

Stadtholders become in an important sense the capital of Europe, if not of the world.

The heroic traditions of the illustrious House of Orange stir the pulses of every lover of liberty, especially of every member of the English-speaking race. A great staff of distinguished journalists have kept the civilized world in touch with that distinguished conference and its august deliberations. It will be



GOING TO CHURCH, IN NORTH HOLLAND.

appropriate, therefore, to record briefly, with suitable illustration, some of the aspects of that unique corner of Europe which *Hudibras* describes as—

A country that draws fifty feet of water;
A land that lies at anchor and is moored,
In which men do not live but go on board.

This amphibious country is well named Holland—the hollow land. Its character is indicated by its

heraldic cognizance—a swimming lion, with the motto, “*Luctor et Emergo*,” which may be freely rendered, “I struggle to keep above water.” Much of the country lies below the level of the sea. These fertile pastures have been reclaimed from the domain of the ocean by the daring industry of the Dutch, who have built great dikes, or embankments, to keep out the ravening sea, which, unlike the “ancient and unsubsidized allies of England”—an invulnerable defence—is an implacable enemy, perpetually besieging their earthen ramparts.

In spite of ceaseless vigilance against its assaults, the ocean sometimes bursts its barriers and turns fertile meadows and smiling valleys into a stormy sea—“*Verdrongen Land*,” as it is called—literally, “drowned land.” Over and over again the patriotic Dutch have opened the dikes and laid their country far and wide beneath the waves, as their sole defence against Spanish tyranny. In the terrible siege of Antwerp by the French in 1832, the dikes were cut, and the country for three years was flooded by the sea, and gun-boats cruised about the fields. The stratum of saline sand deposited almost prevented cultivation for many years.

The route from Antwerp to Rotterdam traverses a characteristically Dutch landscape—vast meadows, level as a floor and divided by trenches of water. Canals ramify everywhere, along whose silent highways stealthily glide the “*trekschuits*,” or “draw-boats,” often dragged by men, or even women, harnessed like horses. Along the horizon, wherever one looks, are rows of picturesque windmills, ceaselessly brandishing their mighty arms, as if to challenge any over-valiant Quixote to mortal combat. I have seen a dozen in a single view.