

throng of people consisted largely of peasants in their gala dress—the men in stiff high-collared coats with big horn buttons, and high-crowned hats; the women in stuff gowns and a white neckerchief, a lace cap and a broad gold band across the forehead with spiral horns projecting at either side, and large, clumsy-looking pendants in their ears. These must be of considerable value, but Dutch thrift secures to almost every peasant woman this singular and ugly head-gear.

The inn where I lodged was thronged with these holiday makers, evidently bent on having a good time. I was much amused, as I took my lunch, at a group at another table—composed, I surmised, of the parish priest and three or four of his male parishioners with their wives; and stout, florid, homely, hearty women they were. They ordered the waiters about, and talked all together with their mouths full, ate with their knives, and sat so far from the table that not a little of their food fell on the floor, and gnawed their bones in a voracious manner. The common conventions of table etiquette did not trouble them in the least. They seemed to be a simple-minded, honest, industrious people.

The town has little of architectural interest. The Groote Kerk, or Church of St. Lawrence, is a large, bare, ugly structure. The view of red roofs, flat pastures, windmills and canals, did not repay me for my weary climb up its lofty spire. A great dyke runs through the town, along which stretches the Hoog Straat, or High Street. The busiest spot in the city is the Boompjes, a handsome quay planted with trees, from which a hundred steamers and innumerable other vessels sail to many Dutch and foreign ports. The art gallery is rich in homely Dutch interiors and still life, painted with exquisite minuteness; but the prosaic subjects seemed to me not worth the skill or patience bestowed upon them. In the Groote Market is a fine statue of Erasmus, and on the small house, now a tavern, in which the great scholar was born, is the legend, "Hæc est parva domus, magnus qua natus Erasmus." Just opposite is the "House of the Thousand Terrors," where, during the Spanish massacre in 1572, hundreds of persons took refuge. Having barricaded the doors and windows they killed a kid and let the blood flow over the threshold. Seeing the gory stream the Spanish soldiers thought the work of butchery complete, and hastened to deeds of slaughter elsewhere. To-day the peaceful draper shop which occupies the site presents a strange contrast to the horrors of that dreadful day.