fall in the value of pearls; that there would be a large importation of them within the next twenty days, when they were sure to become very cheap—so much so that a reduction in the price by about a half might be expected—and that consequently it was not desirable to purchase them now. He accordingly told his wife to return them, which she did.

The Governor then gave me the following information concerning the three ships of the Company captured by Commodore Barnet on their way hither from China, and sold by him to the Dutch. It was that the King of France had required of the Dutch Company the restoration of the vessels in question, that the latter had yielded to this demand, and that the ships with their cargoes had consequently again become the property of the French Company. I expressed my delight at this news, and requested him to communicate to me any information that he could concerning the Manilla* ship. He replied: “The royal standard of France does not fly at Manilla. The dominant flag there is that of a Muhammadan—a bigoted Muhammadan—and the point is not one on which the Company ought to move the King. Steps have been taken in other directions. But nobody knows the will of Heaven in the matter, and the predestined fortunes of us all.”

Thereupon I observed: “It will be of no avail if the undertaking results only in the recovery by the

* This refers apparently to the "vessel from Manilla" mentioned at pages 46 and 48.
as the sea and the river form their chief means of communication. Further, the Dutch Company is
 robbed by the very people who are in its service, and consequently the latter enrich themselves at the
cost of the Company, which becomes proportionately impoverished. The occupations of the Dutch are
solely confined to trade and commerce, and their State owns no territorial possessions. These causes
must conduce to the collapse before long of this Company also. About 200 towns belonging to the
Dutch were captured last year by the King of France, who, however, influenced by certain motives, after-
wards restored them. But having been disappointed in his expectations, he has again commenced military
operations resulting in a serious loss of life and property. If princes hurry themselves into any act
without due forethought, their undertakings must be attended by consequences affecting human lives and
fortunes."

I concurred with the sentiments which he had expressed, and related certain anecdotes by way of
illustration, the aptitude of which he admitted.