

BLACKMAIL AS A HERITAGE;

OR NEW YORK'S LEGACY FROM COLONIAL DAYS.

DURING the Senate investigation of the police department, a single avenue in the labyrinth of corruption known as the Corporation of the City of New York, there was one eminent citizen who maintained a philosophic calm. As the finger on the dial of guilt swung to and fro from ordinary depths to unexampled heights of infamy, he occasionally exonerated the political club and the municipal régime of which he was the indivisible head, by blaming it all on human nature. This theory of the responsibility for New York's sad preëminence was enunciated by the Tammany Grand-Sachem-and-Mayor, and was cautiously echoed by the orators and organs of public delusion in the service of Tammany Hall; and setting aside the question of the success or failure of that institution in satisfying the venal cravings of human nature, it must be admitted that they were more than half right.

So, human nature in New York is the culprit; but Tammany Hall, as a proxy, is standing in the pillory. On several occasions it has suffered the same obloquy for placing itself at the service of a community which has been in the habit of blowing warm on wide-spread corruption for a series of years, and then of taking the sudden whim to snap cold, like an unreasonable frost in the Tammany "Season of Flowers."

As human nature in Manhattan is composed of rival race elements, there has been a disposition to shift the responsibility from the whole to a part. This is true especially of the native stock, in itself blended of several races; for it has placed the rank condition of affairs to the credit of the yet unassimilated foreign elements of the population, forgetting that this charge does not balance its own debit of complicity and neglect. Much less does the charge free the native stock from the "iniquity of the fathers" that is visited "upon the children unto the third and fourth generation"; for the careful historian must delve in the records of the docile Dutch, or overlook the roots of some of the most luxuriant weeds in the Tammany garden of Popular Government.

Also, a special indictment has been framed against the Irish, as the dominating political element; but it will not bear close analysis, and it will never be forgotten that the second

demon of reform in the recent Saturnalia of Decency is himself an unmitigated Irishman. It is true that the Irish have long been in possession of Tammany Hall, and consequently have been masters of the city's wealth and reputation; but they have given to New York the kind of government it has seemed grateful for on election day, and they will be found ready and able to provide a respectable administration when the electors demand it. Flying from poverty and oppression at home, the Irish brought to Manhattan something which was sorely needed—the courage and energy of a virile race. Prompted by a respect for public honors and influence, and for their money value, they won in the lists of manhood suffrage nearly every important place of power and profit. While they adopted ancient tribal rules for the regulation of their own oligarchy, in dealing with the servile population they, in a way, adhered to the local forms of law, as being admirably adapted to the enjoyment of thirty-four millions of city revenue. In some walks of executive duty they have made two kinds of blackmail grow where only one grew before, but in general they have merely cherished the time-honored swindles of the town.

When the Dutch came to Manhattan they had no thought of planting civilization like the English at Jamestown, nor were they looking for a good place to pray like the Puritans at Plymouth. Nor, to use the Tammany argot, were they "traveling for their health." Their sole aim was to exchange trinkets and rum for the peltries of the Indians, which they did for twenty years in a semi-organized way, before the first settlers arrived in 1623. Peter Minuit brought the first colonial administration in 1626. In name the traders and colonists were free citizens of the Dutch Republic, but in fact they were the despoiled and intimidated subjects of a venal ring. Under the company's mercantile charter its officers were able to elude the penalty for extortion and tyranny just as the Tammany leaders have found shelter in intrigues and combinations covered by a charter to foster "the Smile of Charity."

Even the dread name of "boss" is an inheritance from the Dutch period. It is derived from *baas*, meaning foreman or master. A hundred years after English became the official language, men of wealth and character, like "Boss" Walton of the famous Walton House in

Franklin Square, received the appellation from persons who wished to be deferential. And today a working-man may use the title in its original sense when addressing his employer or accosting a stranger. In its political significance "boss" is a Tammany product. As such it defines a vulgar usurper of public authority, who knows he would be squelched if he ventured to stand as a candidate himself, but who succeeds by caucus methods in forcing his puppet candidates on the electors, and in directing their official acts for his own selfish ends. On the other hand, a political "leader" is a man who influences the councils of a party by virtue of his ability to direct public affairs, and who appeals personally to the ballot-box for his commission to make laws and to execute them in the name of the people. Hence with unerring instinct the Tammany bosses call themselves "leaders"; but in Tammany Hall things always go by contraries; even the force of gravitation works toward the ceiling, causing vice to rise above decency, and those who have shortened human life to soar into prominence as guardians of the public weal.

THE FIRST MANHATTAN BOSS.

BEFORE the Manhattan settlement was ten years old it had hatched a boss of the true Tammany stripe. Though Cornelis Van Tienhoven never wore prison garb like some of the modern "leaders," during twenty-three years he climbed on stepping-stones of scandalous deeds from high to higher honors, and thwarted the efforts of the burghers to shake him off. In education and intellect he was qualified for leadership in the best sense, but in subtlety, craft, and venal purposes he was an exemplar as a boss, and thereby controlled the policy of the Dutch governors. Speaking the language of the Indians, he was all the more an adept in cheating them. Like the early members of the Tammany Society, he even masqueraded in Indian dress and manners. A remonstrance addressed to their "High Mightinesses" in Holland said of him: "He has run about like an Indian with little covering and a patch before him." In his Indian revels, as in his private life, he was shameless. Sketch portraits of this Manhattan worthy are preserved in the affidavits given at The Hague in 1652 by two Dutch women who were aiding injured innocence, as we shall see later on. In one of the depositions he appears as "a corpulent and thickset person, of red and bloated visage, and light hair"; and in the other as "a likely person of ruddy face, corpulent body, and having a little wen on the side of the cheek." But it is his moral wen that entitles him to a place in the Tammany gallery.

When he first appears in the annals of early Manhattan, Van Tienhoven was twenty years younger than the bloated Lothario of the portraits of 1652. It is supposed that he was in the employ of the Dutch West India Company during a part of Minuit's administration; but it is certain that when this governor locked horns with the patroons over the question of trading privileges, and Patroon Van Rensselaer's relative, Wouter Van Twiller, was appointed in his stead, the latter made Tienhoven "book-keeper of wages" to the council. This was in 1633, and the office, in the Dutch called "Koopman," was analogous to a Tammany commissionership of public works, inasmuch as whatever sums dribbled to the hangers-on of the company were filtered through his itching palms. He was also receiver of dues. One way or another, everybody came in contact with his suavity; and it is said that those who failed to "water the pigeons"—a Dutch euphemism for gratuities and godfatherly gifts—were put off with promises that never matured.

As Wouter Van Twiller carried to the extreme the Tammany doctrine that a public trust should be administered for the benefit of the trustee, he got into trouble with Dincklagen, the honest fiscal, or sheriff-attorney, of the council,—no, the expostulating officer got into trouble with the governor, in much the same way that ex-Fire Commissioner Gray was forced to withdraw from his Tammany colleagues for presuming to notice that the public money was being wasted. Van Twiller investigated himself, and found himself spotless. Also in true modern fashion he adjudged the accuser to be the real malefactor, and sent him back to Holland without arrears of salary. Dincklagen laid his grievances before the home authorities, and despite a powerful attempt to shield Van Twiller, owing to a miscarriage of whitewash the director was dismissed. Yet he remained in the colony to enjoy expansive lands, including the present Governor's Island, and herds of cattle, which, owing to his official position, had in the short space of five years been turned into his account.

Tienhoven profited by the change inasmuch as William Kieft, the new director-general, who arrived in 1638, appointed him secretary of the colony. Kieft in his previous field of operations had been accused of embezzlement; so it is not surprising that, with Tienhoven's assistance, his new authority worked for public mischief. Under his predecessors the council had consisted of five members, who acted as magistrates. One councilor, having one vote, was enough for Kieft, who reserved the right of casting two votes; so like the "Leader" in the practical working of the Tammany coun-

cils, Kieft possessed in his own person a quorum and a "fair working majority." At Tienhoven's instigation, so it was claimed, Kieft laid a tax on the corn of the neighboring tribes. This was the beginning of lasting trouble, and in 1640 Tienhoven led seventy men in a massacre of Raritans south of Staten Island. By the next summer the situation had become grave, and Kieft invited the burghers to elect Twelve Men to represent the heads of families in taking counsel with him for the public defense.

THE DAWN OF MUGWUMPERY.

This first public assembly on Manhattan Island was held on August 29, 1641. But the Twelve Men, who, like a Tammany board or legislature, were of no use to the bosses except as "a cloak and a catspaw," made bold to ask for permanent representation in the council, and professed advice which savored of interest in the proper conduct of local affairs. So Kieft ordered the venturesome Twelve "to hold no further meeting, as the same tends to a dangerous consequence." As he claimed despotic powers, he threatened them with corporal punishment in case they disobeyed; whereas a Tammany boss to the same end would have refused them renomination, or, if they were merchants, would have pestered them with police interference or perhaps even with special legislation.

This abrogation of the Twelve Men was "done in Fort Amsterdam, February 8, 1642." Yet a year later, on February 24, 1643, Kieft treated a petition for the privilege of committing an atrocious murder, signed by three of the Twelve, as an appeal from "the whole of the freemen." During eighteen months Kieft and the ring had been watching for a safe chance to terrorize the Indians. On the latter date word came that two parties of Indians, flying from the vengeance of other tribes, had come to the vicinity of the town for security. One party had camped at Pavonia on the Jersey side (the present site of the Erie ferry), and the other, crossing to Manhattan, had camped at Corlear's Hook, near the present site of the Grand street ferry. Both relied upon the good will of the Dutch. Tienhoven, as he was able to converse with them, was sent over to Pavonia to spy out the strength of the Indians. On his return, so it was charged, he himself drafted a petition, on behalf of "the whole of the freemen," for authority "to attack the Indians as enemies, whilst God hath fully delivered them into our hands," which was signed by Kieft's crony, Maryn Andriensen, "an old freebooter"; Jan Jansen Damen, a trader, the stepfather of Tienhoven's wife; and Abraham Verplanck, Tienhoven's brother-in-law. No other members of the discarded Twelve signed

the petition, nor were the burghers generally aware of Kieft's purpose. On the night of February 25-26, Captain Andriensen led a band of the company's "heelers" against the camp at Corlear's Hook, and a party of soldiers was sent to Pavonia. The double massacre of men, women, and children which ensued was more brutal, perhaps, than some of the murders whose heroes have been lauded by Tammany Hall. Even Vrouw Damen, Tienhoven's mother-in-law, joined in the family exultation by kicking a few Indian heads which were a part of the trophies.

Every honest burgher realized at once that the settlement which contained not above four hundred males, with the population so mixed that eighteen different languages were spoken, would suffer for such a revolting act of treachery. Strenuous objection was made to the pretense that the conspirators had acted for "the whole of the freemen." Kieft was made to feel the shame of his position, and sought to throw the blame on Andriensen and Tienhoven's relatives. War with the Indians followed; all outlying farms were devastated, and the miserable settlers, huddled about the fort, were brought to the verge of destruction. At this point a breach was opened between the authorities and the burghers which lasted for ten years; and although Tienhoven was known to be the real offender, like Tammany Hall in times of special disgrace, he managed to slip between his official scapegoat, Kieft, and the enraged though impotent people.

In September of that year (1643) Kieft felt the need of another "catspaw," so he invited the heads of families to elect Eight Men to represent the commonalty by giving counsel, as required. Forty-six citizens, nineteen of whom made their mark, agreed that Kieft and his council should nominate the Eight Men, but they reserved the right to reject any nominee who was objectionable. Twenty-eight, one half of whom made their mark, signed the certificate of election of Kieft's nominees. Among the chosen Eight was Jan Jansen Damen, the father-in-law of Tienhoven; but on account of the part he had played in the conspiracy of the double massacre, his colleagues refused to sit with him, and another was chosen.

Kieft squared accounts by ignoring the Eight Men. They were asked to give advice on November 4, 1643, but thereafter a suggestion from them brought no other response from the company's autocrat than "biting and scoffing taunts"; until for the second and last time he summoned them to his house in the fort on June 18, 1644. He was pressed for funds, and knowing there were not above two hundred Dutch on the island able to bear arms, he sought to gain their consent to new taxes and duties on the

threat of discharging the English contingent under Captain John Underhill. Though brow-beaten into adopting Kieft's measures, the docile natures of the Eight were now aroused. On October 24, 1643, they had petitioned the States-General of the Netherlands for succor against the Indians, and in that paper had refrained from criticism of Kieft; but in a petition to the West India Company, dated October 28, 1644, they stated their grievances and the pitiable needs of the colony in plain words. The directors of the company at first decided to send Dincklagen back to Manhattan as director-general in Kieft's place, but his commission hung fire; and as Peter Stuyvesant was at hand, having returned to Holland from Curaçao owing to a wound which deprived him of a leg, it was determined in December, 1646, to confide New Netherland to his imperious nature, with Dincklagen as vice-director.

Kieft had made money by various means, including a brandy-still, and had rewarded his friends. About the time Jan Jansen Damen was repudiated by the Eight Men, who were the original Manhattan Mugwumps, Kieft granted to Damen the most valuable strip of land adjoining the town, lying between the present Wall street and Maiden Lane, and extending from river to river. At the same time Tienhoven received the second best, an adjoining slice included between Maiden Lane and the present Ann street, and extending from Broadway to the present Pearl street. Tienhoven built a stone mansion on an eminence which was located near the present corner of John and Cliff streets; in after times this mansion became a noted resort, called "The Orchard," and the locality was known as Golden Hill. When the Damen farm was plotted, a street running from the North River east to Pearl was named after Tienhoven. It is significant that the name was afterward changed to Crown, and finally to Liberty, street, a designation which remains as a sarcasm on certain great corporations of that vicinity who in our time have paid gigantic blackmail to the Tienhovens of Tammany Hall.

Peter Stuyvesant's paternal rule began on May 27, 1647. When his councilors ventured an adverse opinion they were "boobies, rascals, and bear-skinners," or "villains, scoundrels, and thieves." All of these varieties of people were about him, for a certainty, but the abuse did not always fall on the right people. He would even scarify the sea-captains who had been his aides in the West Indies; but there was one, it was said, named Paulus Lenaertse, who on small wages had been able to build the finest house on Manhattan Island; when this one began to get excited, Stuyvesant would grow silent, though he would endure a show of temper from no other person. This peculiarity gave rise to

"divers unfavorable surmises" akin to those aroused by Sheriff Grant's godfatherly gift to "Leader" Croker's family.

Stuyvesant's espousal of the official rottenness left by Kieft spoke volumes for his varied experience as governor in Curaçao. Prominent burghers were quick to unveil Tienhoven's character to him, yet the crafty secretary who fleeced every one was retained in office, and gained such ascendancy that everything followed "his behest more than if he were president." A month after Stuyvesant's arrival, Kieft entered complaint against the Eight Men for the "libels and lies" contained in the letter of October 28, 1644, which the displeased directors had sent back to Kieft by Stuyvesant's hand. Two of the leading spirits of the Eight, Jochem Petersen Kuyter, the Harlem planter, and Cornelis Melyn, the patroon of Staten Island, were ordered to make written reply in forty-eight hours. Stuyvesant was quoted as saying: "These boorish brutes would hereafter endeavor to knock me over also, but I shall now manage it that they will have their bellies full in all time to come."

And so he did. Kieft's chief accusers, after trial before the council, were adjudged guilty of offenses "not to be tolerated or endured in a well ordered and governed republic." Stuyvesant sentenced Kuyter to banishment for three years, and Melyn for seven years, besides imposing fines. They took passage on August 16, 1647, in the *Princess*. Kieft was also on board, returning home with goodly hoard. Another trial by ordeal of shipwreck followed; for the *Princess* stranded on the Welsh coast, and Kieft was lost along with eighty-three others. Kuyter clung to a part of the wreck, and was washed ashore. Melyn, who lost a son, reached a sand-bank, from which he was rescued. Kuyter carried papers relating to the suit in a box, which was recovered by dragging in the shoals; but Kieft's papers, on which Kuyter and Melyn had been convicted, were lost. The States-General in the dallying course of time provided them with authority to enjoy their property in New Netherland pending appeal. They returned in the spring of 1648, and Kuyter ultimately made his peace with Stuyvesant, who even became a partner in the reestablishment of Kuyter's Harlem "bouwerie." In these complex days of "pulls" it would be inferred that Kuyter had tempted the autocrat, who was awake to every good thing. For it was said: "The director is in, and carries on, all sorts of business all over the country, for he hath various stores of his own; he is a brewer, hath bouweries, is part owner of ships, a merchant and a trader both in lawful and contraband articles." Kuyter would have been sheriff in 1654 if an Indian had not anticipated the arrival of his commission by taking his scalp.

Melyn chose an aggressive course, and on his return went about airing his victory. He wanted justice with éclat. So he chose the occasion of a public assembly in the church within the fort as a happy moment for serving the mandamus on the governor, who flew into a rage at the "mutinous and insulting service," snatched the mandamus, damaged the seal of their "High Mightinesses," and tried to rend the parchment. On cooling down, he returned the document, but did not relent. Another year passed before Melyn secured attention to the suit; and then Stuyvesant, instead of responding in person, sent Tienhoven to The Hague as his attorney. Again Melyn won a virtual victory, but on returning, in 1650, Stuyvesant treated the authority of the States-General with contempt, on the ground that the company owned New Netherland, and could do as it pleased. Yet again Melyn voyaged to Holland for redress, but on his return home, in the ship *Fortuyn*, with settlers for his Staten Island lands, was arrested on a trumped-up charge of smuggling. Stuyvesant carried his animosity to the extreme of confiscating the ship and cargo, and until the English took possession of the country Melyn was in effect banished to his Staten Island domain.

A SMALL "COMMITTEE OF SEVENTY."

THESE events concern the birth of local self-government on Manhattan Island; or rather the outward form of it, since there was as little of the essence of self-government under the bosses of the West India Company as recently under the "leaders" of Tammany. While Melyn, as the representative of the Eight Men, was contending in Holland for the right of criticizing the Manhattan authorities, his friends at home were carrying on a campaign for permanent burgher representation. In order to facilitate the raising of new revenues Stuyvesant resorted again to an election in which the freemen chose eighteen burghers, of whom the governor named Nine Men to represent the commonalty. His idea of their duty was ratification of his will. But opposition was soon aroused, and the Nine Men, through their spokesman, Adrian Vanderdonck, prepared a statement of grievances, the rough draft of which Stuyvesant, by invading Vanderdonck's lodgings, personally seized, placing the writer under arrest for lese-majesty. A deputation of three, headed by Vanderdonck, was sent to Holland, where they presented the famous "Remonstrance" of July 28, 1649, whose object was to show how the company's "servants and the directors and their friends have fattened here from time to time, having played with their employers and the people as the cat plays with the mouse."

About the time the deputation embarked, Tienhoven sailed to defend the governor's decision against Melyn, and was also charged with the task of counteracting the Remonstrance. This mission was in all respects his masterpiece. No Tammany apologist ever excelled Cornelis Van Tienhoven's "Answer" in those expedients of crafty evasion and impudence to which the venal usurper under "free" institutions spontaneously turns for concealment. "Those who complain of Stuyvesant's haughtiness," he smoothly says, "are such, I think, as wish to live without government or order." And if Stuyvesant "hath made use of any harsh language, it must be that some profligate hath provoked him to it." Wherever the case will not safely bear even discussion, he clamors for proofs. This charge "remains to be proved"; that one "must be specified and proved." The arraignment of himself as a versatile scoundrel he blandly waves aside with this glittering generality: "All the other slanders and calumnies uttered against the rest of the officers ought to be proved." How like Mr. Croker's "Sudden Wealth" interview of December 17, 1893, in which, with affected ignorance, he begged for proofs of Tammany venality, while luxuriant blackmail was bursting into bloom around him! And yet it was as true then as it was when Vice-Director Dincklagen wrote to Vanderdonck of the increased oppression and rapacity of the director: "What stupid boors feel for, and grope after, the children on the street understand."

Tienhoven's answer was given on November 29, 1650, ten months after the directors of the West India Company, apparently with his assistance, had put in a similar answer containing this interesting evasion: "As regards the calumnies against Cornelis Van Tienhoven, he is prepared to answer the petitioners if their High Mightinesses consider it necessary." As for himself, he seems to have regarded his record as over-pure, considering his position and influence in the company. But he rectified that matter by corrupting the daughter of a basket-maker of Amsterdam, on a promise of marriage as soon as they should reach New Netherland, where, of course, he already had a family. He carried this confiding girl to The Hague, where two officers, discovering the nature of the friendship, blackmailed him to the amount of eighty-two rix-dollars, in modern style, besides which Tienhoven "provided some oysters and a drink for the two sheriffs."

Nevertheless, on the complaint of his landlady, a bailiff promised to investigate the relations of the pair, but Tienhoven "prevailed on him to desist from such investigation." We of the later Manhattan need not ask by what subtle argument the bailiff was satisfied. In March, 1651, the States-General summoned Tienho-

ven to appear before them for examination; but, on the plea of ill health, he remained in Amsterdam awaiting the sailing of the *Waterhont*. Late in April the States-General ordered the West India Company to detain him, and the skipper of the ship not to carry him, but Tienhoven sailed nevertheless with his paramour. In September of that year a burgher wrote to Vanderdonck, who was still pleading for redress in Holland: "That infernal swaggerer Tienhoven has returned here, and put the country in a blaze"; adding that the basket-maker's daughter, "finding he was already married, hath exposed his conduct even in the public court." His wife Rachel had disturbed Tienhoven's plans for a dual existence.

Governor Stuyvesant not long afterward appointed Tienhoven "fiscal," or sheriff-attorney, of the colony "to uphold his character." For the same reason Tammany mayors, in our day, have appointed malefactors to dispense justice and administer departments. And how like an incident of Tammany government is this criticism on the promotion: "In addition to the office of Fiscal he holds that of Secretary in fact, and Carel Van Brugge that of Secretary in name; for this Englishman is not qualified for it, and allows himself to be used by the director and Tienhoven as an instrument."

When the company in 1653 granted a form of burgher government Stuyvesant allowed Tienhoven to act as city schout, or sheriff. This was sanctioned by the directors on April 26, 1655, in a letter to Stuyvesant. They consented that Tienhoven as fiscal should provisionally perform the duties of schout, and confessed a knowledge of "the manifold and grave charges against him." Then, with a solicitude as amusing as some of the Tammany apologies for scandalous appointments, they said, "You must admonish him to treat the people well, and to endeavor to give satisfaction."

But his hour had struck. In the following year (1656) public revenues were traced to his pockets; he was dismissed from office and arrested, but still had the support of the director-general. One morning his hat and cane were found floating in the East River. Everybody said he had feigned suicide and fled. His brother, who also disappeared, was afterward seen in Barbados serving as a cook. When Tienhoven's light went out, Rachel was not in the dark. She insisted that her faithless spouse should be called dead, and administered his estate. No memorial tablet to this first Manhattan boss has yet been erected in Tammany Hall, but when one is it ought to testify to the fact that

Tienhoven's body lies a-moldering in the wave,
But his soul is marching on.

THE CORNER-STONE OF POLICE BLACKMAIL.

IN Stuyvesant's time many abuses of power and assessment were grafted upon the eternal customs of the town. Shortly after his arrival he observed that "one full fourth part of the city of New Amsterdam have become bawdy houses for the sale of ardent spirits, of tobacco and beer": on some of the business streets this proportion still holds good. He inaugurated Sunday closing with the result, perpetuated to our time, of side-door opening. Fines were established for this, that, and the other infraction of regulations which afforded the constables a legal basis for making reprisals. In 1658 eight men were constituted the rattle-watch, and were authorized to take "lock-up money" and fees, which sums were to be brought into the house of the captain of the watch, and held for the benefit of the members, a "divvy," as it is now called, occurring four times a year.

Thus extortion was put, as it were, upon a basis of police discretion and right; but there was a rule against setting up a social club on the proceeds. So the habit of police collections, contracted as a pleasurable duty, has been handed down as a vast and secret "perquisite" of the guardians of the public peace; and it must not be overlooked that from those days to these the police of the city have been in the personnel a continuing body. It was as necessary then as now to admonish the police not to use violence upon peaceful burghers.

"Burgher right," after the Dutch custom, was granted by Stuyvesant to please the citizens, and prevailed as a trading and electoral qualification of "freemen" into our own century. Stuyvesant fixed the fee of "great burghers," from whom municipal officers were chosen, at fifty florins; and of "small burghers," qualified to pursue a trade or to keep shop, at twenty-five florins. Partly from this acorn has grown the Tammany oak of assessments and reprisals on merchants.

Followers of shady callings in the early days were the spoil of the autocratic authorities, just as they have been to-day of equally irresponsible blackmailers. Some of the earliest settlers were freebooters from the Spanish main. Smuggling was as common as Indian cheating, and Stuyvesant and other governors, English as well as Dutch, were openly charged with sharing in the profits of illicit trade. Subsequent to the Dutch governors piracy found in Manhattan its chief emporium. Even reputable merchants devised moral and legal quibbles for engaging in sea poaching, usually under the cover of so-called privateering. The great William Kidd was peculiarly a Manhattan pro-

duct. Governor Fletcher in 1696 admitted that he had exchanged "presents" with the notorious pirate Thomas Tew, but explained that his chief desire in seeking his "amusing conversation" was "to reclaim him from a vile habit of swearing"—which parallels the Tammany theory that a proper way to reclaim malefactors is to appoint them to public office. In 1698 the Earl of Bellomont, who had succeeded Fletcher as governor, complained to the English Lords of Trade that he had endeavored to place four merchantmen, about to clear for Madagascar, under bonds not to supply pirates at that notorious trusting-place with supplies, and bring their booty to Manhattan; "but the Council, some of them being concerned in these ships," he writes, "unanimously opposed this method, as not prescribed by Law, and because it was never practised here before, so I was forced to discharge the said ships."

A horde of doubtful money-getters have found the Island of Manhattan congenial headquarters, because it has always been easy to win the protection of the guardians of the law. Commercial evasion and official venality go hand in hand. The power to annoy and oppress honest merchants has been a fruitful means of extorting political contributions; but is any citizen so simple as to believe that rich merchants and powerful corporations would go on, year after year, paying blackmail to a political organization unless it purchased immunity from legal obligations, and secured to them an advantage over their fellow-citizens?

"Strikes," indeed, are usually aimed at vulnerable spots in the commercial armor. The first notable "strike" at a shady calling, if it is permissible in Manhattan to speak disrespectfully of the slave-trade, occurred under Stuyvesant. From the early days of the colony, the West India Company had used negro slaves as laborers, several of whom were manumitted by Director Kieft in 1644. From time to time, Dutch skippers had slipped into port with human cargoes; but the scruples of the company against an authorized traffic did not give way until 1652, when the "Commonalty at Manhattan" were graciously permitted to send vessels to the African coast, on the plea of a necessity to provide agricultural laborers. On the strength of this subterfuge, slaves were imported and resold for an advance in price to neighboring colonies. A tax of \$6 a head went to the Dutch West India Company, of which Stuyvesant and his council received one fourth. In one purchase for himself, Stuyvesant let it be known that he was buying to obtain laborers for his private use, "and not for lucre"; but in 1664 he sold slaves at auction for the company's account, and was thankful for the proceeds as a resource in feeding the garrison. He acknowledged the safe

arrival of the slaver *Gideon* with a "God be praised!" and deplored with becoming gravity that her cargo of three hundred was "a very poor assortment."

But let us not lose sight of the first "strike." In 1655, when the ship *White Horse*, one of the first authorized slavers, was in port, Manhattan was in a stew over a threatened invasion of the English. A sum was raised by contribution to strengthen the city's defenses. Petrus Stuyvesant led off with \$60, Cornelis Van Tienhoven, the boss, followed with \$40, and fifteen others were as liberal as he; two hundred and fourteen gave sums ranging from \$2 to \$32—with three notable exceptions: these were "the skipper of the *Speckled Cow*, \$60"; the "skipper of the *New Amsterdam*, \$60"; and the "skipper of the *White Horse*, \$60." As well-known slavers dependent on the good will of the authorities, these skippers had been "seen," and had thought it prudent to "come in" to the extent of the director-general's "ante." Thus we see that transporters of human merchandise in floating hells helped to lay the foundations of a system which has adorned the Tammany Era with myriad acts of charity.

THE FIRST DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

ONE of the earliest of the appeals for negro slaves came from the English settlement at Gravesend, latterly known as John Y. McKane's principality, but then a little spot of earth made glorious by the courage of Captain John Underhill, who resided in the neighboring settlement of Flushing. In 1651—the year before slave-trading was authorized—the Gravesend Englishmen informed the Dutch company that they were "too much fatigued by work," and would be much obliged by an importation of "servant men," particularly of negroes, for whom they would pay "whatever price you will order." They made the special plea that in a new country new conditions excused departures from old-world morality. Give us slavery, they said, "for we are as a young tree or little sprout now, for the first time shooting forth to the world, which, if watered and nursed by your honors' liberality and attention, may hereafter grow up a blooming Republic." This prophecy of a "blooming Republic" at Gravesend was fully realized by John Y. McKane's recent Tammany-by-the-Sea.

It is worthy of note that two years after the Gravesend appeal for slaves, stout John Underhill issued the first Declaration of Independence on this continent, "in the name of as many of the Dutch and English as the matter concerns, which justly impels us to renounce the iniquitous government of Peter Stuyvesant over the inhabitants living and dwelling on Long Isl-

and." He began by denouncing Boss Tienhoven, in behalf of the neighboring Indians whom he had deceived, "as a rogue, a knave, and a liar"; then, article by article, he indicted Stuyvesant for confiscation, unjust taxes, violations of liberty of conscience, arbitrary imprisonment, conspiracy to murder the English settlers, monopoly, and cruelty, even to the beating of an old councilor with his cane. And worse still: "He hath imposed magistrates on freemen without election and voting. This great autocracy and tyranny is too grievous for any brave Englishman and good Christian any longer to tolerate." "The above grounds," he adds, "are sufficient for all honest hearts that seek the glory of God, and their own peace and prosperity, to throw off this tyrannical yoke." The doughty captain was so noisy in charging a conspiracy on the part of the Dutch with the Indians to murder the English settlers that Stuyvesant put him in jail, but soon released him without trial. Underhill was still unsatisfied when Stuyvesant's tyranny was supplanted by that of an English governor; for he was at heart no better than a modern Mugwump, and would have felt qualms if he could have seen, in the summer of 1893, Manhattan and Gravesend, welded together by three millions of population, under the autocratic, and almost automatic, "leadership" of Croker, McLaughlin, and McKane.

In their slave-trading the Dutch showed a reverential preference for Biblical names to designate their ships. Stuyvesant, as we have seen, received a cargo by the *Gideon*; the *Saint John* and the *King Solomon* plied from Manhattan; and the *Prophet Daniel* achieved distinction in municipal annals for the following reasons: In 1698 a sturdy youth of twenty sailed as supercargo of the slaver *Prophet Daniel*, which was seized by pirates or rival slavers on the African coast. On his return to Manhattan he thrived as a merchant, and in 1712 was elected alderman, serving in that capacity for twenty-two successive years. Subsequently he was mayor for five years, and also a member of the Colonial Assembly. Though in his day slave-catching, and privateering on the high seas, were in Manhattan regarded as privileged pursuits, as a public officer he was useful to the community, and far above the privateering ashore which has distinguished the crew of the Tammany craft *Smile of Charity*.

No people of the mental acuteness of the Manhattanese can enjoy the profits of slave-trading and piracy for two hundred years, and escape an inherited partiality for buying and selling political as well as commercial rights and privileges. From the days of Stuyvesant down to the threshold of the Tweed régime, wealth was brought to Manhattan by the slave-

trade, which ceased only when the civil war destroyed the great Southern market, the last slaver captured by the United States, in 1860, being the ship *Cora*, which was fitted out in New York.

No nationality of the colonial age surpassed the phlegmatic Dutch in surrounding the business with a spurious odor of "respectability." In the early days of Stuyvesant they ran their slaves mostly from the West African coast directly across to Brazil, which was a distributing point. There they were handled by jobbers, and even hypothecated, like paper securities. West Indians, as well as negroes, were sold in the Manhattan slave-market. White men as bond-servants were also to be had. These were of various nationalities: as for instance, in April, 1739, the ship *Charming Polly* offered several Palatine and Swiss servants "to be sold"; and the "Weekly Post Boy" for June 9, 1746, announced "To be sold. On board the ship *Jacob* . . . a parcel of young Men Servants, just imported." Slaves were hired out for day-labor at the public market established for that purpose at the foot of Wall street.

In 1740 the population of the city was about ten thousand, one fourth being West Indian and negro slaves, some of whom at that time started the custom of peddling "hot corn" on the streets, which to this day is an incident of the summer evening life of the metropolis. As late as 1788 the garbage of the city was removed by the negro servants, who, after night-fall, carried it in tubs upon their heads to the rivers, where it was dumped into the waters of the harbor, a ridiculous method which has been maintained until now, though indeed the dumping is done farther toward the sea, because Tammany has found profit in wasteful methods.

PERENNIAL PIRACY.

PIRACY was the twin sister of slave-trading from the early days of Manhattan, Captain Kidd himself being contemporaneous with the misfortunes of the *Prophet Daniel*. In fact his voyage in 1696 had for its original purpose the destruction of the pirates who were pouncing upon Manhattan slavers; and these latter often turned an ingenious penny by yielding like Kidd to the temptations of private war. Fifty years later there was as great a craze in Manhattan for privateering as in the last five years to become a member of the prize-crew of Tammany Hall. In September, 1744, it was "computed there will be before Winter 113 Sail of Privateers at Sea from the British American colonies; mostly stout vessels and well manned." The "Gazette" and the "Post Boy" abounded in such notices as this of October, 1743:

"To all Gentlemen Sailors and others, who have a mind to try their Fortunes on a cruising Voyage against the enemy; that the Brig *Hester* and Sloop *Polly* are now fitting out at New York in the best manner. . . . The Owners of said Vessels being to find every thing necessary for such an undertaking. The Brig is a fine new single Deck vessel of 150 Tons, to mount 32 Guns, and to be mann'd with 120 Men; the Sloop is also new, Burthen 100 Tons, to mount 26 Guns, and be manned with 80 Men; being both prime Sailors, and are to go in Company. Whoever inclines to go in either of said Vessels, may see the articles at the house of Mr. Benjamin Kierstede, Tavern-Keeper on the New Dock."

The address to "Gentlemen Sailors and others" was the usual ingenious formula; and the privateers frequently sailed "in Company" for self-protection. In one instance a woman tried to palm herself off as a male cutthroat on one of the companion privateers *Castor* and *Pollux*; but the "Gentlemen Sailors," on discovering her sex, ducked her three times from the yard-arm, and "made their negroes tarr her all over from head to foot."

That these Manhattan pirates were up to the requisite gentleman standard for the business may further be seen from an item of the date of September 23, 1745, which reads: "Wednesday last Captain Bevan of the *Clinton* privateer Sloop gave a very handsome Treat of a Hoghead of Punch and an Ox roasted whole to his Sloop's Company in the Fields, near Dominie's Hook, in consideration of their desisting, at his Desire, from plundering any of the Passengers, Officers or Sailors on board the Prize Ship lately brought in here by them."

This reads like a clam-bake given by a Tammany district leader to his heelers,—the leaders, like Captain Bevan, offering a treat as a means of expressing their gratitude at being allowed to control the plundering.

Another item of the same period refers to the capture of a Spanish sloop by the sloop *Polly*, mentioned above; and adds, "By what we can learn, the *Polly* has otherways made a pretty good cruize." One of the "otherways" is described in an item concerning the *Polly's* companion, the *Hester*. In April, 1747, word came from the West Indies that she "had lately met with a Danish vessel which had a Spanish merchant with 8000 pieces of 8 on board; Captain Troup thought proper to accept of the money, and paying the Dane his Freight, very civilly dismissed him." No silver-tongued Tammany orator could have described the transaction more neatly; and, curiously enough, the Spanish piece of 8 was the model on which the Dollar of Tammany politics was fashioned.

Between the years 1704 and 1815 there were about four hundred of these pseudo-pirates on record as hailing from Manhattan. Dutch, English, and Irish surnames figure as the skippers. Among the designations of pirate vessels such names as *St. Patrick* and the *Irish Hero* attract attention; but particularly shocking is the frankness of Captain Alexander Moore, who christened his privateer of six guns the *Irish Gimblet*.

A logical basis for the popularity of piracy under the name of privateering cannot be found without taking into account the profit derived by respectable merchants in disposing of the goods. They often owned the vessels which left port under the sanction of their good names, and brought home rich goods which were sold at low prices under the guarantee of their good names—the proceedings in between being known only to the "Gentlemen Sailors and others" who were interested in collecting the largest possible plunder in the shortest space of time. A grandson of one of the early Dutch aldermen, and progenitor of the orator at the laying of the corner-stone of the new Tammany Hall on July 4, 1867, advertised as follows in May, 1740: "To be sold for ready money by Gulian Verplanck, living in Wall Street, the following Prize goods just imported by Captain Samuel Bayard," etc. Bayard subsequently, for a time, commanded the *Hester* mentioned above. The Tammany "Prize goods," taken at elections usually more or less coercive, have been obtainable at the Tammany Exchange in Fourteenth street, and have consisted of about fifteen thousand offices and places under the city government, and a large assortment of contracts, refereeships, exemptions, immunities to publicans and sinners, receiverships, figurehead honors, complimentary appointments to public committees, and favors and indulgences of many kinds.

CONTINUOUS SURRENDER.

A VOLUME might be filled with an account of the political ills and venalities suffered by Manhattan under the Dutch, English, and Irish governors of the colonial period; but it will be sufficient for our purpose to note how the Dutch surrendered their nationality just as their modern mixed descendants have usually defaulted on their birthright. We have seen how the several elections of Twelve, Eight, and Nine Men under Kieft and Stuyvesant were the merest travesties of burgher representation in local affairs. And when in 1653, "to stop the mouth of all the world," the West India Company granted, by a sort of charter, a local magistracy, including a schout, two burgomasters, and five schepens, Stuyvesant either molded

them to his will by cane or by threats, or nullified their acts. In the first entry on the records of those magistrates there is a prayer which would serve well for a Tammany board of aldermen, for in part it reads: "We, thy wretched creatures, acknowledge that we are not worthy of this honor, and that we have neither strength nor sufficiency to discharge the trust committed to us."

England, the world's great claimant, had, as soon as the value of the territory was established, served notice on the Dutch that New Netherland belonged to her, first, because Cabot, a Venetian in English pay, had squinted at the whole American horizon from some point on the coast in 1497; and, secondly, because Hudson, in Dutch pay when he took possession in 1609, was by birth an Englishman. Notwithstanding the inconsistency of the double claim, she finally prevailed over the Dutch colonists as much by the tempting offer of English freedom as by her hearts of oak. In their squabbles with Stuyvesant the burghers had often reminded the home authorities of the privileges enjoyed by their New England and Virginia neighbors, as better suited to a republican community than the "thousand ways" in which the Dutch governors "sought to shear the sheep before the wool had grown." When, in 1654, Cromwell sent a fleet to New England, which was expected to descend upon New Amsterdam, Stuyvesant was unable to shut the mouths of some of the leading burghers, who openly counseled a pusillanimous surrender. The succeeding ten years of Stuyvesant were well calculated to convince them that it would be preferable to simmer gently in English tallow than to fry forever in their own fat. Lest Stuyvesant should take advantage of better means of resistance to be "more harsh and severe," they had refused money for improving the defenses. So when four English ships, and about five hundred men, in 1664 summoned Stuyvesant to surrender to the authority of the Duke of York, the mettlesome old governor tore up the letter of demand and sent a refusal; but his subjects declined to fire a gun, and Dutch "freemen" on Manhattan Island, who had never been more than lay figures, passed under the English yoke into the enjoyment of liberal institutions.

The key to Stuyvesant's conduct as governor lies in the fact that he regarded the colony more as the private property of the West India Company than as a public trust. When he assumed the duties of steward with military powers, he promised to govern the tenants on the estate "as a father governs his children," and he did. But they proved querulous and obstinate, and he was hot-tempered and indomitable. The wonder, perhaps, should be, that in such a medley of conflicting rights,

selfish interests, and lawless practices, he was able to maintain himself as well as he did. Two years after the surrender he settled down on his estate and led the life of a genial private citizen until his death, at eighty, in 1672, an inheritor of fame as the most virile and picturesque figure in the colonial history of Manhattan.

Governor Nicolls, the new master of the settlement which then became New York, and which comprised only 1500 people, granted a charter under which Thomas Willet was appointed mayor, and six Dutchmen aldermen and sheriff. A Dutch fleet seized the defenseless town in 1673, but by the treaty of 1674 Manhattan regained an English heritage under Governor Andros. In 1683 the Duke of York, who had become the Catholic king James II., sent Thomas Dongan, an Irish Roman Catholic, to govern the province and the city, which then numbered about 4000 inhabitants below the Wall street defenses. Dongan, during the next three years, recognized "The People," with a big P, in both assembly and city board, established the office of recorder, the city court, the court of sessions and of oyer and terminer, and the chancery or supreme court, and provided a board of assistant aldermen, which was a feature of the city government until 1870.

BLACKMAIL AT THE BASE OF THE GREAT CHARTER.

DONGAN'S charter, handsomely engrossed on parchment, is still preserved in the City Hall as the Magna Charta of Manhattan's liberty and venality. That amiable governor was so well aware of its value to the burghers that he "struck" the Common Council, who were nearly all Dutchmen, for \$1500 for himself and \$120 for his secretary. James Graham, the first recorder, and Collector Santen complained of this action and a few other irregularities, such as sharing the plunder of pirates.

When the home authorities asked for explanations, Dongan admitted that he had taken the money from the aldermen, but offered the excruciating defense that the matter was trifling since he had "granted nothing more than what they had from my predecessors." This precedent for buying and selling rights and privileges has been followed so persistently by the aldermen and their bosses, that latterly the chief qualification required of these officers has seemed to be the ability to ask one of two questions, or both: "What is it worth to you?" "What is it worth to us?"

It is easy to draw superficial and unfair conclusions from the race factors involved in such sorry episodes of municipal progress. Dongan did not exact the bribe because he was Irish

and a Catholic; nor have the Tammany masters exacted tribute for similar reasons: they happened merely to be of the same moral development. No race and no religion have a monopoly of human weakness or of moral strength. Nor would it be just to say that Dongan's aldermen paid blackmail because Dutch blood flowed in their veins; or that to the same blended and diluted strain was due the craven tribute paid for so many years to Tammany Hall. We are all proud of the Dutch blood that may have been vouchsafed us; and the more, the prouder. To the sturdy Dutch character New York owes much of her large capacity for prosperity and happiness; and to the Dutch perception of human rights, coupled with the Dutch genius for realizing human equality before the law, the world is greatly indebted for the new era of human freedom.

But let us confess that in the last fifty years Manhattan, with a commercially vigorous and prosperous native stock, has offered such a spectacle of civic cowardice as would be impossible in the chief city of any other civilized country. This is the Emporium of Freedom where men who think they are respectable have apologized for official crime; where professional men have been non-committal from fear of losing a moiety of their practice; where merchants under their breath have admitted that they would like to vindicate their manhood, but could not show their true colors without injuring their business; where corporations have trembled when the "Leader" stepped to the Tammany telephone, with wires stretching to every municipal office, to the legislature, and even to Congress, in fear that he would "ring the bell" on them.

Most memorable as a sign was the dinner given by a non-partizan club to Grand-Sachem-and-Mayor Gilroy ten days after he had elevated an assassin and minor malefactors to high honors and civic trusts. In response to the first

toast, the Mayor with sublime aplomb rebuked all citizens who had criticized his action, and a certain Mugwump club in particular, for being so deficient in civic pride as "to slander the city itself, and try to make it appear a byword in the mouths of people of other municipalities." Applause followed this plaintive shifting of the responsibility for the moral stench of the appointments, because the high-toned and respectable gentlemen present knew they had been summoned to praise their thralldom, and not to pray for deliverance. Managers of great corporations were there to grace the triumph; for only a corporation manager could know how much was at stake when a Tammany Grand-Sachem-and-Mayor winked friendship or looked displeasure. Surely it could not have been a labor of love for those representatives of the intellectual vigor, education, and wealth of the native stock, to rise at such a specter feast, and garland with soft rhetoric, and sweet ridicule of the mayor's critics, that matchless insult to civic honor. And standing in the shadow cast on "human nature" and "commerce" by the Senate investigation, how can any citizen of New York resent the poet's sneer that

Honor sinks where commerce long prevails?

Confession is good for the soul; and although "confession" is set down as the lowest and greatest sin in the Tammany decalogue of inverted morals, from the confessions before the Senate Committee the City of New York will derive a new and a nobler standard of civic duty and official honor. Commerce must bear the shame of the neglect of public honor in the past; but the Chamber of Commerce, by taking a leading part in the movement for a regenerated city, offers the surest guarantee that through commerce, the handmaid of learning and the arts, Manhattan will honorably fulfil her glorious destiny.

C. C. Buell.

