

berty, and of the Protestant Religion. Thus the Riches and Strength of the United Provinces may, in due time, be added to our common Stock, together with the Herring and Whale Fisheries, the Trade of the Spice-Islands, and all those other valuable Branches which they enjoy, and other Nations envy.

A very small Part of that immense Treasure expended already in Defence of the *Dutch as our Barrier on the Continent*, might, by another Turn of Policy, have produced all those desirable Ends. But if ever that Maxim was true, how can the *Dutch* be *our Barrier upon the Continent*, at this Time? Not by their Land-force; for, the whole Body of that People, computed at about two Millions, is but an Handful in Comparison of their Neighbours: not by their Situation between us and our most potent Rivals; for the Ports of *France* are much nearer to our Coasts. The *Dutch* therefore cannot be our Barrier in any other Sense, *than as a Maritime Power*; but how great their Declension has been in that respect, is obvious to all *Europe*. Whether that Declension be imputable to the bad Constitution of their Government, (founded upon Aristocracy and Democracy, which are absolutely incompatible in Nature) or to the Fraud and Treachery of their late Governors, or to *the Nature of their Harbours*, which are too shallow for large Ships of modern Built, are Points well worthy of the Inquiry of better Judgment than mine. But if the latter be the Case

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