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A Week in Holland.

I FOUGHT with the Boers in the Boer War," said my Dutch friend, the Burgomaster of Baflo, one morning, as we speeded homeward from Rotterdam last July on the Holland-American steamship "Ryndam." "And we are all now the best of friends," was my commentary to the Captain, in speaking of the relations between Great Britain and the Dutch, both in South Africa and across the North Sea. It was interesting to find how quickly all traces of ill-feeling had been obliterated. We had just been spending a few days in Holland visiting some of the cities of this country so largely wrested from the sea, and were full of admiration for the intelligence, the industry, the thriftiness and the courtesy of the Dutch. We felt that, in the Boer war, Britain had had worthy foes who, when they laid down the sword, could be, as they became, equally worthy friends.

We made our headquarters at the Hotel Weimar in Rotterdam. We belonged to a Dominion remarkable for its great expanse of territory, its immense waterways and its extended railway systems, but here was a little kingdom, one-third less in size than Nova Scotia, and yet with great historic cities, and a population nearly equal to that of the whole of Canada. The distances were so short from point to point that each day, after breakfast, we were able to visit a different city and return from it to Rotterdam in time for a late dinner. It might be fair to assume that we spoke the language and thus avoided many delays and difficulties, but we had only English and German to our credit. These served us well on the regular tourist routes, but, away from these routes, our difficulties began. Imagine our wandering for an hour backwards and forwards trying to find the railway station of the quaint little town of Gorkum to which we had gone by steamer up the beautiful Maas; but so it was, and all because of our inability to understand the good people there. Well could we say of their replies—"It is all Dutch to us."

Imagine ten thousand square miles of the flat, rich Canadian prairies transplanted to the eastern side of the North Sea, opposite England, and close to what Germany covets for her own, and you have in your mind what a considerable share of Holland is like. Not a hillock is seen, but you miss the loneliness of the prairies and the great stretches of waving grain. Instead, are constantly seen the towns, the villages, the hamlets, the herds of black and white cattle, and the miles of small holdings sub-divided into rectangular lots of an acre or two in extent, each with its ditch surrounding it filled with water more or less to the brim. And such heavy crops! for here was one secret of Dutch wealth.