

CHAPTER XXVIII

CONCLUSION

Let me pass briefly over the next six months. It is now midsummer and the city is at peace. Already the Red Band is a thing of the past and well-nigh forgotten. Jacques' return with a message to the invaders was effective. We heard no more of the French fleet. The men of the Red Band, bereft of their leader, were incapable of a stand and were, for the most part, allowed to go free. Sir Evelin Marmaduke slowly grew strong and resumed his position in the affairs of the city. And Annetje Dorn became willing to pass the Kissing Bridge arm in arm with my little friend Pierre.

For Miriam and me, however, there was much of sorrow. She had greatly misjudged me, and the recollection of it stung her to the heart. But I had still greater sins upon my soul. I had done much wrong, albeit I had intended to do right. Through craft and deceit I had driven the patroon to bay, and I took upon myself the blame for his last great crimes. My remorse was a heavy burden and I prayed through many a weary night to be forgiven. At last, after many resolutions and much perusal of my Bible, this, too, passed away, and I knew myself a better and a worthier man.