

is collected in the community either for the church or for the poor. If it is so, then it is our opinion, and we command that the disposal and the distribution of it shall only concern the consistory and remain until further orders in its hands."¹

The evident reprehensible character of the letter sent by the magistrates of Wiltwijck in answer to the communication of the director-general regarding the disagreement existing between them and the members of the church-consistory causes one to wonder why those officials were prompted to use the disrespectful and unwarranted language which it contained. Whatever influenced them to express themselves in the manner in which they did regarding the commands of the director-general and council, it is difficult to assign a satisfactory reason for their rash and intemperate strictures on the governmental policy of the provincial authorities. Regarding the contents of the letter received from them, the officers of the court of Wiltwijck, on December 23, 1663, wrote :

"Your Honorable Worships' letter was thankfully received by us on the 26th of November last past, and we accepted most of its contents with pleasure, but we are highly astonished that your Honorable Worships, as our supreme authority here in New Netherland, should have taken away the small privileges of this village and destroyed the authority of the *commissaries*, for we see by your Honorable Worships' order that the surplus resulting from estates left behind by this or that person shall be placed in the hands of the overseers of the poor that it may be better and more safely taken care of by them. The magistrates of this village are therefore much dissatisfied, unless your Honorable Worships had appointed orphan-masters for the place, or mistrusting us, had required security, as is done in court when guardians are appointed. If your Honorable Worships should think fit to persist in this first order, then we request that your Honorable Worships will transfer not only part but all the duties and rights of the *commissaries* to Dominie Hermanus Blom and his consistory, Albert Heymansen, for before or during our time no deacon has been elected who could either read or write, except the dominie alone, who sides with Albert Heymansen, who has shown himself more than once as an instigator of quarrels." ²

For his imprudence in being induced to subscribe his name to the discourteous communication, bearing the signatures of four other members of the Court of Wiltwijck, Roeloff Swartwout was summarily dispossessed of the office of *schout*. This action on the part of the authorities of New Netherland was made known to him in a letter dated at Fort Amsterdam, on December 19,

¹ Documents relating to the colonial history of the state of New York, vol. xiii., pp. 306, 307.

² *Ibid.*, p. 318.