

space; the residence, in short, of a quiet, home-living woman. . . . We went down to see the kitchen. The walls were as white as untouched snow; the saucepans reflected objects like mirrors; the mantelpiece was ornamented by a species of muslin curtain, like the canopy of a bed, without a trace of smoke; the fire-place beneath was covered with china tiles that looked as bright as if no fire had ever been lighted there; the shovel, tongs and poker, and the chains and hooks seemed of polished steel. A lady in a ball-dress might have gone into every hole and corner of that kitchen and come forth without a smirch on her whiteness."

Dutch women have a mania for cleanliness. In Broek, a village lying north of Amsterdam, it approaches a frenzy. It is said an inscription to the following effect was once to be seen at the entrance to the village: "Before and after sunrise, it is forbidden to smoke in the village of Broek, except with a cover to the pipe-bowl, so as not to scatter the ashes." This may be fiction, so also the story of a popular uprising against unfortunate strangers, who were wicked enough to scatter cherry-stones in the street. But the custom of leaving shoes and boots and wooden-pattens outside the house, on entering it, still obtains, and even leaves and pieces of paper are religiously removed from the streets. We may not, however, believe that the inhabitants go five hundred paces out of the village to dust their shoes, or employ boys to blow the dust out of the cracks of the pavements.

A not unwise custom is observed in *Utrecht*: the daily issue of a health bulletin in case of sickness in a home. This is placed upon the door, friends read it and pass on. Births are similarly announced. Deaths are made known by a class of men called *aansprekers*, whose peculiar dress is thus described: "They wear three-cornered hats, with a long black weeper, a black swallow-tailed coat, black small-clothes and stockings, black cloaks, pumps with ribbons, white cravats and gloves, and a black-edged paper always in their hands."

Royalty may be seen at the Hague—the political capital of Holland. Holland is a monarchy, where the king resembles a crowned president. Few of the trappings of monarchy appear. Though the Hague is the seat of the court, the king passes a great part of the summer at his castle at *Gueldres*, and visits *Amsterdam* yearly.

The necessary limits of the present article forbid a more lengthened review of notable points in the history and natural features of Holland. Much interest would gather around an imaginary visit to *Leyden*, "the antique Athens of the north,"