

Stockholm on the 2d of July, 1626, wherein all, both high and low, were invited to contribute something to the Company, according to their means. The work was completed in the Diet of the following year, 1627, when the estates of the realm gave their assent, and confirmed the measure. Those who took part in this Company were: His Majesty's mother, the Queen Dowager Christina, the Prince John Casimir, the Royal Council, the most distinguished of the nobility, the highest officers of the army, the bishops and other clergymen, together with the burgo-masters and aldermen of the cities, as well as a large number of the people generally. The time fixed for paying in the subscriptions was the 1st of May of the following year (1628). For the management and working of the plan there were appointed an admiral, vice-admiral, chapman, under-chapman, assistants, and commissaries; also a body of soldiers duly officered.

But when these arrangements were now in full progress, and duly provided for, the German war and the king's death occurred, which caused this important work to be laid aside. The Trading Company was dissolved, its subscriptions nullified, and the whole project seemed about to die with the king. But, just as it appeared to be at its end, it received new life. Another Hollander, by the name of PETER MENEWE, sometimes called MENUET,* made his appearance in Sweden. He had been in the service of Holland in America, where he became involved in difficulties with the officers of their West India Company, in consequence of which he was recalled home and dismissed from their service. But he was not discouraged by this, and went over to Sweden, where he renewed the representations which Usselinx had formerly made in regard to the excellence of the country and the advantages that Sweden might derive from it.

Queen Christina, who succeeded † her royal father in the government, was glad to have the project thus renewed. The royal chancellor, Count Axel Oxenstierna, understood well how to put it in operation. He took the West India Trading Company into his own hands, as its president, and encouraged other noblemen to take shares in it. King Charles I. of England had already, in the year 1634, upon representations made

*[An autograph letter found in the royal archives in Stockholm gives the name as commonly written in English, MINUIT.]

†[Christina succeeded her father, the great Gustaf Adolph, in 1632, when only six years of age, and the kingdom remained under a regency until she was eighteen, in 1644. Consequently, she was only eleven years of age in 1637, when the American colony was established.]