration all these various honors and distinctions, together with an exuberant eulogium, passed on his in the Portfolio (with which, we are told, the old gentleman was so much overpowered, that he was sick for two or three days) it must be confessed that few authors have ever lived to receive such illustrious rewards, or have so completely enjoyed in advance their own immortality.

After his return from Scaghtikoke, Mr. Knickerbocker took up his residence at a little rural retreat, which the Stuyvesants had granted him on the family domain, in gratitude for his honorable mention of their ancestor. It was pleasantly situated on the borders of one of the salt marshes beyond Corlear's Hook; subject, indeed, to be occasionally over-flowed, and much infested, in the summer-time, with mosquitoes; but otherwise very agreeable, producing abundant crops of salt grass and bulrushes.

Here, we are sorry to say, the good old gentleman fell dangerously ill of a fever, occasioned by the neighboring

marshes. When he found his end approaching, he disposed of his worldly affairs, leaving the bulk of his fortune to the New York Historical Society; his Heidelberg Catechism and Vander Donck's work to the City Library; and his saddle-bags to Mr. Handaside. He forgave all his enemies – that is to say, all that bore any enmity towards him; for as to himself, he declared he died in good-will to all the world. And, after dictating several kind messages, to his relations at Scaghtikoke, as well as to certain of our most substantial Dutch citizens, he expired in the arms of his friend the librarian.

His remains were interred, according to his own request, in St. Mark's Churchyard, close by the bones of his favorite hero, Peter Stuyvesant; and it is rumored that the Historical Society have it in mind to erect a wooden monument to his memory in the Bowling Green.

# TO THE PUBLIC

"To rescue from oblivion the memory of former incidents, and to render a just tribute of renown to the many great and wonderful transactions of our Dutch progenitors, Diedrich Knickerbocker, native of the city of New York, produces this historical essay."<sup>1</sup> Like the great Father of History, whose words I have just quoted, I treat of times long past, over which the twilight of uncertainty had already thrown its shadows, and the night of forgetfulness was about to descend for ever. With great solicitude had I long beheld the early history of this venerable and ancient city gradually slipping from our grasp, trembling on the lips of narrative old age, and day by day dropping piecemeal into the tomb. In a little while, thought I, and those revered Dutch burghers, who serve as the tottering monuments of good old times, will be gathered to their fathers; their children, engrossed by the empty pleasures or insignificant transactions of the present age, will neglect to treasure up the recollections of the past, and posterity will search in vain for memorials of the days of the Patriarchs. The origin of our city will be buried in eternal oblivion, and even the names and achievements of Wouter Van Twiller, William Kieft, and Peter Stuyvesant be enveloped in doubt and fiction, like those of Romulus and Remus, of Charlemagne, King Arthur, Rinaldo, and Godfrey of

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<sup>1</sup> Beloe's Herodotus.

Boulogne.

Determined, therefore, to avert if possible this threatened misfortune, I industriously set myself to work to gather together all the fragments of our ancient history which still existed; and, like my revered prototype, Herodotus, where no written records could be found, I have endeavored to continue the chain of history by well-authenticated traditions.

In this arduous undertaking, which has been the whole business of a long and solitary life, it is incredible the number of learned authors I have consulted, and all to but little purpose. Strange as it may seem, though such multitudes of excellent works have been written about this country, there are none extant which give any full and satisfactory account of the early history of New York, or of its three first Dutch Governors. I have, however, gained much valuable and curious matter from an elaborate manuscript, written in exceeding pure and classic low Dutch, excepting a few errors in orthography, which was found in the archives of the Stuyvesant family. Many legends, letters, and other documents have I likewise gleaned in my researches among the family chests and lumber garrets of our respectable Dutch citizens; and I have gathered a host of well-authenticated traditions from divers excellent old ladies of my acquaintance, who requested that their names might not be mentioned. Nor must I neglect to acknowledge how greatly I have been assisted by that admirable and praiseworthy institution, the New York Historical Society, to which I here publicly return my sincere

acknowledgments.

In the conduct, of this inestimable work I have adopted no individual model, but, on the contrary, have simply contented myself with combining and concentrating the excellences of the most approved ancient historians. Like Xenophon, I have maintained the utmost impartiality, and the strictest adherence to truth throughout my history. I have enriched it, after the manner of Sallust, with various characters of ancient worthies, drawn at full length and faithfully colored. I have seasoned it with profound political speculations like Thucydides, sweetened it with the graces of sentiment like Tacitus, and infused into the whole the dignity, the grandeur and magnificence of Livy.

I am aware that I shall incur the censure of numerous very learned and judicious critics for indulging too frequently in the bold excursive manner of my favorite Herodotus. And, to be candid, I have found it impossible always to resist the allurements of those pleasing episodes, which, like flowery banks and fragrant bowers, beset the dusty road of the historian, and entice him to turn aside, and refresh himself from his wayfaring. But I trust it will be found that I have always resumed my staff, and addressed myself to my weary journey with renovated spirits, so that both my readers and myself have been benefited by the relaxation.

Indeed, though it has been my constant wish and uniform endeavor to rival Polybius himself, in observing the requisite unity of History, yet the loose and unconnected manner in which

many of the facts herein recorded have come to hand rendered such an attempt extremely difficult. This difficulty was likewise increased by one of the grand objects contemplated in my work, which was to trace the rise of sundry customs and institutions in these best of cities, and to compare them, when in the germ of infancy, with what they are in the present old age of knowledge and improvement.

But the chief merit on which I value myself, and found my hopes for future regard, is that faithful veracity with which I have compiled this invaluable little work; carefully winnowing away the chaff of hypothesis, and discarding the tares of fable, which are too apt to spring up and choke the seeds of truth and wholesome knowledge. Had I been anxious to captivate the superficial throng, who skim like swallows over the surface of literature; or had I been anxious to commend my writings to the pampered palates of literary epicures, I might have availed myself of the obscurity that overshadows the infant years of our city, to introduce a thousand pleasing fictions. But I have scrupulously discarded many a pithy tale and marvelous adventure, whereby the drowsy ear of summer indolence might be enthralled; jealously maintaining that fidelity, gravity, and dignity which should ever distinguish the historian. "For a writer of this class," observes an elegant critic, "must sustain the character of a wise man writing for the instruction of posterity; one who has studied to inform himself well, who has pondered his subject with care, and addresses himself to our judgment

rather than to our imagination."

Thrice happy, therefore, is this our renowned city, in having incidents worthy of swelling the theme of history; and doubly thrice happy is it in having such an historian as myself to relate them. For, after all, gentle reader, cities of themselves, and, in fact, empires of themselves, are nothing without an historian. It is the patient narrator who records their prosperity as they rise – who blazons forth the splendor of their noontide meridian – who props their feeble memorials as they totter to decay – who gathers together their scattered fragments as they rot – and who piously, at length, collects their ashes into the mausoleum of his work, and rears a triumphant monument to transmit their renown to all succeeding ages.

What has been the fate of many fair cities of antiquity, whose nameless ruins encumber the plains of Europe and Asia, and awaken the fruitless inquiry of the traveler? They have sunk into dust and silence – they have perished from remembrance for want of a historian! The philanthropist may weep over their desolation – the poet may wander among their mouldering arches and broken columns, and indulge the visionary flights of his fancy – but alas! alas! the modern historian, whose pen, like my own, is doomed to confine itself to dull matter of fact, seeks in vain among their oblivious remains for some memorial that may tell the instructive tale of their glory and their ruin.

"Wars, conflagrations, deluges," says Aristotle, "destroy nations, and with them all their monuments, their discoveries,

and their vanities. The torch of science has more than once been extinguished and rekindled – a few individuals, who have escaped by accident, reunite the thread of generations."

The same sad misfortune which has happened to so many ancient cities will happen again, and from the same sad cause, to nine-tenths of those which now flourish on the face of the globe. With most of them the time for recording their history is gone by: their origin, their foundation, together with the early stages of their settlement, are for ever buried in the rubbish of years; and the same would have been the case with this fair portion of the earth if I had not snatched it from obscurity in the very nick of time, at the moment that those matters herein recorded were about entering into the widespread insatiable maw of oblivion – if I had not dragged them out, as it were, by the very locks, just as the monster's adamantine fangs were closing upon them for ever! And here have I, as before observed, carefully collected, collated, and arranged them, scrip and scrap, "*punt en punt, gat en gat*," and commenced in this little work, a history to serve as a foundation on which other historians may hereafter raise a noble superstructure, swelling in process of time, until Knickerbocker's New York may be equally voluminous with Gibbon's Rome, or Hume and Smollett's England!

And now indulge me for a moment: while I lay down my pen, skip to some little eminence at the distance of two or three hundred years ahead; and, casting back a bird's-eye glance over the waste of years that is to roll between, discover myself – little

I – at this moment the progenitor, prototype, and precursor of them all, posted at the head of this host of literary worthies, with my book under my arm, and New York on my back, pressing forward, like a gallant commander, to honor and immortality.

Such are the vain-glorious misgivings that will now and then enter into the brain of the author – that irradiate, as with celestial light, his solitary chamber, cheering his weary spirits, and animating him to persevere in his labors. And I have freely given utterance to these rhapsodies whenever they have occurred; not, I trust, from an unusual spirit of egotism, but merely that the reader may for once have an idea how an author thinks and feels while he is writing – a kind of knowledge very rare and curious, and much to be desired.

*BOOK I.*  
**CONTAINING DIVERS INGENUOUS  
THEORIES AND PHILOSOPHIC  
SPECULATIONS, CONCERNING  
THE CREATION AND POPULATION  
OF THE WORLD, AS CONNECTED  
WITH THE HISTORY OF NEW YORK**

**CHAPTER I**

According to the best authorities, the world in which we dwell is a huge, opaque, reflecting, inanimate mass, floating in the vast ethereal ocean of infinite space. It has the form of an orange, being an oblate spheroid, curiously flattened at opposite parts, for the insertion of two imaginary poles, which are supposed to penetrate and unite at the center; thus forming an axis on which the mighty orange turns with a regular diurnal revolution.

The transitions of light and darkness, whence proceed the alternations of day and night, are produced by this diurnal revolution successively presenting the different parts of the earth to the rays of the sun. The latter is, according to the best, that is to say, the latest, accounts a luminous or fiery body, of a

prodigious magnitude, from which this world is driven by a centrifugal or repelling power, and to which it is drawn by a centripetal or attractive force; otherwise called the attraction of gravitation; the combination, or rather the counteraction, of these two opposing impulses producing a circular and annual revolution. Hence result the different seasons of the year – viz., spring, summer, autumn, and winter.

This I believe to be the most approved modern theory on the subject; though there be many philosophers who have entertained very different opinions; some, too, of them entitled to much deference from their great antiquity and illustrious characters. Thus it was advanced by some of the ancient sages that the earth was an extended plain, supported by vast pillars; and by others that it rested on the head of a snake, or the back of a huge tortoise; but as they did not provide a resting place for either the pillars or the tortoise, the whole theory fell to the ground for want of proper foundation.

The Brahmins assert, that the heavens rest upon the earth, and the sun and moon swim therein like fishes in the water, moving from east to west by day, and gliding along the edge of the horizon to their original stations during the night;<sup>2</sup> while, according to the Pauranicas of India, it is a vast plain, encircled by seven oceans of mild, nectar, and other delicious liquids; that it is studded with seven mountains, and ornamented in the center by a mountainous rock of burnished gold; and that a great

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<sup>2</sup> Faria y Souza: Mick. Lus. note b. 7.

dragon occasionally swallows up the moon, which accounts for the phenomena of lunar eclipses.<sup>3</sup>

Beside these, and many other equally sage opinions, we have the profound conjectures of Aboul-Hassan-Aly, son of Al Khan, son of Aly, son of Abderrahman, son of Abdallah, son of Masoud el-Hadheli, who is commonly called Masoudi, and surnamed Cothbeddin, but who takes the humble title of Laheb-ar-rasoul, which means the companion of the ambassador of God. He has written a universal history, entitled, "Mourouge-ed-dharab or the Golden Meadows, and the Mines of Precious Stones."<sup>4</sup> In this valuable work he has related the history of the world, from the creation down to the moment of writing; which was under the Khaliphate of Mothi Billah, in the month Dgioumadi-el-aoual of the 336th year of the Hegira or flight of the Prophet. He informs us that the earth is a huge bird, Mecca and Medina constitute the head, Persia and India the right wing, the land of Gog the left wing, and Africa the tail. He informs us moreover, that an earth has existed before the present (which he considers as a mere chicken of 7,000 years), that it has undergone divers deluges, and that, according to the opinion of some well-informed Brahmins of his acquaintance; it will be renovated every seventy thousandth hazarouam; each hazarouam consisting of 12,000 years.

These are a few of the many contradictory opinions of philosophers concerning the earth, and we find that the learned

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<sup>3</sup> Sir W. Jones, Diss. Antiq. Ind. Zod.

<sup>4</sup> MSS. Bibliot. Roi. Fr.

have had equal perplexity as to the nature of the sun. Some of the ancient philosophers have affirmed that it is a vast wheel of brilliant fire;<sup>5</sup> others that it is merely a mirror or sphere of transparent crystal;<sup>6</sup> and a third class, at the head of whom stands Anaxagoras, maintained that it was nothing but a huge ignited mass of iron or stone – indeed he declared the heavens to be merely a vault of stone – and that the stars were stones whirled upward from the earth, and set on fire by the velocity of its revolutions.<sup>7</sup> But I give little attention to the doctrines of this philosopher, the people of Athens having fully refuted them by banishing him from their city; a concise mode of answering unwelcome doctrines, much resorted to in former days. Another sect of philosophers do declare, that certain fiery particles exhale constantly from the earth, which, concentrating in a single point of the firmament by day, constitute the sun, but being scattered and rambling about in the dark at night, collect in various points, and form stars. These are regularly burnt out and extinguished, not unlike to the lamps in our streets, and require a fresh supply of exhalations for the next occasion.<sup>8</sup>

It is even recorded that at certain remote and obscure periods,

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<sup>5</sup> Plutarch de Plac. Philos. lib. ii. cap. 20

<sup>6</sup> Achill. Tat. isag. cap. 19; Ap. Petav. t. iii. p. 81; Stob. Eclog. Phys. lib. i. p. 56; Plut. de Plac. Philos.

<sup>7</sup> Diogenes Laertius in Anaxag. 1. ii. sec. 8; Plat Apol. t. i. p. 26; Plut. de Plac. Philos; Xenoph. Mem. 1. iv. p. 815.

<sup>8</sup> Aristot. Meteor. 1. ii. c. 2; Idem. Probl. sec. 15; Stob. Ecl. Phys. 1. i. p. 55; Bruck. Hist. Phil, t. i. p. 1154, etc.

in consequence of a great scarcity of fuel, the sun has been completely burnt out, and sometimes not rekindled for a month at a time. A most melancholy circumstance, the very idea of which gave vast concern to Heraclitus, that worthy weeping philosopher of antiquity. In addition to these various speculations, it was the opinion of Herschel that the sun is a magnificent, habitable abode; the light it furnishes arising from certain empyreal, luminous or phosphoric clouds, swimming in its transparent atmosphere.<sup>9</sup>

But we will not enter further at present into the nature of the sun, that being an inquiry not immediately necessary to the development of this history; neither will we embroil ourselves in any more of the endless disputes of philosophers touching the form of this globe, but content ourselves with the theory advanced in the beginning of this chapter, and will proceed to illustrate by experiment the complexity of motion therein described to this our rotatory planet.

Professor Von Poddingcoft (or Puddinghead, as the name may be rendered into English) was long celebrated in the University of Leyden for profound gravity of deportment and a talent at going to sleep in the midst of examinations, to the infinite relief of his hopeful students, who thereby worked their way through college with great ease and little study. In the course of one of his lectures, the learned professor seizing a bucket of water swung it around his head at arm's length. The impulse with

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<sup>9</sup> Philos. Trans. 1795, p. 72; Idem. 1801, p. 265; Nich. Philos. Journ. i. p. 13.

which he threw the vessel from him, being a centrifugal force, the retention of his arm operating as a centripetal power, and the bucket, which was a substitute for the earth, describing a circular orbit round about the globular head and ruby visage of Professor Von Poddingcoft, which formed no bad representation of the sun. All of these particulars were duly explained to the class of gaping students around him. He apprised them, moreover, that the same principle of gravitation which retained the water in the bucket restrains the ocean from flying from the earth in its rapid revolutions; and he farther informed them that should the motion of the earth be suddenly checked, it would incontinently fall into the sun, through the centripetal force of gravitation: a most ruinous event to this planet, and one which would also obscure, though it most probably would not extinguish, the solar luminary. An unlucky stripling, one of those vagrant geniuses who seem sent into the world merely to annoy worthy men of the puddinghead order, desirous of ascertaining the correctness of the experiment, suddenly arrested the arm of the professor just at the moment that the bucket was in its zenith, which immediately descended with astonishing precision upon the philosophic head of the instructor of youth. A hollow sound, and a red-hot hiss, attended the contact; but the theory was in the amplest manner illustrated, for the unfortunate bucket perished in the conflict; but the blazing countenance of Professor Von Poddingcoft emerged from amidst the waters, glowing fiercer than ever with unutterable indignation, whereby the students

were marvelously edified, and departed considerably wiser than before.

It is a mortifying circumstance, which greatly perplexes many a painstaking philosopher, that nature often refuses to second his most profound and elaborate efforts; so that often after having invented one of the most ingenious and natural theories imaginable, she will have the perverseness to act directly in the teeth of his system, and flatly contradict his most favorite positions. This is a manifest and unmerited grievance, since it throws the censure of the vulgar and unlearned entirely upon the philosopher; whereas the fault is not to be ascribed to his theory, which is unquestionably correct, but to the waywardness of Dame Nature, who, with the proverbial fickleness of her sex, is continually indulging in coquetries and caprices, and seems really to take pleasure in violating all philosophic rules, and jilting the most learned and indefatigable of her adorers. Thus it happened with respect to the foregoing satisfactory explanation of the motion of our planet; it appears that the centrifugal force has long since ceased to operate, while its antagonist remains in undiminished potency: the world, therefore, according to the theory as it originally stood, ought in strict propriety to tumble into the sun; philosophers were convinced that it would do so, and awaited in anxious impatience the fulfillment of their prognostics. But the untoward planet pertinaciously continued her course, notwithstanding that she had reason, philosophy, and a whole university of learned professors opposed to her conduct.

The philosophers took this in very ill part, and it is thought they would never have pardoned the slight and affront which they conceived put upon them by the world had not a good-natured professor kindly officiated as a mediator between the parties, and effected a reconciliation.

Finding the world would not accommodate itself to the theory, he wisely determined to accommodate the theory to the world; he therefore informed his brother philosophers that the circular motion of the earth round the sun was no sooner engendered by the conflicting impulses above described than it became a regular revolution independent of the cause which gave it origin. His learned brethren readily joined in the opinion, being heartily glad of any explanation that would decently extricate them from their embarrassment; and ever since that memorable era the world has been left to take her own course, and to revolve around the sun in such orbit as she thinks proper.

## CHAPTER II

Having thus briefly introduced my reader to the world, and given him some idea of its form and situation, he will naturally be curious to know from whence it came, and how it was created. And, indeed, the clearing up of these points is absolutely essential to my history, inasmuch as if this world had not been formed, it is more than probable that this renowned island, on which is situated the city of New York, would never have had an existence.

The regular course of my history, therefore, requires that I should proceed to notice the cosmogony or formation of this our globe.

And now I give my readers fair warning that I am about to plunge, for a chapter or two, into as complete a labyrinth as ever historian was perplexed withal; therefore, I advise them to take fast hold of my skirts, and keep close at my heels, venturing neither to the right hand nor to the left, lest they get bemired in a slough of unintelligible learning, or have their brains knocked out by some of those hard Greek names which will be flying about in all directions. But should any of them be too indolent or chicken-hearted to accompany me in this perilous undertaking, they had better take a short cut round, and wait for me at the beginning of some smoother chapter.

Of the creation of the world we have a thousand contradictory accounts; and though a very satisfactory one is furnished us by divine revelation, yet every philosopher feels himself in honor bound to furnish us with a better. As an impartial historian, I consider it my duty to notice their several theories, by which mankind have been so exceedingly edified and instructed.

Thus it was the opinion of certain ancient sages, that the earth and the whole system of the universe was the Deity himself;<sup>10</sup> a doctrine most strenuously maintained by Zenophanes and the whole tribe of Eleatics, as also by Strabo and the sect of peripatetic philosophers. Pythagoras likewise inculcated the famous numerical system of the monad, dyad, and triad; and

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<sup>10</sup> Aristot. ap, Cic. lib. i. cap. 3.

by means of his sacred quaternary, elucidated the formation of the world, the arcana of nature, and the principles both of music and morals.<sup>11</sup> Other sages adhered to the mathematical system of squares and triangles; the cube, the pyramid, and the sphere; the tetrahedron, the octahedron, the icosahedron, and the dodecahedron.<sup>12</sup> While others advocated the great elementary theory, which refers the construction of our globe and all that it contains to the combinations of four material elements, air, earth, fire, and water; with the assistance of a fifth, an immaterial and vivifying principle.

Nor must I omit to mention the great atomic system taught by old Moschus before the siege of Troy; revived by Democritus of laughing memory; improved by Epicurus, that king of good fellows; and modernized by the fanciful Descartes. But I decline inquiring, whether the atoms, of which the earth is said to be composed, are eternal or recent; whether they are animate or inanimate; whether, agreeably, to the opinion of Atheists, they were fortuitously aggregated, or, as the Theists maintain, were arranged by a supreme intelligence.<sup>13</sup> Whether, in fact, the earth be an insensate clod, or whether it be animated by a soul,<sup>14</sup> which

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<sup>11</sup> Aristot. *Metaph.* lib. i. c. 5.; *Idem*, de *Coelo*, l. iii, c. I; Rousseau *mem. sur Musique ancien.* p. 39; Plutarch de *Plac. Philos.* lib. i. cap. 3.

<sup>12</sup> *Tim. Locr.* ap. *Plato.* t. iii. p. 90.

<sup>13</sup> Aristot. *Nat. Auscult.* l. ii. cap. 6; Aristoph. *Metaph.* lib. i. cap. 3; Cic. de *Nat. Deor.* lib. i. cap. 10; Justin Mart. *orat. ad gent.* p. 20.

<sup>14</sup> Mosheim in *Cudw.* lib. i. cap. 4; *Tim. de anim. mund.* ap. *Plat.* lib. iii.; *Mem. de l'Acad. des Belles-Lettres.* t. xxxii. p. 19.

opinion was strenuously maintained by a host of philosophers, at the head of whom stands the great Plato, that temperate sage, who threw the cold water of philosophy on the form of sexual intercourse, and inculcated the doctrine of Platonic love – an exquisitely refined intercourse, but much better adapted to the ideal inhabitants of his imaginary island of Atlantis than to the sturdy race, composed of rebellious flesh and blood, which populates the little matter-of-fact island we inhabit.

Besides these systems, we have, moreover, the poetical theogony of old Hesiod, who generated the whole universe in the regular mode of procreation; and the plausible opinion of others, that the earth was hatched from the great egg of night, which floated in chaos, and was cracked by the horns of the celestial bull. To illustrate this last doctrine, Burnet, in his theory of the earth,<sup>15</sup> has favored us with an accurate drawing and description, both of the form and texture of this mundane egg, which is found to bear a marvelous resemblance to that of a goose. Such of my readers as take a proper interest in the origin of this our planet will be pleased to learn that the most profound sages of antiquity among the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Persians, Greeks, and Latins have alternately assisted at the hatching of this strange bird, and that their cacklings have been caught, and continued in different tones and inflections, from philosopher to philosopher, unto the present day.

But while briefly noticing long celebrated systems of ancient

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<sup>15</sup> Book i. ch. 5.

sages, let me not pass over, with neglect, those of other philosophers, which, though less universal than renowned, have equal claims to attention, and equal chance for correctness. Thus it is recorded by the Brahmins in the pages of their inspired Shastah, that the angel Bistnoo transformed himself into a great boar, plunged into the watery abyss, and brought up the earth on his tusks. Then issued from him a mighty tortoise and a mighty snake; and Bistnoo placed the snake erect upon the back of the tortoise, and he placed the earth upon the head of the snake.<sup>16</sup>

The negro philosophers of Congo affirm, that the world was made by the hands of angels, excepting their own country, which the Supreme Being constructed himself that it might be supremely excellent. And he took great pains with the inhabitants, and made them very black and beautiful; and when he had finished the first man, he was well pleased with him, and smoothed him over the face, and hence his nose, and the nose of all his descendants, became flat.

The Mohawk philosophers tell us, that a pregnant woman fell down from heaven, and that a tortoise took her upon its back, because every place was covered with water; and that the woman, sitting upon the tortoise, paddled with her hands in the water, and raked up the earth, whence it finally happened that the earth became higher than the water.<sup>17</sup>

But I forbear to quote a number more of these ancient and

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<sup>16</sup> Holwell, *Gent. Philosophy*.

<sup>17</sup> Johannes Megapolensis. *Jun. Account of Maquaas or Mohawk Indians*.

outlandish philosophers, whose deplorable ignorance, in despite of all their erudition, compelled them to write in languages which but few of my readers can understand; and I shall proceed briefly to notice a few more intelligible and fashionable theories of their modern successors.

And, first, I shall mention the great Buffon, who conjectures that this globe was originally a globe of liquid fire, scintillated from the body of the sun, by the percussion of a comet, as a spark is generated by the collision of flint and steel. That at first it was surrounded by gross vapors, which, cooling and condensing in process of time, constituted, according to their densities, earth, water, and air, which gradually arranged themselves, according to their respective gravities, round the burning or vitrified mass that formed their center.

Hutton, on the contrary, supposes that the waters at first were universally paramount; and he terrifies himself with the idea that the earth must be eventually washed away by the force of rain, rivers, and mountain torrents, until it is confounded with the ocean, or, in other words, absolutely dissolves into itself. Sublime idea! far surpassing that of the tender-hearted damsel of antiquity, who wept herself into a fountain; or the good dame of Narbonne in France, who, for a volubility of tongue unusual in her sex, was doomed to peel five hundred thousand and thirty-nine ropes of onions, and actually run out at her eyes before half the hideous task was accomplished.

Whistorn, the same ingenious philosopher who rivaled Ditton

in his researches after the longitude (for which the mischief-loving Swift discharged on their heads a most savory stanza), has distinguished himself by a very admirable theory respecting the earth. He conjectures that it was originally a chaotic comet, which, being selected for the abode of man, was removed from its eccentric orbit; and whirled round the sun in its present regular motion; by which change of direction, order succeeded to confusion in the arrangement of its component parts. The philosopher adds that the deluge was produced by an uncourteous salute from the watery tail of another comet; doubtless through sheer envy of its improved condition; thus furnishing a melancholy proof that jealousy may prevail even among the heavenly bodies, and discord interrupt that celestial harmony of the spheres so melodiously sung by the poets.

But I pass over a variety of excellent theories, among which are those of Burnet, and Woodward, and Whitehurst; regretting extremely that my time will not suffer me to give them the notice they deserve; and shall conclude with that of the renowned Dr. Darwin. This learned Theban, who is as much distinguished for rhyme as reason, and for good-natured credulity as serious research, and who has recommended himself wonderfully to the good graces of the ladies, by letting them into all the gallantries, amours, debaucheries, and other topics of scandal of the court of Flora, has fallen upon a theory worthy of his combustible imagination. According to his opinion, the huge mass of chaos took a sudden occasion to explode, like a barrel of gunpowder,

and in that act exploded the sun – which, in its flight, by a similar convulsion, exploded the earth, which in like guise exploded the moon – and thus, by a concatenation of explosions, the whole solar system was produced, and set most systematically in motion!<sup>18</sup>

By the great variety of theories here alluded to, every one of which, if thoroughly examined, will be found surprisingly consistent in all its parts, my unlearned readers will perhaps be led to conclude that the creation of a world is not so difficult a task as they at first imagined. I have shown at least a score of ingenious methods in which a world could be constructed; and I have no doubt that had any of the philosophers above quoted the use of a good manageable comet, and the philosophical warehouse, chaos, at his command, he would engage to manufacture, a planet as good, or, if you would take his word for it, better than this we inhabit.

And here I cannot help noticing the kindness of Providence in creating comets for the great relief of bewildered philosophers. By their assistance more sudden evolutions and transitions are effected in the system of nature than are wrought in a pantomimic exhibition by the wonder-working sword of harlequin. Should one of our modern sages, in his theoretical flights among the stars, ever find himself lost in the clouds, and in danger of tumbling into the abyss of nonsense and absurdity, he has but to seize a comet by the beard, mount astride of its tail, and

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<sup>18</sup> Drw. Bot. Garden, part i. cant. i. 1. 105.

away he gallops in triumph like an enchanter on his hippogriff, or a Connecticut witch on her broomstick, "to sweep the cobwebs out of the sky."

It is an old and vulgar saying about a "beggar on horseback" which I would not for the world have applied to these reverend philosophers; but I must confess that some of them, when they are mounted on one of those fiery steeds, are as wild in their curvettings as was Phaeton of yore, when he aspired to manage the chariot of Phoebus. One drives his comet at full speed against the sun, and knocks the world out of him with the mighty concussion; another, more moderate, makes his comet a kind of beast of burden, carrying the sun a regular supply of food and faggots; a third, of more combustible disposition, threatens to throw his comet like a bombshell into the world, and blow it up like a powder magazine; while a fourth, with no great delicacy to this planet and its inhabitants, insinuates that some day or other his comet – my modest pen blushes while I write it – shall absolutely turn tail upon our world and deluge it with water! Surely, as I have already observed, comets were bountifully provided by Providence for the benefit of philosophers to assist them in manufacturing theories.

And now, having adduced several of the most prominent theories that occur to my recollection, I leave my judicious readers at full liberty to choose among them. They are all serious speculations of learned men – all differ essentially from each other – and all have the same title to belief. It has ever been

the task of one race of philosophers to demolish the works of their predecessors, and elevate more splendid fantasies in their stead, which in their turn are demolished and replaced by the air-castles of a succeeding generation. Thus it would seem that knowledge and genius, of which we make such great parade, consist but in detecting the errors and absurdities of those who have gone before, and devising new errors and absurdities, to be detected by those who are to come after us. Theories are the mighty soap-bubbles with which the grown-up children of science amuse themselves while the honest vulgar stand gazing in stupid admiration, and dignify these learned vagaries with the name of wisdom! Surely Socrates was right in his opinion, that philosophers are but a soberer sort of madmen, busying themselves in things totally incomprehensible, or which, if they could be comprehended, would be found not worthy the trouble of discovery.

For my own part, until the learned have come to an agreement among themselves, I shall content myself with the account handed down to us by Moses; in which I do but follow the example of our ingenious neighbors of Connecticut; who at their first settlement proclaimed that the colony should be governed by the laws of God – until they had time to make better.

One thing, however, appears certain – from the unanimous authority of the before quoted philosophers, supported by the evidence of our own senses (which, though very apt to deceive us, may be cautiously admitted as additional testimony) – it

appears, I say, and I make the assertion deliberately, without fear of contradiction, that this globe really was created, and that it is composed of land and water. It further appears that it is curiously divided and parceled out into continents and islands, among which I boldly declare the renowned island of New York will be found by any one who seeks for it in its proper place.

## CHAPTER III

Noah, who is the first seafaring man we read of, begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japhet. Authors, it is true, are not wanting who affirm that the patriarch had a number of other children. Thus Berosus makes him father of the gigantic Titans; Methodius gives him a son called Jonithus, or Jonicus (who was the first inventor of Johnny cakes); and others have mentioned a son, named Thuiscon, from whom descended the Teutons or Teutonic, or, in other words, the Dutch nation.

I regret exceedingly that the nature of my plan will not permit me to gratify the laudable curiosity of my readers, by investigating minutely the history of the great Noah. Indeed, such an undertaking would be attended with more trouble than many people would imagine; for the good old patriarch seems to have been a great traveler in his day, and to have passed under a different name in every country that he visited. The Chaldeans, for instance, give us his story, merely altering his name into Xisuthrus – a trivial alteration, which to an

historian skilled in etymologies will appear wholly unimportant. It appears, likewise, that he had exchanged his tarpaulin and quadrant among the Chaldeans for the gorgeous insignia of royalty, and appears as a monarch in their annals. The Egyptians celebrate him under the name of Osiris; the Indians as Menu, the Greek and Roman writers confound him with Ogyges; and the Theban with Deucalion and Saturn. But the Chinese, who deservedly rank among the most extensive and authentic historians, inasmuch as they have known the world much longer than any one else, declare that Noah was no other than Fohi; and what gives this assertion some air of credibility is that it is a fact, admitted by the most enlightened *literati*, that Noah traveled into China, at the time of the building of the Tower of Babel (probably to improve himself in the study of languages), and the learned Dr. Shuckford gives us the additional information that the ark rested on a mountain on the frontiers of China.

From this mass of rational conjectures and sage hypotheses many satisfactory deductions might be drawn; but I shall content myself with the simple fact stated in the Bible – viz., that Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japhet. It is astonishing on what remote and obscure contingencies the great affairs of this world depend, and how events the most distant, and to the common observer unconnected, are inevitably consequent the one to the other. It remains to the philosopher to discover these mysterious affinities, and it is the proudest triumph of his skill to detect and drag forth some latent chain of causation, which at

first sight appears a paradox to the inexperienced observer. Thus many of my readers will doubtless wonder what connection the family of Noah can possibly have with this history; and many will stare when informed that the whole history of this quarter of the world has taken its character and course from the simplest circumstance of the patriarch's having but three sons – but to explain.

Noah, we are told by sundry very credible historians, becoming sole surviving heir and proprietor of the earth, in fee simple, after the deluge, like a good father, portioned out his estate among his children. To Shem he gave Asia; to Ham, Africa; and to Japhet, Europe. Now it is a thousand times to be lamented that he had but three sons, for had there been a fourth he would doubtless have inherited America, which, of course, would have been dragged forth from its obscurity on the occasion; and thus many a hard-working historian and philosopher would have been spared a prodigious mass of weary conjecture respecting the first discovery and population of this country. Noah, however, having provided for his three sons, looked in all probability upon our country as mere wild unsettled land, and said nothing about it; and to this unpardonable taciturnity of the patriarch may we ascribe the misfortune that America did not come into the world as early as the other quarters of the globe.

It is true, some writers have vindicated him from this misconduct towards posterity, and asserted that he really did

discover America. Thus it was the opinion of Mark Lescarbot, a French writer, possessed of that ponderosity of thought and profoundness of reflection so peculiar to his nation, that the immediate descendants of Noah peopled this quarter of the globe, and that the old patriarch himself, who still retained a passion for the seafaring life, superintended the transmigration. The pious and enlightened father, Charlevoix, a French Jesuit, remarkable for his aversion to the marvelous, common to all great travelers, is conclusively of the same opinion; nay, he goes still farther, and decides upon the manner in which the discovery was effected, which was by sea, and under the immediate direction of the great Noah. "I have already observed," exclaims the good father, in a tone of becoming indignation, "that it is an arbitrary supposition that the grandchildren of Noah were not able to penetrate into the new world, or that they never thought of it. In effect, I can see no reason that can justify such a notion. Who can seriously believe that Noah and his immediate descendants knew less than we do, and that the builder and pilot of the greatest ship that ever was, a ship which was formed to traverse an unbounded ocean, and had so many shoals and quicksands to guard against, should be ignorant of, or should not have communicated to his descendants, the art of sailing on the ocean? Therefore, they did sail on the ocean – therefore, they sailed to America – therefore, America was discovered by Noah!"

Now all this exquisite chain of reasoning, which is so strikingly characteristic of the good father, being addressed

to the faith, rather than the understanding, is flatly opposed by Hans de Laet, who declares it a real and most ridiculous paradox to suppose that Noah ever entertained the thought of discovering America; and as Hans is a Dutch writer, I am inclined to believe he must have been much better acquainted with the worthy crew of the ark than his competitors, and of course possessed of more accurate sources of information. It is astonishing how intimate historians do daily become with the patriarchs and other great men of antiquity. As intimacy improves with time, and as the learned are particularly inquisitive and familiar in their acquaintance with the ancients, I should not be surprised if some future writers should gravely give us a picture of men and manners as they existed before the flood, far more copious and accurate than the Bible; and that, in the course of another century, the log-book of the good Noah should be as current among historians as the voyages of Captain Cook, or the renowned history of Robinson Crusoe.

I shall not occupy my time by discussing the huge mass of additional suppositions, conjectures, and probabilities respecting the first discovery of this country, with which unhappy historians overload themselves in their endeavors to satisfy the doubts of an incredulous world. It is painful to see these laborious wights panting, and toiling, and sweating under an enormous burden, at the very outset of their works, which, on being opened, turns out to be nothing but a mighty bundle of straw. As, however, by unwearied assiduity, they seem to have established the fact, to the

satisfaction of all the world, that this country has been discovered I shall avail myself of their useful labors to be extremely brief upon this point.

I shall not, therefore, stop to inquire whether America was first discovered by a wandering vessel of that celebrated Phoenician fleet, which, according to Herodotus, circumnavigated Africa; or by that Carthaginian expedition which, Pliny the naturalist informs us, discovered the Canary Islands; or whether it was settled by a temporary colony from Tyre, as hinted by Aristotle and Seneca. I shall neither inquire whether it was first discovered by the Chinese, as Vossius with great shrewdness advances; nor by the Norwegians in 1002, under Biron; nor by Behem the German navigator, as Mr. Otto has endeavored to prove to the savants of the learned city of Philadelphia.

Nor shall I investigate the more modern claims of the Welsh, founded on the voyage of Prince Madoc in the eleventh century, who, having never returned, it has since been wisely concluded that he must have gone to America, and that for a plain reason if he did not go there, where else could he have gone? – a question which most Socratically shuts out all further dispute.

Laying aside, therefore, all the conjectures above mentioned, with a multitude of others equally satisfactory, I shall take for granted the vulgar opinion that America was discovered on the 12th of October, 1492, by Christopher Colon, a Genoese, who has been clumsily nicknamed Columbus, but for what reason I

cannot discern. Of the voyages and adventures of this Colon I shall say nothing, seeing that they are already sufficiently known. Nor shall I undertake to prove that this country should have been called Colonia, after his name, that being notoriously self-evident.

Having thus happily got my readers on this side of the Atlantic, I picture them to myself, all impatience to enter upon the enjoyment of the land of promise, and in full expectation that I will immediately deliver it into their possession. But if I do, may I ever forfeit the reputation of a regular bred historian! No – no – most curious and thrice-learned readers (for thrice learned ye are if ye have read all that has gone before, and nine times learned shall ye be if ye read that which comes after), we have yet a world of work before us. Think you the first discoverers of this fair quarter of the globe had nothing to do but go on shore and find a country ready laid out and cultivated like a garden, wherein they might revel at their ease? No such thing. They had forests to cut down, underwood to grub up, marshes to drain, and savages to exterminate. In like manner, I have sundry doubts to clear away, questions to resolve, and paradoxes to explain before I permit you to range at random; but these difficulties once overcome we shall be enabled to jog on right merrily through the rest of our history. Thus my work shall, in a manner, echo the nature of the subject, in the same manner as the sound of poetry has been found by certain shrewd critics to echo the sense – this being an improvement in history which I claim the merit of having

invented.

## CHAPTER IV

The next inquiry at which we arrive in the regular course of our history is to ascertain, if possible, how this country was originally peopled – a point fruitful of incredible embarrassments; for unless we prove that the aborigines did absolutely come from somewhere, it will be immediately asserted in this age of scepticism, that they did not come at all; and if they did not come at all, then was this country never populated – a conclusion perfectly agreeable to the rules of logic, but wholly irreconcilable to every feeling of humanity, inasmuch as it must syllogistically prove fatal to the innumerable aborigines of this populous region.

To avert so dire a sophism, and to rescue from logical annihilation so many millions of fellow-creatures, how many wings of geese have been plundered! what oceans of ink have been benevolently drained! and how many capacious heads of learned historians have been addled and for ever confounded! I pause with reverential awe when I contemplate the ponderous tomes in different languages, with which they have endeavored to solve this question, so important to the happiness of society, but so involved in clouds of impenetrable obscurity. Historian after historian has engaged in the endless circle of hypothetical argument, and, after leading us a weary chase through octavos,

quartos, and folios, has let us out at the end of his work just as wise as we were at the beginning. It was doubtless some philosophical wild-goose chase of the kind that made the old poet Macrobius rail in such a passion at curiosity, which he anathematises most heartily as "an irksome, agonising care, a superstitious industry about unprofitable things, an itching humor to see what is not to be seen, and to be doing what signifies nothing when it is done." But to proceed.

Of the claims of the children of Noah to the original population of this country I shall say nothing, as they have already been touched upon in my last chapter. The claimants next in celebrity are the descendants of Abraham. Thus Christoval Colon (vulgarly called Columbus), when he first discovered the gold mines of Hispaniola, immediately concluded, with a shrewdness that would have done honor to a philosopher, that he had found the ancient Ophir, from whence Solomon procured the gold for embellishing the temple at Jerusalem; nay, Colon even imagined that he saw the remains of furnaces of veritable Hebraic construction, employed in refining the precious ore.

So golden a conjecture, tintured with such fascinating extravagance, was too tempting not to be immediately snapped at by the gudgeons of learning; and, accordingly, there were divers profound writers ready to swear to its correctness, and to bring in their usual load of authorities and wise surmises, wherewithal to prop it up. Vatablus and Robert Stephens declared nothing could be more clear; Arius Montanus, without the least

hesitation, asserts that Mexico was the true Ophir, and the Jews the early settlers of the country. While Possevin, Becan, and several other sagacious writers lug in a supposed prophecy of the fourth book of Esdras, which being inserted in the mighty hypothesis, like the keystone of an arch, gives it, in their opinion, perpetual durability.

Scarce, however, have they completed their goodly superstructure when in trudges a phalanx of opposite authors with Hans de Laet, the great Dutchman, at their head, and at one blow tumbles the whole fabric about their ears. Hans, in fact, contradicts outright all the Israelitish claims to the first settlement of this country, attributing all those equivocal symptoms, and traces of Christianity and Judaism, which have been said to be found in divers provinces of the new world, to the Devil, who has always effected to counterfeit the worship of the true Deity. "A remark," says the knowing old Padre d'Acosta, "made by all good authors who have spoken of the religion of nations newly discovered, and founded, besides, on the authority of the fathers of the church."

Some writers again, among whom it is with much regret I am compelled to mention Lopez de Gomara and Juan de Leri, insinuate that the Canaanites, being driven from the land of promise by the Jews, were seized with such a panic that they fled without looking behind them, until stopping to take breath, they found themselves safe in America. As they brought neither their national language, manners, nor features with them it is supposed

they left them behind in the hurry of their flight. I cannot give my faith to this opinion.

I pass over the supposition of the learned Grotius, who being both an ambassador and a Dutchman to boot, is entitled to great respect, that North America was peopled by a strolling company of Norwegians, and that Peru was founded by a colony from China – Manco or Mungo Capac, the first Incas, being himself a Chinese. Nor shall I more than barely mention that Father Kircher ascribes the settlement of America to the Egyptians, Budbeck to the Scandinavians, Charron to the Gauls, Juffredus Petri to a skating party from Friesland, Milius to the Celtæ, Marinocus the Sicilian to the Romans, Le Comte to the Phoenicians, Postel to the Moors, Martin d'Angleria to the Abyssinians, together with the sage surmise of De Laet, that England, Ireland, and the Orcades may contend for that honor.

Nor will I bestow any more attention or credit to the idea that America is the fairy region of Zipangri, described by that dreaming traveler Marco Polo the Venetian; or that it comprises the visionary island of Atlantis, described by Plato. Neither will I stop to investigate the heathenish assertion of Paracelsus, that each hemisphere of the globe was originally furnished with an Adam and Eve. Or the more flattering opinion of Dr. Romaine, supported by many nameless authorities, that Adam was of the Indian race; or the startling conjecture of Buffon, Helvetius, and Darwin, so highly honorable to mankind, that the whole human species is accidentally descended from a remarkable family of

monkeys!

This last conjecture, I must own, came upon me very suddenly and very ungraciously. I have often beheld the clown in a pantomime, while gazing in stupid wonder at the extravagant gambols of a harlequin, all at once electrified by a sudden stroke of the wooden sword across his shoulders. Little did I think at such times that it would ever fall to my lot to be treated with equal discourtesy, and that while I was quietly beholding these grave philosophers emulating the eccentric transformations of the hero of pantomime, they would on a sudden turn upon me and my readers, and with one hypocritical flourish metamorphose us into beasts! I determined from that moment not to burn my fingers with any more of their theories, but content myself with detailing the different methods by which they transported the descendants of these ancient and respectable monkeys to this great field of theoretical warfare.

This was done either by migrations by land or transmigrations by water. Thus Padre Joseph d'Acosta enumerates three passages by land, first by the north of Europe, secondly by the north of Asia, and, thirdly, by regions southward of the Straits of Magellan. The learned Grotius marches his Norwegians by a pleasant route across frozen rivers and arms of the sea, through Iceland, Greenland, Estotiland, and Naremerga; and various writers, among whom are Angleria, De Hornn, and Buffon, anxious for the accommodation of these travelers, have fastened the two continents together by a strong chain of deductions –

by which means they could pass over dry-shod. But should even this fail, Pinkerton, that industrious old gentleman, who compiles books and manufactures geographies, has constructed a natural bridge of ice, from continent to continent, at the distance of four or five miles from Behring's Straits-for which he is entitled to the grateful thanks of all the wandering aborigines who ever did or ever will pass over it.

It is an evil much to be lamented that none of the worthy writers above quoted could ever commence his work without immediately declaring hostilities against every writer who had treated of the same subject. In this particular authors may be compared to a certain sagacious bird, which, in building its nest is sure to pull to pieces the nests of all the birds in its neighborhood. This unhappy propensity tends grievously to impede the progress of sound knowledge. Theories are at best but brittle productions, and when once committed to the stream, they should take care that, like the notable pots which were fellow-voyagers, they do not crack each other.

My chief surprise is, that among the many writers I have noticed, no one has attempted to prove that this country was peopled from the moon – or that the first inhabitants floated hither on islands of ice, as white bears cruise about the northern oceans – or that they were conveyed hither by balloons, as modern aeronauts pass from Dover to Calais – or by witchcraft, as Simon Magus posted among the stars – or after the manner of the renowned Scythian Abaris, who, like the New England

witches on full-blooded broomsticks, made most unheard-of journeys on the back of a golden arrow, given him by the Hyperborean Apollo.

But there is still one mode left by which this country could have been peopled, which I have reserved for the last, because I consider it worth all the rest; it is – by accident! Speaking of the islands of Solomon, New Guinea, and New Holland, the profound father Charlevoix observes: "In fine, all these countries are peopled, and it is possible some have been so by accident. Now if it could have happened in that manner, why might it not have been at the same time, and by the same means, with the other parts of the globe?" This ingenious mode of deducing certain conclusions from possible premises is an improvement in syllogistic skill, and proves the good father superior even to Archimedes, for he can turn the world without anything to rest his lever upon. It is only surpassed by the dexterity with which the sturdy old Jesuit in another place cuts the gordian knot – "Nothing," says he, "is more easy. The inhabitants of both hemispheres are certainly the descendants of the same father. The common father of mankind received an express order from Heaven to people the world, and accordingly it has been peopled. To bring this about it was necessary to overcome all difficulties in the way, and they have also been overcome!" Pious logician! how does he put all the herd of laborious theorists to the blush, by explaining in five words what it has cost them volumes to prove they knew nothing about!

From all the authorities here quoted, and a variety of others which I have consulted, but which are omitted through fear of fatiguing the unlearned reader, I can only draw the following conclusions, which luckily, however, are sufficient for my purpose. First, that this part of the world has actually been peopled (Q.E.D.) to support which we have living proofs in the numerous tribes of Indians that inhabit it. Secondly, that it has been peopled in five hundred different ways, as proved by a cloud of authors, who, from the positiveness of their assertions, seem to have been eye-witnesses to the fact. Thirdly, that the people of this country had a variety of fathers, which, as it may not be thought much to their credit by the common run of readers, the less we say on the subject the better. The question, therefore, I trust, is for ever at rest.

## CHAPTER V

The writer of a history may, in some respects, be likened unto an adventurous knight, who having undertaken a perilous enterprise by way of establishing his fame, feels bound, in honor and chivalry to turn back for no difficulty nor hardship, and never to shrink or quail, whatever enemy he may encounter. Under this impression, I resolutely draw my pen, and fall to with might and main at those doughty questions and subtle paradoxes which, like fiery dragons and bloody giants, beset the entrance to my history, and would fain repulse me from the very threshold. And at this

moment a gigantic question has started up, which I must needs take by the beard and utterly subdue before I can advance another step in my historic undertaking; but I trust this will be the last adversary I shall have to contend with, and that in the next book I shall be enabled to conduct my readers in triumph into the body of my work.

The question which has thus suddenly arisen is, What right had the first discoverers of America to land and take possession of a country without first gaining the consent of its inhabitants, or yielding them an adequate compensation for their territory? – a question which has withstood many fierce assaults, and has given much distress of mind to multitudes of kind-hearted folk. And, indeed, until it be totally vanquished, and put to rest, the worthy people of America can by no means enjoy the soil they inhabit with clear right and title, and quiet, unsullied conscience.

The first source of right by which property is acquired in a country is discovery. For as all mankind have an equal right to anything which has never before been appropriated, so any nation that discovers an uninhabited country, and takes possession thereof, is considered as enjoying full property, and absolute, unquestionable empire therein.<sup>19</sup>

This proposition being admitted, it follows clearly that the Europeans who first visited America were the real discoverers of the same; nothing being necessary to the establishment of this fact but simply to prove that it was totally uninhabited by man.

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<sup>19</sup> Grotius: Puffendorf, b. v. c. 4, Vattel, b. i. c. 18, etc.

This would at first appear to be a point of some difficulty, for it is well known that this quarter of the world abounded with certain animals, that walked erect on two feet, had something of the human countenance, uttered certain unintelligible sounds, very much like language; in short, had a marvelous resemblance to human beings. But the zealous and enlightened fathers who accompanied the discoverers, for the purpose of promoting the kingdom of heaven by establishing fat monasteries and bishoprics on earth, soon cleared up this point, greatly to the satisfaction of his holiness the Pope and of all Christian voyagers and discoverers.

They plainly proved, and, as there were no Indian writers arose on the other side, the fact was considered as fully admitted and established, that the two-legged race of animals before mentioned were mere cannibals, detestable monsters, and many of them giants – which last description of vagrants have, since the time of Gog, Magog, and Goliath, been considered as outlaws, and have received no quarter in either history, chivalry, or song. Indeed, even the philosophic Bacon declared the Americans to be people proscribed by the laws of nature, inasmuch as they had a barbarous custom of sacrificing men, and feeding upon man's flesh.

Nor are these all the proofs of their utter barbarism; among many other writers of discernment, Ulla tells us, "their imbecility is so visible that one can hardly form an idea of them different from what one has of the brutes. Nothing disturbs the tranquillity

of their souls, equally insensible to disasters and to prosperity. Though half naked, they are as contented as a monarch in his most splendid array. Fear makes no impression on them, and respect as little." All this is furthermore supported by the authority of M. Boggier. "It is not easy," says he, "to describe the degree of their indifference for wealth and all its advantages. One does not well know what motives to propose to them when one would persuade them to any service. It is vain to offer them money; they answer they are not hungry." And Vane gas confirms the whole, assuring us that "ambition they have none, and are more desirous of being thought strong than valiant. The objects of ambition with us – honor, fame, reputation, riches, posts, and distinctions – are unknown among them. So that this powerful spring of action, the cause of so much seeming good and real evil in the world, has no power over them. In a word, these unhappy mortals may be compared to children, in whom the development of reason is not completed."

Now all these peculiarities, although in the unenlightened states of Greece they would have entitled their possessors to immortal honor, as having reduced to practice those rigid and abstemious maxims, the mere talking about which acquired certain old Greeks the reputation of sages and philosophers; yet were they clearly proved in the present instance to betoken a most abject and brutified nature, totally beneath the human character. But the benevolent fathers, who had undertaken to turn these unhappy savages into dumb beasts by dint of argument, advanced

still stronger proofs; for as certain divines of the sixteenth century, and among the rest Lullus, affirm, the Americans go naked, and have no beards! "They have nothing," says Lullus, "of the reasonable animal, except the mask." And even that mask was allowed to avail them but little, for it was soon found that they were of a hideous copper complexion – and being of a copper complexion, it was all the same as if they were negroes – and negroes are black, "and black," said the pious fathers, devoutly crossing themselves, "is the color of the devil!" Therefore, so far from being able to own property, they had no right even to personal freedom – for liberty is too radiant a deity to inhabit such gloomy temples. All which circumstances plainly convinced the righteous followers of Cortes and Pizarro that these miscreants had no title to the soil that they infested – that they were a perverse, illiterate, dumb, beardless, black-seed – mere wild beasts of the forests and, like them, should either be subdued or exterminated.

From the foregoing arguments, therefore, and a variety of others equally conclusive, which I forbear to enumerate, it is clearly evident that this fair quarter of the globe, when first visited by Europeans, was a howling wilderness, inhabited by nothing but wild beasts; and that the transatlantic visitors acquired an incontrovertible property therein, by the right of discovery.

This right being fully established, we now come to the next, which is the right acquired by cultivation. "The cultivation of

the soil," we are told, "is an obligation imposed by nature on mankind. The whole world is appointed for the nourishment of its inhabitants; but it would be incapable of doing it, was it uncultivated. Every nation is then obliged by the law of nature to cultivate the ground that has fallen to its share. Those people, like the ancient Germans and modern Tartars, who, having fertile countries, disdain to cultivate the earth, and choose to live by rapine, are wanting to themselves, and deserve to be exterminated as savage and pernicious beasts."<sup>20</sup>

Now it is notorious that the savages knew nothing of agriculture when first discovered by the Europeans, but lived a most vagabond, disorderly, unrighteous life, rambling from place to place, and prodigally rioting upon the spontaneous luxuries of nature, without tasking her generosity to yield them anything more; whereas it has been most unquestionably shown that Heaven intended the earth should be ploughed, and sown, and manured, and laid out into cities, and towns, and farms, and country seats, and pleasure grounds, and public gardens, all which the Indians knew nothing about – therefore, they did not improve the talents Providence had bestowed on them – therefore they were careless stewards – therefore, they had no right to the soil – therefore, they deserved to be exterminated.

It is true the savages might plead that they drew all the benefits from the land which their simple wants required – they found plenty of game to hunt, which, together with the roots and

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<sup>20</sup> Vattel, b. i. ch. 17.

uncultivated fruits of the earth, furnished a sufficient variety for their frugal repasts; and that as Heaven merely designed the earth to form the abode and satisfy the wants of man, so long as those purposes were answered the will of Heaven was accomplished. But this only proves how undeserving they were of the blessings around them – they were so much the more savages for not having more wants; for knowledge is in some degree an increase of desires, and it is this superiority both in the number and magnitude of his desires that distinguishes the man from the beast. Therefore the Indians, in not having more wants, were very unreasonable animals; and it was but just that they should make way for the Europeans, who had a thousand wants to their one, and, therefore, would turn the earth to more account, and by cultivating it more truly fulfil the will of Heaven. Besides – Grotius and Lauterbach, and Puffendorf, and Titius, and many wise men beside, who have considered the matter properly, have determined that the property of a country cannot be acquired by hunting, cutting wood, or drawing water in it – nothing but precise demarcation of limits, and the intention of cultivation, can establish the possession. Now as the savages (probably from never having read the authors above quoted) had never complied with any of these necessary forms, it plainly follows that they had no right to the soil, but that it was completely at the disposal of the first comers, who had more knowledge, more wants, and more elegant, that is to say artificial, desires than themselves.

In entering upon a newly discovered, uncultivated country,

therefore, the new comers were but taking possession of what, according to the aforesaid doctrine, was their own property – therefore in opposing them, the savages were invading their just rights, infringing the immutable laws of nature, and counteracting the will of Heaven – therefore, they were guilty of impiety, burglary, and trespass on the case – therefore, they were hardened offenders against God and man – therefore, they ought to be exterminated.

But a more irresistible right than either that I have mentioned, and one which will be the most readily admitted by my reader, provided he be blessed with bowels of charity and philanthropy, is the right acquired by civilization. All the world knows the lamentable state in which these poor savages were found. Not only deficient in the comforts of life, but, what is still worse, most piteously and unfortunately blind to the miseries of their situation. But no sooner did the benevolent inhabitants of Europe behold their sad condition than they immediately went to work to ameliorate and improve it. They introduced among them rum, gin, brandy, and the other comforts of life – and it is astonishing to read how soon the poor savages learn to estimate those blessings – they likewise made known to them a thousand remedies, by which the most inveterate diseases are alleviated and healed; and that they might comprehend the benefits and enjoy the comforts of these medicines, they previously introduced among them the diseases which they were calculated to cure. By these and a variety of other methods

was the condition of these poor savages wonderfully improved; they acquired a thousand wants of which they had before been ignorant, and as he has most sources of happiness who has most wants to be gratified, they were doubtlessly rendered a much happier race of beings.

But the most important branch of civilization, and which has most strenuously been extolled by the zealous and pious fathers of the Roman Church, is the introduction of the Christian faith. It was truly a sight that might well inspire horror, to behold these savages tumbling among the dark mountains of paganism, and guilty of the most horrible ignorance of religion. It is true, they neither stole nor defrauded; they were sober, frugal, continent, and faithful to their word; but though they acted right habitually, it was all in vain, unless they acted so from precept. The new comers, therefore, used every method to induce them to embrace and practice the true religion – except, indeed, that of setting them the example.

But not withstanding all these complicated labors for their good, such was the unparalleled obstinacy of these stubborn wretches, that they ungratefully refused to acknowledge the strangers as their benefactors, and persisted in disbelieving the doctrines they endeavored to inculcate; most insolently alleging that, from their conduct, the advocates of Christianity did not seem to believe in it themselves. Was not this too much for human patience? Would not one suppose that the benign visitants from Europe, provoked at their incredulity and discouraged by

their stiff-necked obstinacy, would for ever have abandoned their shores, and consigned them to their original ignorance and misery? But no: so zealous were they to effect the temporal comfort and eternal salvation of these pagan infidels that they even proceeded from the milder means of persuasion to the more painful and troublesome one of persecution – let loose among them whole troops of fiery monks and furious bloodhounds – purified them by fire and sword, by stake and faggot; in consequence of which indefatigable measures the cause of Christian love and charity was so rapidly advanced that in a few years not one fifth of the number of unbelievers existed in South America that were found there at the time of its discovery.

What stronger right need the European settlers advance to the country than this? Have not whole nations of uninformed savages been made acquainted with a thousand imperious wants and indispensable comforts of which they were before wholly ignorant? Have they not been literally hunted and smoked out of the dens and lurking places of ignorance and infidelity, and absolutely scourged into the right path? Have not the temporal things, the vain baubles and filthy lucre of this world, which were too apt to engage their worldly and selfish thoughts, been benevolently taken from them; and have they not, instead thereof, been taught to set their affections on things above? And finally, to use the words of a reverend Spanish father, in a letter to his superior in Spain: "Can any one have the presumption to say that these savage pagans have yielded anything more than an

inconsiderable recompense to their benefactors, in surrendering to them a little pitiful tract of this dirty sublunary planet, in exchange for a glorious inheritance in the kingdom of heaven."

Here then are three complete and undeniable sources of right established, any one of which was more than ample to establish a property in the newly-discovered regions of America. Now, so it has happened in certain parts of this delightful quarter of the globe that the right of discovery has been so strenuously asserted – the influence of cultivation so industriously extended, and the progress of salvation and civilization so zealously persecuted; that, what with their attendant wars, persecutions, oppressions, diseases, and other partial evils that often hang on the skirts of great benefits – the savage aborigines have, somehow or other, been utterly annihilated – and this all at once brings me to a fourth right, which is worth all the others put together. For the original claimants to the soil being all dead and buried, and no one remaining to inherit or dispute the soil, the Spaniards, as the next immediate occupants, entered upon the possession as clearly as the hangman succeeds to the clothes of the malefactor – and as they have Blackstone<sup>21</sup> and all the learned expounders of the law on their side, they may set all actions of ejectment at defiance – and this last right may be entitled the right by extermination, or in other words, the right by gunpowder.

But lest any scruples of conscience should remain on this head, and to settle the question of right for ever, his holiness

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<sup>21</sup> Bl. Com. b. ii. c. 1.

Pope Alexander VI. issued a mighty Bull, by which he generously granted the newly-discovered quarter of the globe to the Spaniards and Portuguese; who, thus having law and gospel on their side, and being inflamed with great spiritual zeal, showed the pagan savages neither favor nor affection, but persecuted the work of discovery, colonization, civilization, and extermination with ten times more fury than ever.

Thus were the European worthies who first discovered America clearly entitled to the soil, and not only entitled to the soil, but likewise to the eternal thanks of these infidel savages, for having come so far, endured so many perils by sea and land, and taken such unwearied pains, for no other purpose but to improve their forlorn, uncivilized, and heathenish condition; for having made them acquainted with the comforts of life; for having introduced among them the light of religion; and, finally, for having hurried them out of the world to enjoy its reward!

But as argument is never so well understood by us selfish mortals as when it comes home to ourselves, and as I am particularly anxious that this question should be put to rest for ever, I will suppose a parallel case, by way of arousing the candid attention of my readers.

Let us suppose, then, that the inhabitants of the moon, by astonishing advancement in science, and by profound insight into that ineffable lunar philosophy, the mere flickerings of which have of late years dazzled the feeble optics, and addled the shallow brains of the good people of our globe – let us suppose,

I say, that the inhabitants of the moon, by these means, had arrived at such a command of their energies, such an enviable state of perfectibility, as to control the elements, and navigate the boundless regions of space. Let us suppose a roving crew of these soaring philosophers, in the course of an aerial voyage of discovery among the stars, should chance to alight upon this outlandish planet. And here I beg my readers will not have the uncharitableness to smile, as is too frequently the fault of volatile readers, when perusing the grave speculations of philosophers. I am far from indulging in any sportive vein at present; nor is the supposition I have been making so wild as many may deem it. It has long been a very serious and anxious question with me, and many a time and oft, in the course of my overwhelming cares and contrivances for the welfare and protection of this my native planet, have I lain awake whole nights debating in my mind whether it were most probable we should first discover and civilize the moon, or the moon discover and civilize our globe. Neither would the prodigy of sailing in the air or cruising among the stars be a whit more astonishing and incomprehensible to us than was the European mystery of navigating floating castles through the world of waters to the simple savages. We have already discovered the art of coasting along the aerial shores of our planet by means of balloons, as the savages had of venturing along their sea-coasts in canoes; and the disparity between the former and the aerial vehicles of the philosophers from the moon might not be greater than that between the bark canoes of the

savages and the mighty ships of their discoverers. I might here pursue an endless chain of similar speculations; but as they would be unimportant to my subject, I abandon them to my reader, particularly if he be a philosopher, as matters well worthy of his attentive consideration.

To return, then, to my supposition – let us suppose that the aerial visitants I have mentioned, possessed of vastly superior knowledge to ourselves – that is to say, possessed of superior knowledge in the art of extermination – riding on hippogriffs – defended with impenetrable armor – armed with concentrated sunbeams, and provided with vast engines, to hurl enormous moonstones; in short, let us suppose them, if our vanity will permit the supposition, as superior to us in knowledge, and consequently in power, as the Europeans were to the Indians when they first discovered them. All this is very possible, it is only our self-sufficiency that makes us think otherwise; and I warrant the poor savages, before they had any knowledge of the white men, armed in all the terrors of glittering steel and tremendous gunpowder, were as perfectly convinced that they themselves were the wisest, the most virtuous, powerful, and perfect of created beings, as are at this present moment the lordly inhabitants of old England, the volatile populace of France, or even the self-satisfied citizens of this most enlightened republic.

Let us suppose, moreover, that the aerial voyagers, finding this planet to be nothing but a howling wilderness, inhabited by us poor savages and wild beasts, shall take formal possession of

it, in the name of his most gracious and philosophic excellency, the Man in the Moon. Finding however that their numbers are incompetent to hold it in complete subjection, on account of the ferocious barbarity of its inhabitants, they shall take our worthy President, the King of England, the Emperor of Hayti, the mighty Bonaparte, and the great King of Bantam, and, returning to their native planet, shall carry them to court, as were the Indian chiefs led about as spectacles in the courts of Europe.

Then making such obeisance as the etiquette of the court requires, they shall address the puissant Man in the Moon in, as near as I can conjecture, the following terms: —

"Most serene and mighty Potentate, whose dominions extend as far as eye can reach, who rideth on the Great Bear, useth the sun as a looking glass, and maintaineth unrivaled control over tides, madmen, and sea-crabs. We, thy liege subjects, have just returned from a voyage of discovery, in the course of which we have landed and taken possession of that obscure little dirty planet, which thou beholdest rolling at a distance. The five uncouth monsters which we have brought into this august present were once very important chiefs among their fellow-savages, who are a race of beings totally destitute of the common attributes of humanity, and differing in everything from the inhabitants of the moon, inasmuch as they carry their heads upon their shoulders, instead of under their arms — have two eyes instead of one — are utterly destitute of tails, and of a variety of unseemly complexions, particularly of horrible whiteness, instead of pea-

green.

"We have moreover found these miserable savages sunk into a state of the utmost ignorance and depravity, every man shamelessly living with his own wife, and rearing his own children, instead of indulging in that community of wives enjoined by the law of nature, as expounded by the philosophers of the moon. In a word, they have scarcely a gleam of true philosophy among them, but are, in fact, utter heretics, ignoramuses, and barbarians. Taking compassion, therefore, on the sad condition of these sublunary wretches, we have endeavored, while we remained on their planet, to introduce among them the light of reason and the comforts of the moon. We have treated them to mouthfuls of moonshine, and draughts of nitrous oxide, which they swallowed with incredible voracity, particularly the females; and we have likewise endeavored to instil into them the precepts of lunar philosophy. We have insisted upon their renouncing the contemptible shackles of religion and common sense, and adoring the profound, omnipotent, and all perfect energy, and the ecstatic, immutable, immovable perfection. But such was the unparalleled obstinacy of these wretched savages that they persisted in cleaving to their wives, and adhering to their religion, and absolutely set at nought the sublime doctrines of the moon – nay, among other abominable heresies they even went so far as blasphemously to declare that this ineffable planet was made of nothing more nor less than green cheese!"

At these words, the great Man in the Moon (being a very profound philosopher) shall fall into a terrible passion, and possessing equal authority over things that do not belong to him, as did whilome his holiness the Pope, shall forthwith issue a formidable Bull, specifying, "That whereas a certain crew of Lunatics have lately discovered and taken possession of a newly-discovered planet called the earth; and that whereas it is inhabited by none but a race of two-legged animals that carry their heads on their shoulders instead of under their arms; cannot talk the Lunatic language; have two eyes instead of one; are destitute of tails, and of a horrible whiteness, instead of pea-green – therefore, and for a variety of other excellent reasons, they are considered incapable of possessing any property in the planet they infest, and the right and title to it are confirmed to its original discoverers. And, furthermore, the colonists who are now about to depart to the aforesaid planet are authorised and commanded to use every means to convert these infidel savages from the darkness of Christianity, and make them thorough and absolute Lunatics."

In consequence of this benevolent Bull, our philosophic benefactors go to work with hearty zeal. They seize upon our fertile territories, scourge us from our rightful possessions, relieve us from our wives, and when we are unreasonable enough to complain, they will turn upon us and say, "Miserable barbarians! ungrateful wretches! have we not come thousands of miles to improve your worthless planet? have we not fed you

with moonshine! have we not intoxicated you with nitrous oxide? does not our moon give you light every night? and have you the baseness to murmur, when we claim a pitiful return for all these benefits?" But finding that we not only persist in absolute contempt of their reasoning and disbelief in their philosophy, but even go so far as daringly to defend our property, their patience shall be exhausted, and they shall resort to their superior powers of argument; hunt us with hippogriffs, transfix us with concentrated sunbeams, demolish our cities with moonstones; until having by main force converted us to the true faith, they shall graciously permit us to exist in the torrid deserts of Arabia, or the frozen regions of Lapland, there to enjoy the blessings of civilization and the charms of lunar philosophy, in much the same manner as the reformed and enlightened savages of this country are kindly suffered to inhabit the inhospitable forests of the north, or the impenetrable wilderness of South America.

Thus, I hope, I have clearly proved, and strikingly illustrated, the right of the early colonists to the possession of this country; and thus is this gigantic question completely vanquished: so having manfully surmounted all obstacles, and subdued all opposition, what remains but that I should forthwith conduct my readers into the city which we have been so long in a manner besieging? But hold: before I proceed another step I must pause to take breath, and recover from the excessive fatigue I have undergone, in preparing to begin this most accurate of histories. And in this I do but imitate the example of a renowned Dutch

tumbler of antiquity, who took a start of three miles for the purpose of jumping over a hill, but having run himself out of breath by the time he reached the foot, sat himself quietly down for a few moments to blow, and then walked over it at his leisure.

## *BOOK II.*

# TREATING OF THE FIRST SETTLEMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF NIEUW NEDERLANDTS

## CHAPTER I

My great-grandfather by the mother's side, Hermanus Van Clattercop, when employed to build the large stone church at Rotterdam, which stands about three hundred yards to your left after you turn off from the Boomkeys, and which is so conveniently constructed that all the zealous Christians of Rotterdam prefer sleeping through a sermon there to any other church in the city – my great-grandfather, I say, when employed to build that famous church, did in the first place send to Delft for a box of long pipes; then having purchased a new spitting-box and a hundredweight of the best Virginia, he sat himself down, and did nothing for the space of three months but smoke most laboriously. Then did he spend full three months more in trudging on foot, and voyaging in the trekschuit, from Rotterdam to Amsterdam – to Delft – to Haerlem – to Leyden – to the Hague, knocking his head and breaking his pipe against every church in his road. Then did he advance gradually nearer and

nearer to Rotterdam, until he came in full sight of the identical spot whereon the church was to be built. Then did he spend three months longer in walking round it and round it; contemplating it, first from one point of view and then from another – now he would be paddled by it on the canal – now would he peep at it through a telescope, from the other side of the Meuse – and now would he take a bird's-eye glance at it, from the top of one of those gigantic windmills which protect the gates of the city. The good folks of the place were on the tiptoe of expectation and impatience – notwithstanding all the turmoil of my great-grandfather, not a symptom of the church was yet to be seen; they even began to fear it would never be brought into the world, but that its great projector would lie down and die in labor of the mighty plan he had conceived. At length, having occupied twelve good months in puffing and paddling, and talking and walking – having traveled over all Holland, and even taken a peep into France and Germany – having smoked five hundred and ninety-nine pipes and three hundredweight of the best Virginia tobacco – my great-grandfather gathered together all that knowing and industrious class of citizens who prefer attending to anybody's business sooner than their own, and having pulled off his coat and five pair of breeches, he advanced sturdily up, and laid the corner-stone of the church, in the presence of the whole multitude – just at the commencement of the thirteenth month.

In a similar manner, and with the example of my worthy ancestor full before my eyes, have I proceeded in writing this

most authentic history. The honest Rotterdammers no doubt thought my great-grandfather was doing nothing at all to the purpose, while he was making such a world of prefatory bustle about the building of his church; and many of the ingenious inhabitants of this fair city will unquestionably suppose that all the preliminary chapters, with the discovery, population, and final settlement of America, were totally irrelevant and superfluous – and that the main business, the history of New York, is not a jot more advanced than if I had never taken up my pen. Never were wise people more mistaken in their conjectures. In consequence of going to work slowly and deliberately, the church came out of my grandfather's hands one of the most sumptuous, goodly, and glorious edifices in the known world – excepting that, like our magnificent capitol at Washington, it was begun on so grand a scale that the good folk could not afford to finish more than the wing of it. So, likewise, I trust, if ever I am able to finish this work on the plan I have commenced (of which, in simple truth, I sometimes have my doubts), it will be found that I have pursued the latest rules of my art, as exemplified in the writings of all the great American historians, and wrought a very large history out of a small subject – which nowadays, is considered one of the great triumphs of historic skill. To proceed, then, with the thread of my story.

In the ever-memorable year of our Lord, 1609, on a Saturday morning, the five-and-twentieth day of March, old style, did that "worthy and irrecoverable discoverer (as he has justly been

called), Master Henry Hudson," set sail from Holland in a stout vessel called the Half Moon, being employed by the Dutch East India Company to seek a north-west passage to China.

Henry (or, as the Dutch historians call him, Hendrick) Hudson was a seafaring man of renown, who had learned to smoke tobacco under Sir Walter Raleigh, and is said to have been the first to introduce it into Holland, which gained him much popularity in that country, and caused him to find great favor in the eyes of their High Mightinesses the Lords States General, and also of the Honorable West India Company. He was a short, square, brawny old gentleman, with a double chin, a mastiff mouth, and a broad copper nose, which was supposed in those days to have acquired its fiery hue from the constant neighborhood of his tobacco pipe.

He wore a true Andrea Ferrara tucked in a leathern belt, and a commodore's cocked hat on one side of his head. He was remarkable for always jerking up his breeches when he gave out his orders, and his voice sounded not unlike the brattling of a tin trumpet, owing to the number of hard north-westers which he had swallowed in the course of his seafaring.

Such was Hendrick Hudson, of whom we have heard so much, and know so little; and I have been thus particular in his description, for the benefit of modern painters and statuaries, that they may represent him as he was; and not, according to their common custom with modern heroes, make him look like a Cæsar, or Marcus Aurelius, or the Apollo of Belvidere.

As chief mate and favorite companion, the commodore chose Master Robert Juet, of Limehouse, in England. By some his name has been spelt Chewit, and ascribed to the circumstance of his having been the first man that ever chewed tobacco; but this I believe to be a mere flippancy; more especially as certain of his progeny are living at this day, who write their names Juet. He was an old comrade and early schoolmate of the great Hudson, with whom he had often played truant and sailed chip boats in a neighboring pond, when they were little boys; from whence, it is said, the commodore first derived his bias towards a seafaring life. Certain it is that the old people about Limehouse declared Robert Juet to be a unlucky urchin prone to mischief, that would one day or other come to the gallows.

He grew up as boys of that kind often grow up, a rambling, heedless varlet, tossed about in all quarters of the world, meeting with more perils and wonders than did Sinbad the Sailor, without growing a whit more wise, prudent, or ill-natured. Under every misfortune he comforted himself with a quid of tobacco, and the truly philosophic maxim that "it will be all the same thing a hundred years hence." He was skilled in the art of carving anchors and true lovers' knot on the bulk-heads and quarter railings, and was considered a great wit on board ship, in consequence of his playing pranks on everybody around, and now and then even making a wry face at old Hendrick when his back was turned.

To this universal genius are we indebted for many particulars

concerning this voyage, of which he wrote a history, at the request of the commodore, who had an unconquerable aversion to writing himself, from having received so many floggings about it when at school. To supply the deficiencies of Master Juet's journal, which is written with true log-book brevity, I have availed myself of divers family traditions, handed down from my great-great-grandfather, who accompanied the expedition in the capacity of cabin-boy.

From all that I can learn, few incidents worthy of remark happened in the voyage; and it mortifies me exceedingly that I have to admit so noted an expedition into my work without making any more of it.

Suffice it to say, the voyage was prosperous and tranquil – the crew, being a patient people, much given to slumber and vacuity, and but little troubled with the disease of thinking – a malady of the mind, which is the sure breeder of discontent. Hudson had laid in abundance of gin and sour-kROUT, and every man was allowed to sleep quietly at his post unless the wind blew. True it is, some slight dissatisfaction was shown on two or three occasions at certain unreasonable conduct of Commodore Hudson. Thus, for instance, he forbore to shorten sail when the wind was light and the weather serene, which was considered among the most experienced Dutch seamen as certain weather-breeders, or prognostics, that the weather would change for the worse. He acted, moreover, in direct contradiction to that ancient and sage rule of the Dutch navigators, who always took

in sail at night, put the helm a-port, and turned in; by which precaution they had a good night's rest, were sure of knowing where they were the next morning, and stood but little chance of running down a continent in the dark. He likewise prohibited the seamen from wearing more than five jackets and six pair of breeches, under pretence of rendering them more alert; and no man was permitted to go aloft and hand in sails with a pipe in his mouth, as is the invariable Dutch custom at the present day. All these grievances, though they might ruffle for a moment the constitutional tranquillity of the honest Dutch tars, made but transient impression; they ate hugely, drank profusely, and slept immeasurably; and being under the especial guidance of Providence, the ship was safely conducted to the coast of America; where, after sundry unimportant touchings and standings off and on, she at length, on the fourth day of September, entered that majestic bay which at this day expands its ample bosom before the city of New York, and which had never before been visited by any European.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> True it is, and I am not ignorant of the fact, that in a certain apocryphal book of voyages, compiled by one Hackluyt, is to be found a letter written to Francis the First, by one Giovanni, or John Verazzani, on which some writers are inclined to found a belief that this delightful bay had been visited nearly a century previous to the voyage of the enterprising Hudson. Now this (albeit it has met with the countenance of certain very judicious and learned men) I hold in utter disbelief, and that for various good and substantial reasons: First, because on strict examination it will be found that the description given by this Verazzani applies about as well to the bay of New York as it does to my nightcap. Secondly, because that this John Verazzani, for whom I already begin to feel a most bitter enmity, is a native of Florence, and everybody knows the

It has been traditionary in our family that when the great navigator was first blessed with a view of this enchanting island, he was observed, for the first and only time in his life, to exhibit strong symptoms of astonishment and admiration. He is said to have turned to master Juet, and uttered these remarkable words, while he pointed towards this paradise of the new world – "See! there!" – and thereupon, as was always his way when he was uncommonly pleased, he did puff out such clouds of dense tobacco smoke that in one minute the vessel was out of sight of land, and Master Juet was fain to wait until the winds dispersed this impenetrable fog.

"It was indeed," as my great-grandfather used to say, though in truth I never heard him, for he died, as might be expected, before I was born – "it was indeed a spot on which the eye might have revelled for ever, in ever new and never-ending beauties." The island of Manna-hata spread wide before them, like some sweet

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crafty wiles of these losel Florentines, by which they filched away the laurels from the brows of the immortal Colon (vulgarly called Columbus), and bestowed them on their officious townsman, Amerigo Vespucci; and I make no doubt they are equally ready to rob the illustrious Hudson of the credit of discovering this beauteous island, adorned by the city of New York, and placing it beside their usurped discovery of South America. And, thirdly, I award my decision in favor of the pretensions of Hendrick Hudson, inasmuch as his expedition sailed from Holland, being truly and absolutely a Dutch enterprise; and though all the proofs in the world were introduced on the other side, I would set them at nought as undeserving my attention. If these three reasons be not sufficient to satisfy every burgher of this ancient city, all I can say is they are degenerate descendants from their venerable Dutch ancestors, and totally unworthy the trouble of convincing. Thus, therefore, the title of Hendrick Hudson to his renowned discovery is fully vindicated.

vision of fancy, or some fair creation of industrious magic. Its hills of smiling green swelled gently one above another, crowned with lofty trees of luxuriant growth; some pointing their tapering foliage towards the clouds which were gloriously transparent, and others loaded with a verdant burden of clambering vines, bowing their branches to the earth that was covered with flowers. On the gentle declivities of the hills were scattered in gay profusion the dog-wood, the sumach, and the wild brier, whose scarlet berries and white blossoms glowed brightly among the deep green of the surrounding foliage; and here and there a curling column of smoke rising from the little glens that opened along the shore seemed to promise the weary voyagers a welcome at the hands of their fellow-creatures. As they stood gazing with entranced attention on the scene before them, a red man, crowned with feathers, issued from one of these glens, and after contemplating in silent wonder the gallant ship, as she sat like a stately swan swimming on a silver lake, sounded the war-whoop, and bounded into the woods like a wild deer, to the utter astonishment of the phlegmatic Dutchmen, who had never heard such a noise or witnessed such a caper in their whole lives.

Of the transactions of our adventurers with the savages, and how the latter smoked copper pipes and ate dried currants; how they brought great store of tobacco and oysters; how they shot one of the ship's crew, and how he was buried, I shall say nothing, being that I consider them unimportant to my history. After tarrying a few days in the bay, in order to refresh themselves

after their seafaring, our voyagers weighed anchor, to explore a mighty river which emptied into the bay. This river, it is said, was known among the savages by the name of the Shatemuck; though we are assured in an excellent little history published in 1674, by John Josselyn, gent., that it was called the Mohegan;<sup>23</sup> and Master Richard Bloome, who wrote some time afterwards, asserts the same – so that I very much incline in favor of the opinion of these two honest gentlemen. Be this as it may, up this river did the adventurous Hendrick proceed, little doubting but it would turn to be the much-looked-for passage to China!

The journal goes on to make mention of divers interviews between the crew and the natives in the voyage up the river; but as they would be impertinent to my history, I shall pass over them in silence, except the following dry joke, played off by the old commodore and his schoolfellow Robert Juet, which does such vast credit to their experimental philosophy that I cannot refrain from inserting it. "Our master and his mate determined to try some of the chiefe men of the countrey whether they had any treacherie in them. So they tooke them downe into the cabin, and gave them so much wine and acqua vitæ that they were all merrie; and one of them had his wife with him, which sate so modestly, as any of our countrey women would do in a strange place. In the end, one of them was drunke, which had been aboarde of our ship all the time that we had been there, and that was strange to

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<sup>23</sup> This river is likewise laid down in Ogilvy's map as Manhattan – Noordt, Montaigne, and Mauritius river.

them, for they could not tell how to take it."<sup>24</sup>

Having satisfied himself by this ingenious experiment that the natives were an honest, social race of jolly roysterers, who had no objection to a drinking bout, and were very merry in their cups, the old commodore chuckled hugely to himself, and thrusting a double quid of tobacco in his cheek, directed Master Juet to have it carefully recorded, for the satisfaction of all the natural philosophers of the University of Leyden – which done, he proceeded on his voyage with great self-complacency. After sailing, however, above a hundred miles up the river, he found the watery world around him began to grow more shallow and confined, the current more rapid and perfectly fresh – phenomena not uncommon in the ascent of rivers, but which puzzled the honest Dutchman prodigiously. A consultation was therefore called, and having deliberated full six hours, they were brought to a determination by the ship's running aground – whereupon they unanimously concluded that there was but little chance of getting to China in this direction. A boat, however, was despatched to explore higher up the river, which, on its return, confirmed the opinion; upon this the ship was warped off and put about with great difficulty, being, like most of her sex, exceedingly hard to govern; and the adventurous Hudson, according to the account of my great-great-grandfather, returned down the river – with a prodigious flea in his ear!

Being satisfied that there was little likelihood of getting to

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<sup>24</sup> Juet's Journ. Purch. Pil.

China, unless, like the blind man, he returned from whence he set out, and took a fresh start, he forthwith recrossed the sea to Holland, where he was received with great welcome by the Honorable East India Company, who were very much rejoiced to see him come back safe – with their ship; and at a large and respectable meeting of the first merchants and burgomasters of Amsterdam it was unanimously determined that, as a munificent reward for the eminent services he had performed, and the important discovery he had made, the great river Mohegan should be called after his name; and it continues to be called Hudson River unto this very day.

## CHAPTER II

The delectable accounts given by the great Hudson and Master Juet of the country they had discovered excited not a little talk and speculation among the good people of Holland. Letters patent were granted by Government to an association of merchants, called the West India Company, for the exclusive trade on Hudson River, on which they erected a trading-house called Fort Aurania, or Orange, from whence did spring the great city of Albany. But I forbear to dwell on the various commercial and colonizing enterprises which took place; among which was that of Mynheer Adrian Block, who discovered and gave a name to Block Island, since famous for its cheese – and shall barely confine myself to that which gave birth to this renowned city.

It was some three or four years after the return of the immortal Hendrick that a crew of honest Low Dutch colonists set sail from the city of Amsterdam for the shores of America. It is an irreparable loss to history, and a great proof of the darkness of the age and the lamentable neglect of the noble art of book-making, since so industriously cultivated by knowing sea-captains and learned supercargoes, that an expedition so interesting and important in its results should be passed over in utter silence. To my great-great-grandfather am I again indebted for the few facts I am enabled to give concerning it – he having once more embarked for this country, with a full determination, as he said, of ending his days here – and of begetting a race of Knickerbockers that should rise to be great men in the land.

The ship in which these illustrious adventurers set sail was called the *Goede Vrouw*, or good woman, in compliment to the wife of the president of the West India Company, who was allowed by everybody, except her husband, to be a sweet-tempered lady – when not in liquor. It was in truth a most gallant vessel, of the most approved Dutch construction, and made by the ablest ship-carpenters of Amsterdam, who, it is well known, always model their ships after the fair forms of their countrywomen. Accordingly, it had one hundred feet in the beam, one hundred feet in the keel, and one hundred feet from the bottom of the stern-post to the taffrail. Like the beautiful model, who was declared to be the greatest belle in Amsterdam, it was full in the bows, with a pair of enormous catheads, a copper

bottom, and withal a most prodigious poop.

The architect, who was somewhat of a religious man, far from decorating the ship with pagan idols, such as Jupiter, Neptune or Hercules, which heathenish abominations, I have no doubt, occasion the misfortunes and shipwreck of many a noble vessel, he I say, on the contrary, did laudably erect for a head, a goodly image of St. Nicholas, equipped with a low, broad-brimmed hat, a huge pair of Flemish trunk hose, and a pipe that reached to the end of the bow-sprit. Thus gallantly furnished, the staunch ship floated sideways, like a majestic goose, out of the harbor of the great city of Amsterdam, and all the bells that were not otherwise engaged, rung a triple bobmajor on the joyful occasion.

My great-great-grandfather remarks, that the voyage was uncommonly prosperous, for, being under the especial care of the ever-revered St. Nicholas, the Goede Vrouw seemed to be endowed with qualities unknown to common vessels. Thus she made as much leeway as headway, could get along very nearly as fast with the wind a head as when it was a-poop, and was particularly great in a calm; in consequence of which singular advantage she made out to accomplish her voyage in a very few months, and came to anchor at the mouth of the Hudson, a little to the east of Gibbet Island.

Here lifting up their eyes they beheld, on what is at present called the Jersey shore, a small Indian village, pleasantly embowered in a grove of spreading elms, and the natives all collected on the beach, gazing in stupid admiration at the Goede

Vrouw. A boat was immediately dispatched to enter into a treaty with them, and, approaching the shore, hailed them through a trumpet in the most friendly terms; but so horribly confounded were these poor savages at the tremendous and uncouth sound of the Low Dutch language that they one and all took to their heels, and scampered over the Bergen Hills: nor did they stop until they had buried themselves, head and ears, in the marshes on the other side, where they all miserably perished to a man; and their bones being collected and decently covered by the Tammany Society of that day, formed that singular mound called Rattlesnake Hill, which rises out of the center of the salt marshes a little to the east of the Newark Causeway.

Animated by this unlooked-for victory, our valiant heroes sprang ashore in triumph, took possession of the soil as conquerors, in the name of their High Mightinesses the Lords States General; and marching fearlessly forward, carried the village of Communipaw by storm, notwithstanding that it was vigorously defended by some half a score of old squaws and papposes. On looking about them they were so transported with the excellences of the place that they had very little doubt the blessed St. Nicholas had guided them thither as the very spot whereon to settle their colony. The softness of the soil was wonderfully adapted to the driving of piles; the swamps and marshes around them afforded ample opportunities for the constructing of dykes and dams; the shallowness of the shore was peculiarly favorable to the building of docks; in a word, this

spot abounded with all the requisites for the foundation of a great Dutch City. On making a faithful report, therefore, to the crew of the *Goede Vrouw*, they one and all determined that this was the destined end of their voyage. Accordingly, they descended from the *Goede Vrouw*, men, women and children, in goodly groups, as did the animals of yore from the ark, and formed themselves into a thriving settlement, which they called by the Indian name *Communipaw*.

As all the world is doubtless perfectly acquainted with *Communipaw*, it may seem somewhat superfluous to treat of it in the present work; but my readers will please to recollect, that not withstanding it is my chief desire to satisfy the present age, yet I write likewise for posterity, and have to consult the understanding and curiosity of some half a score of centuries yet to come; by which time, perhaps, were it not for this invaluable history, the great *Communipaw*, like *Babylon*, *Carthage*, *Nineveh*, and other great cities, might be perfectly extinct – sunk and forgotten in its own mud – its inhabitants turned into oysters,<sup>25</sup> and even its situation a fertile subject of learned controversy and hard-headed investigation among indefatigable historians. Let me, then, piously rescue from oblivion the humble relics of a place which was the egg from whence was hatched the mighty city of *New York*!

*Communipaw* is at present but a small village, pleasantly situated among rural scenery, on that beauteous part of the

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<sup>25</sup> Men by inaction degenerate into oysters. – *Kaimes*.

Jersey shore which was known in ancient legends by the name of Pavonia,<sup>26</sup> and commands a grand prospect of the superb bay of New York. It is within but half an hour's sail of the latter place, provided you have a fair wind, and may be distinctly seen from the city. Nay, it is a well known fact, which I can testify from my own experience, that on a clear still summer evening you may hear from the battery of New York the obstreperous peals of broad-mouthed laughter of the Dutch negroes at Communipaw, who, like most other negroes, are famous for their risible powers. This is peculiarly the case on Sunday evenings, when, it is remarked by an ingenious and observant philosopher, who has made great discoveries in the neighborhood of this city, that they always laugh loudest, which he attributes to the circumstance of their having their holiday clothes on.

These negroes, in fact, like the monks in the dark ages, engross all the knowledge of the place, and, being infinitely more adventurous, and more knowing than their masters, carry on all the foreign trade, making frequent voyages to town in canoes loaded with oysters, buttermilk and cabbages. They are great astrologers, predicting the different changes of weather almost as accurately as an almanac; they are, moreover, exquisite performers on three-stringed fiddles; in whistling they almost boast the far-famed powers of Orpheus' lyre, for not a horse nor an ox in the place, when at the plough or before the wagon,

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<sup>26</sup> Pavonia, in the ancient maps, is given to a tract of country extending from about Hoboken to Amboy.

will budge a foot until he hears the well known whistle of his black driver and companion. And from their amazing skill at casting up accounts upon their fingers they are regarded with as much veneration as were the disciples of Pythagoras of yore when initiated into the sacred quaternary of numbers.

As to the honest burghers of Communipaw, like wise men and sound philosophers, they never look beyond their pipes, nor trouble their heads about any affairs out of their immediate neighborhood; so that they live in profound and enviable ignorance of all the troubles, anxieties, and revolutions of this distracted planet. I am even told that many among them do verily believe that Holland, of which they have heard so much from tradition, is situated somewhere on Long Island; that Spiking-devil and the Narrows are the two ends of the world; that the country is still under the dominion of their High Mightinesses, and that the city of New York still goes by the name of Nieuw Amsterdam. They meet every Saturday afternoon at the only tavern in the place, which bears as a sign a square-headed likeness of the Prince of Orange, where they smoke a silent pipe by way of promoting social conviviality, and invariably drink a mug of cider to the success of Admiral Van Tromp, whom they imagine is still sweeping the British Channel with a broom at his masthead.

Communipaw, in short, is one of the numerous little villages in the vicinity of this most beautiful of cities, which are so many strongholds and fastnesses whither the primitive manners of our

Dutch forefathers have retreated, and where they are cherished with devout and scrupulous strictness. The dress of the original settlers is handed down inviolate from father to son – the identical broad-brimmed hat, broad-skirted coat, and broad-bottomed breeches continue from generation to generation; and several gigantic knee-buckles of massy silver are still in wear that made gallant display in the days of the patriarchs of Communipaw. The language likewise continues unadulterated by barbarous innovations; and so critically correct is the village schoolmaster in his dialect that his reading of a Low Dutch psalm has much the same effect on the nerves as the filing of a hand-saw.

### CHAPTER III

Having in the trifling digression which concluded the last chapter discharged the filial duty which the city of New York owed to Communipaw, as being the mother settlement; and having given a faithful picture of it as it stands at present, I return with a soothing sentiment of self-approbation to dwell upon its early history. The crew of the Goede Vrouw being soon reinforced by fresh importations from Holland, the settlement went jollily on increasing in magnitude and prosperity. The neighboring Indians in a short time became accustomed to the uncouth sound of the Dutch language, and an intercourse gradually took place between them and the new comers. The Indians were much given to long talks, and the Dutch to long

silence; in this particular, therefore, they accommodated each other completely. The chiefs would make long speeches about the big bull, the wabash, and the Great Spirit, to which the others would listen very attentively, smoke their pipes, and grunt yah, myn-her; whereat the poor savages were wondrously delighted. They instructed the new settlers in the best art of curing and smoking tobacco, while the latter in return, made them drunk with true Hollands, and then taught them the art of making bargains.

A brisk trade for furs was soon opened. The Dutch traders were scrupulously honest in their dealings, and purchased by weight, establishing it as an invariable table of avoirdupois that the hand of a Dutchman weighed one pound, and his foot two pounds. It is true the simple Indians were often puzzled by the great disproportion between bulk and weight, for let them place a bundle of furs never so large in one scale, and a Dutchman put his hand or foot in the other, the bundle was sure to kick the beam; never was a package of furs known to weigh more than two pounds in the market of Communipaw!

This is a singular fact; but I have it direct from my great-great-grandfather, who had risen to considerable importance in the colony, being promoted to the office of weigh-master, on account of the uncommon heaviness of his foot.

The Dutch possessions in this part of the globe began now to assume a very thriving appearance, and were comprehended under the general title of Nieuw Nederlandts, on account, as

the sage Vander Donck observes, of their great resemblance to the Dutch Netherlands, which indeed was truly remarkable, excepting that the former was rugged and mountainous, and the latter level and marshy. About this time the tranquillity of the Dutch colonists was doomed to suffer a temporary interruption. In 1614, Captain Sir Samuel Argal, sailing under a commission from Dale, Governor of Virginia, visited the Dutch settlements on Hudson River, and demanded their submission to the English crown and Virginian dominion. To this arrogant demand, as they were in no condition to resist it, they submitted for the time, like discreet and reasonable men.

It does not appear that the valiant Argal molested the settlement of Communipaw; on the contrary, I am told that when his vessel first hove in sight, the worthy burghers were seized with such a panic that they fell to smoking their pipes with astonishing vehemence; insomuch that they quickly raised a cloud, which, combining with the surrounding woods and marshes, completely enveloped and concealed their beloved village, and overhung the fair regions of Pavonia – so that the terrible Captain Argal passed on, totally unsuspecting that a sturdy little Dutch settlement lay snugly couched in the mud, under cover of all this pestilent vapor. In commemoration of this fortunate escape, the worthy inhabitants have continued to smoke almost without intermission unto this very day, which is said to be the cause of the remarkable fog which often hangs over Communipaw of a clear afternoon.

Upon the departure of the enemy our magnanimous ancestors

took full six months to recover their wind, having been exceedingly discomposed by the consternation and hurry of affairs. They then called a council of safety to smoke over the state of the provinces. At this council presided one Oloffte Van Kortlandt, who had originally been one of a set of peripatetic philosophers who passed much of their time sunning themselves on the side of the great canal of Amsterdam in Holland; enjoying, like Diogenes, a free and unencumbered estate in sunshine. His name Kortlandt (Shortland or Lackland) was supposed, like that of the illustrious Jean Sansterre, to indicate that he had no land; but he insisted, on the contrary, that he had great landed estates somewhere in Terra Incognita; and he had come out to the new world to look after them.

Like all land speculators, he was much given to dreaming. Never did anything extraordinary happen at Communipaw but he declared that he had previously dreamt it, being one of those infallible prophets who predict events after they have come to pass. This supernatural gift was as highly valued among the burghers of Pavonia as among the enlightened nations of antiquity. The wise Ulysses was more indebted to his sleeping than his waking moments for his most subtle achievements, and seldom undertook any great exploit without first soundly sleeping upon it; and the same may be said of Oloffte Van Kortlandt, who was thence aptly denominated Oloffte the Dreamer.

As yet his dreams and speculations had turned to little personal profit; and he was as much a lackland as ever. Still he

carried a high head in the community: if his sugar-loaf hat was rather the worse for wear, he set it oft with a taller cock's tail; if his shirt was none of the cleanest, he puffed it out the more at the bosom; and if the tail of it peeped out of a hole in his breeches, it at least proved that it really had a tail and was not a mere ruffle.

The worthy Van Kortlandt, in the council in question, urged the policy of emerging from the swamps of Communipaw and seeking some more eligible site for the seat of empire. Such, he said, was the advice of the good St. Nicholas, who had appeared to him in a dream the night before, and whom he had known by his broad hat, his long pipe, and the resemblance which he bore to the figure on the bow of the *Goede Vrouw*.

Many have thought this dream was a mere invention of Oloffte Van Kortlandt, who, it is said, had ever regarded Communipaw with an evil eye, because he had arrived there after all the land had been shared out, and who was anxious to change the seat of empire to some new place, where he might be present at the distribution of "town lots." But we must not give heed to such insinuations, which are too apt to be advanced against those worthy gentlemen engaged in laying out towns and in other land speculations.

This perilous enterprise was to be conducted by Oloffte himself, who chose as lieutenants, or coadjutors, Mynheers Abraham Harden Broeck, Jacobus Van Zandt, and Winant Ten Broeck – three indubitably great men, but of whose history, although I have made diligent inquiry, I can learn but little

previous to their leaving Holland. Nor need this occasion much surprise; for adventurers, like prophets, though they make great noise abroad, have seldom much celebrity in their own countries; but this much is certain that the overflowings and offscourings of a country are invariably composed of the richest parts of the soil. And here I cannot help remarking how convenient it would be to many of our great men and great families of doubtful origin, could they have the privilege of the heroes of yore, who, whenever their origin was involved in obscurity, modestly announced themselves descended from a god, and who never visited a foreign country but what they told some cock-and-bull stories about their being kings and princes at home. This venal trespass on the truth, though it has been occasionally played off by some pseudo marquis, baronet, and other illustrious foreigner, in our land of good-natured credulity, has been completely discountenanced in this sceptical, matter-of-fact age; and I even question whether any tender virgin, who was accidentally and unaccountably enriched with a bantling, would save her character at parlor firesides and evening tea-parties by ascribing the phenomenon to a swan, a shower of gold, or a river god.

Had I the benefit of mythology and classic fable above alluded to, I should have furnished the first of the trio with a pedigree equal to that of the proudest hero of antiquity. His name, Van Zandt – that is to say, from the dirt – gave reasons to suppose that, like Triptolemus, Themis, the Cyclops, and the Titans, he

had sprung from Dame Terra or the Earth! This supposition is strongly corroborated by his size, for it is well known that all the progeny of Mother Earth were of a gigantic stature; and Van Zandt, we are told, was a tall, raw-boned man, above six feet high, with an astonishingly hard head. Nor is this origin of the illustrious Van Zandt a whit more improbable or repugnant to belief than what is related and universally admitted of certain of our greatest, or rather richest, men, who we are told with the utmost gravity did originally spring from a dunghill!

Of the second of the trio but faint accounts have reached to this time, which mention that he was a sturdy, obstinate, worrying, bustling little man; and, from being usually equipped in an old pair of buckskins, was familiarly dubbed Harden Broeck, or Tough Breeches.

Ten Broeck completed this junto of adventurers. It is a singular but ludicrous fact, which, were I not scrupulous in recording the whole truth, I should almost be tempted to pass over in silence, as incompatible with the gravity and dignity of history, that this worthy gentleman should likewise have been nicknamed from what in modern times is considered the most ignoble part of the dress. But, in truth, the small-clothes seems to have been a very dignified garment in the eyes of our venerated ancestors, in all probability from its covering that part of the body which has been pronounced "the seat of honor."

The name of Ten Broeck, or, as it was sometimes spelt, Tin Broeck, has been indifferently translated into Ten Breeches

and Tin Breeches. The most elegant and ingenious writers on the subject declare in favor of Tin, or rather Thin, Breeches; whence they infer that the original bearer of it was a poor but merry rogue, whose galligaskins were none of the soundest, and who, peradventure, may have been the author of that truly philosophical stanza: —

"Then why should we quarrel for riches,  
Or any such glittering toys?  
A light heart and thin pair of breeches  
Will go through the world, my brave boys!"

The High Dutch commentators, however, declare in favor of the other reading, and affirm that the worthy in question was a burly, bulbous man, who, in sheer ostentation of his venerable progenitors, was the first to introduce into the settlement the ancient Dutch fashion of ten pair of breeches.

Such was the trio of coadjutors chosen by Oloffte the Dreamer to accompany him in this voyage into unknown realms; as to the names of his crews they have not been handed down by history.

Having, as I before observed, passed much of his life in the open air, among the peripatetic philosophers of Amsterdam, Oloffte had become familiar with the aspect of the heavens, and could as accurately determine when a storm was brewing or a squall rising as a dutiful husband can foresee, from the brow of his spouse, when a tempest is gathering about his ears. Having pitched upon a time for his voyage, when the skies appeared

propitious, he exhorted all his crews to take a good night's rest, wind up their family affairs, and make their wills; precautions taken by our forefathers, even in after times when they became more adventurous, and voyaged to Haverstraw, or Kaatskill, or Grootd Esopus, or any other far country, beyond the great waters of the Tappen Zee.

## CHAPTER IV

And now the rosy blush of morn began to mantle in the east, and soon the rising sun, emerging from amidst golden and purple clouds, shed his blithesome rays on the tin weathercocks of Communipaw. It was that delicious season of the year when Nature, breaking from the chilling thralldom of old winter, like a blooming damsel from the tyranny of a sordid old father, threw herself, blushing with ten thousand charms, into the arms of youthful Spring. Every tufted copse and blooming grove resounded with the notes of hymeneal love. The very insects, as they sipped the dew that gemmed the tender grass of the meadows, joined in the joyous epithalamium – the virgin bud timidly put forth its blushes, "the voice of the turtle was heard in the land," and the heart of man dissolved away in tenderness. Oh, sweet Theocritus! had I thine oaten reed, wherewith thou erst did charm the gay Sicilian plains; or, oh, gentle Bion! thy pastoral pipe wherein the happy swains of the Lesbian isle so much delighted, then might I attempt to sing, in soft Bucolic or

negligent Idyllium, the rural beauties of the scene; but having nothing, save this jaded goose-quill, wherewith to wing my flight, I must fain resign all poetic disportings of the fancy, and pursue my narrative in humble prose; comforting myself with the hope, that though it may not steal so sweetly upon the imagination of my reader, yet it may commend itself, with virgin modesty, to his better judgment, clothed in the chaste and simple garb of truth.

No sooner did the first rays of cheerful Phoebus dart into the windows of Communipaw than the little settlement was all in motion. Forth issued from his castle the sage Van Kortlandt, and seizing a conch shell, blew a far-resounding blast, that soon summoned all his lusty followers. Then did they trudge resolutely down to the water side, escorted by a multitude of relatives and friends, who all went down, as the common phrase expresses it, "to see them off." And this shows the antiquity of those long family processions, often seen in our city, composed of all ages, sizes, and sexes, laden with bundles and bandboxes, escorting some bevy of country cousins about to depart for home in a market-boat.

The good Oloffte bestowed his forces in a squadron of three canoes, and hoisted his flag on board a little round Dutch boat, shaped not unlike a tub, which had formerly been the jolly-boat of the Goede Vrouw. And now, all being embarked, they bade farewell to the gazing throng upon the beach, who continued shouting after them, even when out of hearing, wishing them a happy voyage, advising them to take good care of themselves,

not to get drowned – with an abundance of other of those sage and invaluable cautions generally given by landsmen to such as go down to the sea in ships, and adventure upon the deep waters. In the meanwhile the voyagers cheerily urged their course across the crystal bosom of the bay, and soon left behind them the green shores of ancient Pavonia.

And first they touched at two small islands which lie nearly opposite Communipaw, and which are said to have been brought into existence about the time of the great irruption of the Hudson, when it broke through the Highlands and made its way to the ocean.<sup>27</sup> For, in this tremendous uproar of the waters we are told that many huge fragments of rock and land were rent from the mountains and swept down by this runaway river, for sixty or seventy miles; where some of them ran aground on the shoals just opposite Communipaw, and formed the identical islands in question, while others drifted out to sea, and were never heard of more. A sufficient proof of the fact is, that the rock which forms the bases of these islands is exactly similar to that of the Highlands; and moreover, one of our philosophers,

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<sup>27</sup> It is a matter long since established by certain of our philosophers, that is to say, having been often advanced and never contradicted, it has grown to be pretty nigh equal to a settled fact, that the Hudson was originally a lake dammed up by the mountains of the Highlands. In process of time, however, becoming very mighty and obstreperous, and the mountains waxing pury, dropsical, and weak in the back, by reason of their extreme old age, it suddenly rose upon them, and after a violent struggle effected its escape. This is said to have come to pass in very remote time, probably before that rivers had lost the art of running up hill. The foregoing is a theory in which I do not pretend to be skilled, not withstanding that I do fully give it my belief.

who has diligently compared the agreement of their respective surfaces, has even gone so far as to assure me, in confidence, that Gibbet Island was originally nothing more nor less than a wart on Anthony's nose.<sup>28</sup>

Leaving these wonderful little isles, they next coasted by Governor's Island, since terrible from its frowning fortress and grinning batteries. They would by no means, however, land upon this island, since they doubted much it might be the abode of demons and spirits, which in those days did greatly abound throughout this savage and pagan country.

Just at this time a shoal of jolly porpoises came rolling and tumbling by, turning up their sleek sides to the sun, and spouting up the briny element in sparkling showers. No sooner did the sage Oloffte mark this than he was greatly rejoiced. "This," exclaimed he, "if I mistake not, augurs well – the porpoise is a fat, well-conditioned fish – a burgomaster among fishes – his looks betoken ease, plenty, and prosperity. I greatly admire this round fat fish, and doubt not but this is a happy omen of the success of our undertaking." So saying, he directed his squadron to steer in the track of these alderman fishes.

Turning, therefore, directly to the left, they swept up the strait, vulgarly called the East River. And here the rapid tide which courses through this strait, seizing on the gallant tub in which Commodore Van Kortlandt had embarked, hurried it forward with a velocity unparalleled in a Dutch boat, navigated

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<sup>28</sup> A promontory in the Highlands.

by Dutchmen; insomuch that the good commodore, who had all his life long been accustomed only to the drowsy navigation of canals, was more than ever convinced that they were in the hands of some supernatural power, and that the jolly porpoises were towing them to some fair haven that was to fulfill all their wishes and expectations.

Thus borne away by the resistless current, they doubled that boisterous point of land since called Corlear's Hook,<sup>29</sup> and leaving to the right the rich winding cove of the Wallabout, they drifted into a magnificent expanse of water, surrounded by pleasant shores, whose verdure was exceedingly refreshing to the eye. While the voyagers were looking around them, on what they conceived to be a serene and sunny lake, they beheld at a distance a crew of painted savages busily employed in fishing, who seemed more like the genii of this romantic region – their slender canoe lightly balanced like a feather on the undulating surface of the bay.

At sight of these the hearts of the heroes of Communipaw were not a little troubled. But as good fortune would have it, at the bow of the commodore's boat was stationed a valiant man, named Hendrick Kip (which, being interpreted, means chicken, a name given him in token of his courage).

No sooner did he behold these varlet heathens, than he trembled with excessive valor, and although a good half mile distant, he seized a musketoon that lay at hand, and turning

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<sup>29</sup> Properly spelt Hoeck (*i. e.* a point of land).

away his head, fired it most intrepidly in the face of the blessed sun. The blundering weapon recoiled, and gave the valiant Kip an ignominious kick, which laid him prostrate with uplifted heels in the bottom of the boat. But such was the effect of this tremendous fire, that the wild men of the woods, struck with consternation, seized hastily upon their paddles, and shot away into one of the deep inlets of the Long Island shore.

This signal victory gave new spirits to the voyagers, and in honor of the achievement they gave the name of the valiant Kip to the surrounding bay, and it has continued to be called Kip's Bay from that time to the present. The heart of the good Van Kortlandt – who, having no land of his own, was a great admirer of other people's – expanded to the full size of a peppercorn at the sumptuous prospect of rich unsettled country around him, and falling into a delicious reverie, he straightway began to riot in the possession of vast meadows of salt marsh and interminable patches of cabbages. From this delectable vision he was all at once awakened by the sudden turning of the tide, which would soon have hurried him from this land of promise, had not the discreet navigator given signal to steer for shore; where they accordingly landed hard by the rocky heights of Bellevue – that happy retreat where our jolly aldermen eat for the good of the city, and fatten the turtle that are sacrificed on civic solemnities.

Here, seated on the greensward, by the side of a small stream that ran sparkling among the grass, they refreshed themselves after the toils of the seas by feasting lustily on the ample stores

which they had provided for this perilous voyage. Thus having well fortified their deliberate powers, they fell into an earnest consultation what was further to be done. This was the first council dinner ever eaten at Bellevue by Christian burghers; and here, as tradition relates, did originate the great family feud between the Hardenbroecks and the Tenbroecks, which afterwards had a singular influence on the building of the city. The sturdy Harden Broeck, whose eyes had been wondrously delighted with the salt marshes which spread their reeking bosoms along the coast, at the bottom of Kip's Bay, counseled by all means to return thither, and found the intended city. This was strenuously opposed by the unbending Ten Broeck, and many testy arguments passed between them. The particulars of this controversy have not reached us, which is ever to be lamented; this much is certain, that the sage Oloffte put an end to the dispute, by determining to explore still farther in the route which the mysterious porpoises had so clearly pointed out; whereupon the sturdy Tough Breeches abandoned the expedition, took possession of a neighboring hill, and in a fit of great wrath peopled all that tract of country, which has continued to be inhabited by the Hardenbroecks unto this very day.

By this time the jolly Phoebus, like some wanton urchin sporting on the side of a green hill, began to roll down the declivity of the heavens; and now, the tide having once more turned in their favor, the Pavonians again committed themselves to its discretion, and coasting along the western shores, were

borne towards the straits of Blackwell's Island.

And here the capricious wanderings of the current occasioned not a little marvel and perplexity to these illustrious mariners. Now would they be caught by the wanton eddies, and, sweeping round a jutting point, would wind deep into some romantic little cove, that indented the fair island of Manna-hata; now were they hurried narrowly by the very bases of impending rocks, mantled with the flaunting grape-vine, and crowned with groves, which threw a broad shade on the waves beneath; and anon they were borne away into the mid-channel and wafted along with a rapidity that very much discomposed the sage Van Kortlandt, who, as he saw the land swiftly receding on either side, began exceedingly to doubt that terra firma was giving them the slip.

Wherever the voyagers turned their eyes a new creation seemed to bloom around. No signs of human thrift appeared to check the delicious wildness of Nature, who here reveled in all her luxuriant variety. Those hills, now bristled like the fretful porcupine, with rows of poplars (vain upstart plants! minions of wealth and fashion!), were then adorned with the vigorous natives of the soil – the lordly oak, the generous chestnut, the graceful elm – while here and there the tulip-tree reared its majestic head, the giant of the forest. Where now are seen the gay retreats of luxury – villas half buried in twilight bowers, whence the amorous flute oft breathes the sighings of some city swain – there the fish-hawk built his solitary nest, on some dry tree that overlooked his watery domain. The timid deer

fed undisturbed along those shores now hallowed by the lover's moonlight walk, and printed by the slender foot of beauty; and a savage solitude extended over those happy regions, where now are reared the stately towers of the Joneses, the Schermerhornes, and the Rhinelanders.

Thus gliding in silent wonder through these new and unknown scenes, the gallant squadron of Pavonia swept by the foot of a promontory, which strutted forth boldly into the waves, and seemed to frown upon them as they brawled against its base. This is the bluff well known to modern mariners by the name of Gracie's Point, from the fair castle which, like an elephant, it carries upon its back. And here broke upon their view a wild and varied prospect, where land and water were beauteously intermingled, as though they had combined to heighten and set off each other's charms. To their right lay the sedgy point of Blackwell's Island, dressed in the fresh garniture of living green; beyond it stretched the pleasant coast of Sundswick, and the small harbor well known by the name of Hallet's Cove – a place infamous in latter days, by reason of its being the haunt of pirates who infest these seas, robbing orchards and water-melon patches, and insulting gentlemen navigators when voyaging in their pleasure boats. To the left a deep bay, or rather creek, gracefully receded between shores fringed with forests, and forming a kind of vista through which were beheld the sylvan regions of Haerlem, Morrissania, and East Chester. Here the eye reposed with delight on a richly weeded country, diversified

by tufted knolls, shadowy intervals, and waving lines of upland, swelling above each other; while over the whole the purple mists of spring diffused a hue of soft voluptuousness.

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