

One of the reasons why the Dutch East India company flourishes, and is become more rich and powerful than all the others, is its being absolute, and invested with a kind of sovereignty and dominion, more especially over the many ports, provinces, and colonies, it possesses in those parts. It appoints magistrates, admirals, generals, and governors; sends and receives embassies from kings and sovereign princes; makes peace and war at pleasure; and by its own authority administers justice to all; appoints tribunals to judge in their name, with plenary power and no appeal; punishes and remits offences; bestows rewards becoming the dignity of kings; settles colonies, builds fortifications, levies troops, maintains numerous armies and garrisons, fits out fleets, and coins money. And though there is acknowledged a dependance upon the States-general, it may be said they seldom exert their power; and while the republic preserves the right of sovereignty, it tacitly leaves the exercise and possession of it to the merchants of this company. These vast powers were, and are still, requisite to cherish and preserve this flourishing branch of trade: and the proprietors justly merited them; for by their own vigilance, care, and expence, they conquered, and preserve all the countries they possess in those parts of Asia, and their fortresses on the coast of Africa, for the refreshment, refitting, and protection of their ships.

The power of the Dutch by sea and land is very great in the East Indies; where, by force, address, and alliances, they raised themselves, and still support a great superiority, in spite of the English, Portuguese, and other Europeans, that have some trade there; but so inconsiderable, that, all together, is not equal to what the Hollanders singly enjoy. If the power of the Dutch, though great in Europe, does not put princes and states upon their guard, they must possess a kind of universal monarchy or dominion in the southern provinces, islands, and seas of  
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