

Roeloff Swartwout, Cornelis Barentsen Sleight and other settlers to subordinate positions, the inhabitants of Wiltwijck became less apprehensive of any sudden attack of the place by the Indians. The energetic *schout*, however, was alert and mindful of their safety, and did not permit himself to ignore any evidences of danger observed by him in the conduct of the settlers and the savages. The surreptitious selling of intoxicating liquors to the natives by people of the village being a violation of the law, he could not refrain from writing to the provincial authorities regarding his fears of the direful consequences of the frequent infringements of their ordinances prohibiting such barter. In a communication, dated September 5, 1662, he called their attention to this evil, observing :

“ We could not omit informing your Honorable Worships that the situation here is such that if no precautions are taken we are in great danger of drawing upon us a new war. The cause will be the selling of liquor to the savages, which (God better it !) begins to increase notwithstanding that I, your Honors' servant, do my best by watching by day as well as by night, and sometimes with the assistance of the *commissaries* and the good-will of many citizens, who try to prevent it with all their power, but the experience of stricter inquiries has proved that we are nevertheless often imposed upon, we as well as the sergeant of the garrison. * * * * The greatest mischief which we have to expect therefrom is caused by the contraband-traders who try to swallow up this place and sell a pint of brandy for a *schepel* of wheat.”¹

His well-grounded apprehensions were startlingly realized nine months later. In a letter, addressed to Director-General Stuyvesant, on June 10, 1663, the sheriff and magistrates of Esopus appalled him with the intelligence that the savages had attacked the settlers, killed a number, and wounded and taken into captivity others, and had burned the new village and a part of the old.

“ On the 7th, an unexpected, sudden attack was made by them, and pitiable, lamentable murders and arson have been committed by them among us. They took a good time to attack, for the village was almost bared of men, for most of them were pursuing their necessary occupations in the fields.

“ The Indians have burned twelve dwelling-houses in one village, murdered eighteen persons, men, women, and children, and carried away as prisoners ten more persons. The new village has been burned to the ground, and its inhabitants are mostly taken prisoners or killed, only a few of them have come safely to this place, so that we find about sixty-five persons to be missing in

¹ New York colonial manuscripts : New Netherland Correspondence, vol. xiv., p. 67. Documents relating to the colonial history of the state of New York, vol. xiii., pp. 228, 229.