

An Honest Nation.

Why is it that the mention of a Hollander is so apt to raise indignant images in the mind? ...

Yet there is another side to the Dutch character, much more worthy of our attention than the mirth-provoking side.

Our Minister at The Hague not long ago transmitted to the Department of State a report on the social and political condition of the Dutch, in which he

states that the Dutch are not only diligent in their methods of doing business which reflect the highest credit upon the national character.

For instance, he says there has not been a bank failure in Holland during the last forty years. This no doubt is a dull, humdrum way of managing public trusts, but nevertheless it has its advantages—especially to those whose money is being managed.

Again, in fire insurance there is no favoritism, and although the rate of insurance does not average more than one-half of one per cent, there does not appear to be any occasion for failure, since the companies do a thriving business, and realize from twelve to sixteen per cent. per annum.

There are people on this side of the Atlantic who would be glad if the managers of insurance and other abstract companies were could be inoculated with something of the spirit which enables these honest Dutchmen to return such satisfactory results.

As it is, they will in many cases be fortunate if they even get back their own grain. Railroads, too, are conducted in Holland on economic principles which might appear comical to a "great railway king" or a daring speculator in other people's fortunes.

These homely virtues have little of the flavor of "smartness" about them—that smartness which has come to be regarded in many minds as a full equivalent for every moral quality, and a condensation of every crime in commercial and official life.

But, after all, such virtues yield the best results in the end, whether practiced by individuals or by nations. The worst evil of the "hard times" of to-day are the proper outcome of public and private contempt of them; nor may good times be expected to return until their binding obligation upon all is again clearly recognized.

And now, to find out who has done the dreadful deed of the devil-man is summoned. As soon as his approach is heralded, the women flee for their lives to cover. The satanic representative begins his howling, goes through his incantations, and at length fixes the dread odium on some doctored fellow.

If he denies the crime and protests his innocence, almost the only way in which he can clear himself is by passing through the poisonous ordeal. The devil-doctor prepares the calabash or gourd of sassa-wood decoction, whose poisonous intensity will be graduated according to the intensity of the doctor's feelings.

All things being equal, the accused and the accuser, and pretty much the whole town, repair to some cleared spot of the neighborhood. At the center of the ring the victim confesses his general sins, but protests his innocence in this particular matter; and having invoked the demons to destroy him if he is guilty, to deliver him if he is innocent, takes the bowl and drinks the draught.

A short time of intense interest now ensues. Every eye is fixed on the accused. If he becomes only sick, and throws off the contents but does not fall prostrate, then his innocence is established. His friends burst forth around him and bear him off in triumph; while he who was to the devil-man that accused the unfortunate; for he must now pay a heavy fine to the intended victim, or pass through the ordeal himself.

Let us never be afraid of changing our opinions, nor our knowledge. There is a form of pride which hunts the more powerful—the unwillingness to note one's declared opinions; but it is not found in great childlike geniuses.

Learn Your Business.

A young man in a leather store used to feel very impatient with his employer for keeping him, year after year, for three years, handling hides. ...

The letter you know your business the better your chances to rise. If you dream through your allotted tasks without keeping a wide awake look-out on all that goes on about you, your progress will be needlessly slow.

A fine little lad, some twelve years old, was employed in a telegraph office in Southwestern town last year when the yellow fever raged so fearfully in that section.

Ex-Governor Morgan was once a clerk in a store in Waterford. A trip to New York was an event in those days, but the young man had proved so faithful that he was intrusted with several commissions, among them being one to buy corn.

He came back in due time in the old stage coach, and inquiries were made about the corn. The price was very satisfactory, but the old gentleman was afraid it would not be good at so low a price.

The profits were clear, and his employer said the next morning: "We will let some one else do the sweeping," and Edwin was made a partner under twenty-one.

Peter Lamb was convinced some time ago that he could invent a good-looking high hat, the crown of which would shut together with a spring, so that when the owner went to church or to concert, he could wash it flat and sit on it, and then straighten it out as good as ever when he wanted to go home.

Another Story of the Hyacinth. There is another legend of the origin of the hyacinth than that of the ill-fated poet. I will tell that story also, and you can take your choice.

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What Men Love.

No two men are affected in the same way by the same face; because it depends on themselves to seize the full suggestiveness of the face—to catch the stray lights of the features—unconsciously unspeakable sympathies out of the raw material of features.

Men love long eyelashes, because they seem to hide a secret. Men love those eyes which are transparent and yet deep, because there lies in them something of the unknown and undiscoverable, and so men love faces that tell stories, and are coy, confiding, tantalizing, with vague and grand emotional possibilities hidden somewhere about the expression.

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Overtaking the Energies.

It is not advisable for any of us to overtake our energies, corporal or mental, but in the eager pursuit of wealth or fame or knowledge, how many transgress this salutary rule.

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