



# FAMOUS TREES

## XVI.—THE STUYVESANT PEAR TREE—NEW YORK.

UNTIL the late sixties a gnarled old pear tree stood on the corner of Twelfth street and Third avenue, New York, that was known to everyone roundabout as "Peter Stuyvesant's pear tree." The doctory old, one-legged Dutch governor of New Amsterdam is a bright light of an age that seems almost too remote to have such a living relic within the memory of today, but nevertheless, the old landmark could trace a clear descent thru two centuries to the little slip that Stuyvesant brought with him from the home country, when he cast his lines finally in the new world.

When New Amsterdam passed into the hands of the British, Stuyvesant, in spite of his heroism and loyalty, was called sharply to account by his superiors in the East India Company, for their own fault of indifference to this Dutch province in the new world. Stuyvesant stumped stormily aboard a boat for Holland, where the tangle in his affairs kept him for many months. Just how it all might have turned out for the old man it is hard to say, had not the treaty of Breda put an end to the trouble by simply putting an end to the Dutch power in New York.

Stuyvesant's visit to the old country was such an unpleasant one all around that his thoughts turned longingly to his "bouwerie," or farm, on the outskirts of the settlement on Manhattan Island, where he had indulged



Peter Stuyvesant's Pear Tree. New York City.

to his heart's content his love for flowers and trees. So, when the peace of Breda gave his superiors nothing more to scold about, Peter packed up all kinds of mementoes of his happy boyhood days in little old Holland, and set sail again for the new world, where he had determined to make his home so long as he lived.

Among the souvenirs of the mother country, there was a pear tree, which was the special pride of the broken old Dutch ex-governor. This he planted near his house, and watched over its growth with fatherly care. A winding path led from the yellow brick mansion to the pear tree, first worn by the old man, as he stumped back and forth every day watching the budding of the blossoms and the unfolding of each leaf.

Little by little the village at the end of the island pushed out toward the huddle of tavern, blacksmith shop and half a dozen other buildings that had grown up around the old governor's mansion. In the course of time the "bouwerie" was cut up into building lots, houses sprang up close together over every foot of the one-time farm, and the old Dutch name for "farm" was Englished into "Bowery" and given to the old postroad, a name which it bears even to this day. But thru all the changes the old pear tree was lovingly protected, and each year it bore its glory of rich pink blooms that later on weighed the boughs down as luscious fruit.

The fortunes of war wrought the ruin of the old mansion in the Revolution, but even when the growth of the city left the old tree with a rougher and poorer element as neighbors, it was still cherished and guarded from all harm, especially when it at length began to show the decline of old age. Some time, late in the sixties, about 1868, the no records at hand give the year, the historic old tree finally succumbed to the weakness of old age. Great was the regret at its loss, and many the lively scramble for a fragment to be cherished as a souvenir of long-gone days.

On the corner of a building at Twelfth street and Third avenue, The Holland Society of New York has

# THE WISHING BIRD

## A STORY OF PROCRASTINATION AND INDECISION.

"Robert! Have you done your home work yet?"

"No, mother; not yet."  
Every night this conversation took place between Robert and his mother, for Robert was one of those boys who never did anything that he could possibly put off.

The next day at school his teacher said to him:  
"Robert, you have two great faults, Indecision and Procrastination."

These were pretty big words, and the teacher saw by her pupil's expression that he did not quite understand them, so she said sharply: "Go and look up 'Indecision' and 'Procrastination' in the dictionary at once! At once!"

Slowly Robert did as he was told and found that the teacher's remarks were far from complimentary.

"It's the same old story," said he to himself. "Everybody tries to hurry me. It's 'Robert, do this at once,' and 'Robert, why don't you go immediately,' from morning till night. I wish people would let me alone. I can do things as well as any boy if they would only give me time and not be nagging me all day."

He was late with his sums that day. The teacher kept him after school and he knew that he would be late getting home. But, then, as he generally was late anyhow, he did not care much. He would rather be late any time than to hurry.

As he passed on his way home along a path leading thru a piece of woods, he came to a place where the way divided, one path going up over the hill and one down thru the meadow.

Both came out on the highway at equal distances from his home and, as usual, Robert hesitated which path to take.

"What's the hurry, anyhow?" said the boy to himself, and sat down on a rock.

It was afternoon in the late fall and warm for the season of the year. The last leaves were fluttering down from the trees and here and there a squirrel or a bluejay could be seen. So Robert just looked around languidly and loafed, thinking of nothing in particular.

By and by he saw a particularly big bluejay hopping across the carpet of fallen leaves and coming right toward him. This rather surprised Robert for, as a rule, bluejays are shy birds. When the bluejay had hopped close up to him, it put its head on one side and looked up at him with a funny expression in its little bead-like eyes.

Then, to the boy's utter astonishment, the creature spoke in a thin, reedy voice, saying, "Well, Robert, how goes it?"

At first Bob was too surprised to reply, and, to tell the truth, he was a little frightened, too, for one must admit that it is calculated to make anybody a trifle nervous to have a bluejay speak in man's language.

"Come, come, don't be all day!" said the bird, sharply. "Speak up."

"Well, I declare!" exclaimed Robert.  
"Oh, of course you do. But what do you declare? That's what I want to know. Come, time is flying!"

"You are just like everybody else," said Robert, "wanting me to hurry."

"Well, yes; but the point is, you see," replied the bluejay, "that you don't hurry. Now what do you think of me?"

"Well," said Robert slowly, "I think I never heard a bluejay talk before."

"Of course you didn't," said the bird, with a little toss of its head, "and you probably never will again; so you'd better make the most of this conversation."

"What sort of a bird are you, anyway?" asked Robert.

"Me?" said the bluejay. "Oh, I am the Wishing Bird."

"The Wishing Bird?" repeated the boy.

"Yes, the Wishing Bird!" said the bluejay somewhat testily, "and my patience is not the longest in the world either, so you had better look out," and the little creature assumed a threatening air that made Robert laugh.

"Don't laugh," said the bird, "it is bad enough to be afflicted with Procrastination and Indecision without adding Impoliteness to your faults."

The boy assured the Wishing Bird that he had not meant to be impolite and asked the bluejay how it got its funny name.

"Oh," replied the bird, "I was born this way. It was my duty to go around and give people a chance to wish. And, what's more to the purpose, what they wish for they get. Now I will give you just one wish. And remember this is your only chance. I never speak to a person but once during his lifetime. Now wish. Give it a name. Do not be bashful. No trouble to oblige."

There were many things Robert wanted and the more he thought the more undecided he became as to what he should name as his wish. He thought and he thought and took so long about it that the Wishing Bird finally became impatient. It hopped on one leg and then on the other, and finally said petulantly: "Oh, come now, don't be all night about it! Hurry up!"

"I wish you wouldn't hurry me," said Robert—right out before he thought.

"Ha, Ha!" screamed the bird. "You have got your wish."

And it flew away, squeaking out a horribly discordant laugh as it went.

As Robert walked rapidly homeward he was so grieved at the thought of what he had lost that the tears came to his eyes in spite of all he could do. The first thing he did when he reached the house was to look up the words "Indecision" and "Procrastination" in the dictionary and read over again their definitions.

From that day his parents and his teacher noticed a great improvement in Robert, who came to do things as promptly as any other boy and, tho he has never been able to find the Wishing Bird in any work on ornithology, he was convinced that he lost a great opportunity by his Indecision and Procrastination when the bluejay met him coming home from school.

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is due to the presence in the oyster of a worm of the tubes order, the development of which is traced thru the balistes order of fish. This pearl must be distinguished from those of the inferior order produced by the irritation of a foreign substance in the oyster.

### An Old Gallic Custom.

The city of Cork still observes the ancient custom of "throwing the dart." It is performed once in three years by the mayor, in accordance with the clause in the city charter, to show the mayor's jurisdiction over the harbor as admiral of the port. At the latest performance of this ceremony the mayor invited nearly five hundred guests, representing all classes and creeds, who were conveyed on two special steamers from the custom house quay right out to sea, till the limits of the jurisdiction were reached, at a line between Poor Head and Cork Head. Then the mayor, in his robes, after making a short speech, advanced to the prow of the vessel and cast into the sea the dart, which is made of mahogany, tipped and feathered with bronze. Both vessels then returned to the harbor, and the party landed on a small peninsula called Paddy's Point, where spacious tents were erected and an entertainment provided.

### Mechanical Hurry-Ups.

"Come, hurry!" said the second-hand of a clock to the minute hand. "You'll never get around in time if you don't. See how fast I'm going," continued the fussy little monitor as it fretted around on its pivot.

"Come, hurry up!" said the minute-hand to the hour hand, utterly oblivious of being addressed by the second-hand. "If you don't be quick, you'll never be in at the strike of one."

"Well, that's just what our young friend here has been saying to you."

At this point the clock pealed forth the hour, as the hour-hand continued:

"You see, we're on time, not one of us behind. You take my advice to do your own work in your own way, and let others alone."

erected a tablet marking the site of the old Stuyvesant tree, and bearing the words:

On this corner grew  
Petrus Stuyvesant's pear tree.

Recalled to Holland in 1664,  
On his return

He brought the pear tree  
And planted it

As his memorial.

"By which," said he, "my name  
may be remembered."

The pear tree flourished  
And bore fruit for over

Two hundred years.

This tablet is placed here by  
The Holland Society

Of New York.

September, 1890.

### Where Jewels Grow.

Professor Herdman recently lectured on the great fishing for pearls on the coast of Ceylon, which the government permits only at long intervals. Illustrated by beautiful slides, Professor Herdman first showed the young, free, swimming spat, its attachment to seaweed or other objects, its distribution when this decayed, and its settlement upon old shells. The mother of pearl of the pearl oyster is exquisitely glistening and iridescent, but has little commercial value. Townships spring up along the coast when a fishing is in progress, and at one of these as many as 26,000 natives will assemble. He had met a diver as old as 80 years, and found no signs that it is a pursuit generally injurious to those following it. The diver entered the water feet first with a stone of about forty pounds weight attached to one foot, and his basket to the other. He remained under water from one to two minutes, this latter time being exceptional, and, if lucky, he might gather as many as a hundred oysters. The true and natural pearl, said Professor Herdman,