

Our Farm Homes

The Best Way

This world is a difficult world, indeed.

And people are hard to suit,
And the man who plays on the violin,
Is a bore to the man with a flute.

And I myself have often thought
How very much happier 'twould be
If every one of the folks I know
Would only agree with me.

But since they will not, then the very best way

To make this world look bright,
Is never to mind what people say.

But to do what you think is right.
—Selected.

Harry's First Day in Holland

"We are not going to Muskoka this summer, Harry; we are going to Holland, instead. How do you think you will like that, my boy? So Mamma had said six weeks before, and Harry had cried 'Hurrah,' and had jumped for joy. Since that time the days had been full of eager preparation and excitement, followed by the ocean voyage, and rapid journeyings, until now they were in Amsterdam, where they expected to remain some time. And now, right after an early breakfast, while father was seeing about a carriage for their drive, Harry's mother called him away from the open window, from which he was dropping bread crumbs down for the ducks paddling contentedly in the canal beneath.

He came to her at once and leaned upon her lap in his accustomed way, while she smoothed his short silky curls, and said, 'Harry dear, you do not yet know why we have come so far away from home this summer, and have been travelling almost without stopping night or day?'

Harry looked a little bit puzzled for a moment. Then he said merrily, 'So that I have to learn geography, may be. You know last winter, one day I said I thought Holland was the capital of Belgium, but I know better now.'

His mother smiled. 'No, that is not the reason, though I have no doubt you will learn many things besides geography over here this summer. But do you remember ever hearing of your Aunt Edith, Papa's younger sister?'

Harry looked puzzled again, and his mother went on, 'Many years ago your Aunt Edith married a man that none of her family liked. She went away with him, and we have never seen her since, but about two months ago, your father heard that her husband was dead, and that she was living in Amsterdam and was sick and also very poor. Now do you know why we have travelled so far, and so fast?'

'To find Aunt Edith,' cried Harry joyously. 'Oh, Mamma, I hope we will find her to-day.'

'And Harry, your Aunt Edith has a son,' Mamma went on, 'a little boy of about your age.'

'Oh, burrah,' cried Harry, 'three cheers for my Dutch cousin. [?] give him my new knife, and half of my marbles and I hope he'll like me.'

Mr. Harland, entering the room at this moment, smiled at Harry's enthusiasm, though he seemed a little anxious and preoccupied. Soon the

porter came to tell them that the carriage was ready, and they started out without delay. It was a wonderful drive to Harry, through long, pleasant streets with wide canals through the center of them, spanned here and there with pretty bridges, and with

the toll man lowered to them as they passed. Fat little Dutch children were playing out on the clean brick walks before their doorways every where and Harry quickly discovered that the chubby girls could whip their tops with a skill quite equal to the boys.

But soon they were out of the city and driving rapidly along a road by the side of a quiet canal. A huge windmill rose before them in the distance, and when the carriage finally stopped before a small brick house, the mill was close at hand, and its great arms had begun to turn slowly in the wind.

'We will leave you out here for a few minutes, Harry. You can investigate the windmill, if you want to, while we are gone,' Mr. Harland said. Then he and Mamma went into the little house.

Harry ran on to the mill and walked around it. He was surprised to find it so much larger than he had thought. Then he put his curly head in at the open door. There was a great, fat, dusty miller inside, and he greeted his little visitor good naturedly, but Harry could not understand his guttural greeting. The miller smiled, however, and beckoned to him, so Harry, smiling in return, went in. The miller was evidently fond of children and he showed Harry how the grain was ground by the great stones, turned by the power of the heavy arms, which the wind was tossing round and round more rapidly now, outside.



WHERE CONRAD LOST HIS HAT

arching trees on either side that almost met overhead. There were many large boats in the canals and barges laden with grain and all sorts of merchandise were being slowly dragged along by thick set men, sometimes even by sturdy women, with heavy wooden shoes upon their feet, while the men at the helm smoked lazily as they steered.

In one place Harry was fairly wild with delight. A drawbridge was being lifted for a little steam tug, full of tourists, to pass through, and the captain dropped the toll into a little wooden shoe tied to fish line, which

Harry was delighted with everything he saw, and he climbed the steep ladder-stairways as if he had been used to such things all his life. The sixth ladder brought him out upon a gallery at the very top of the mill, where the big canvas sails are adjusted and set.

Looking down from there he saw his mother and father just coming out. He was a little boy looking all about for him. Then Harry flung his arms around like the arms of the mill and cried out lustily, 'Mamma, Papa look up. I am way up here.' His parents seemed surprised to see

their little son so high above them, but Harry waved again to reassure them and then climbed down the six steep ladders with all his speed, just in time to meet them as they reached the doorway. They thanked the miller cordially for his kindness to their boy and if he did not understand their foreign words he certainly understood the meaning of the silver coin which Mr. Harland put into his hand at parting.

Harry was about as dusty as the miller now, but they soon had brushed him clean; and then, as they re-entered the carriage, he noticed that his mother and father both looked very grave, and sad.

'But where is Aunt Edith, Mamma,' he asked, 'and my little Dutch cousin?'

'We do not know, Harry,' she answered sadly. 'They used to live out here, but they have gone away; we cannot find out where. So it may be a long time now before we can find them.' When they reached the hotel again, Mr. Harland went out to make more inquiries, and in the afternoon he and his wife went out together.

'I'm sorry, Harry, but we must leave you here, alone this afternoon,' his father said. 'We have so many places to go to, that it would only tire you out, while it would hinder us to have you with us.'

'Can I go out?' Just up and down in front of the hotel, where I can see the boats in the canal? It is such fun, and I'll take care and be a real good boy.' His father consented, cautioning him not to go far away for fear of getting lost; and then they left him.

Now Harry did not mean to get lost, but after he had followed the canal just a little way to see what was in the barge guarded so carefully by the little yellow dog that barked so vigorously at every passer-by, and then had gone a very little further to look at something else, he somehow took the wrong turning and got where he would after that, he could not find the hotel, anywhere.

'Now I am lost,' he said, at last. 'And I can't speak one word of Dutch, so I don't know what to do. Dear me, what will Mamma and Papa say?'

He tried to think what all the little boys he had ever heard of had done when they were lost, but he could not remember one who had been lost in Holland. He stopped several people and repeated the name of the hotel to them, as plainly as he could. But it was no use, for he could not understand a word they said to him in reply, while it is doubtful whether they had even caught his meaning.

'I'll just have to keep on walking,' he said at length, and by and by he may get back to the hotel again.'

But Amsterdam is a large place and the way he had taken led him in the wrong direction. He grew more and more confused as he reached the more crowded portion of the city and became involved in the network of canals. He had found a long way and it gave him a sense of security to carry it, for stout-hearted though he was, he had begun to grow a little frightened.

At last he saw a little boy running towards him down the street, carrying his hat, which a gust of wind was carrying away. Harry ran and tried to stop it, too, but before either of the boys could reach it, it had blown off into the canal and was floating quietly away.

Down on his knees went Harry and with his stick he could just reach the hat which he tried to coax in nearer to the edge of the canal. It was a breathless moment, and its little bare-headed owner stood over him watching eagerly. Would not the hat suddenly fall with water and go down, or