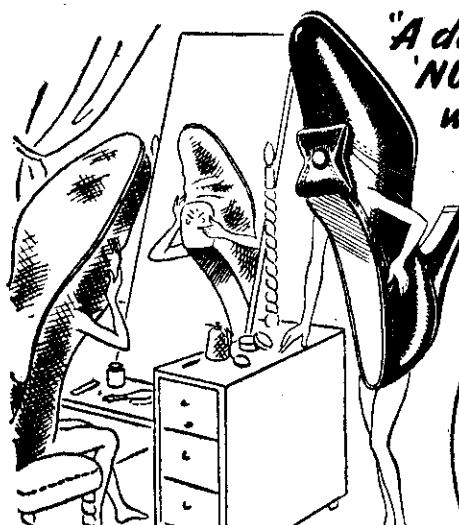


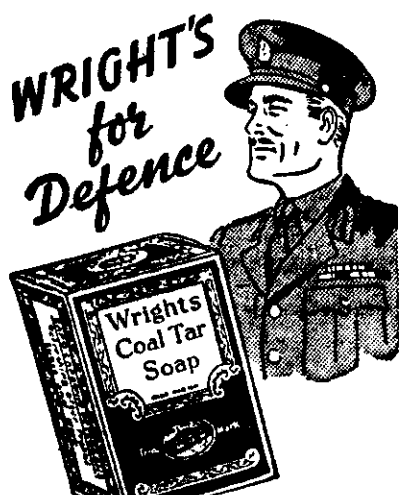
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## HOLLAND

(continued from previous page)

very ugly. The beautiful effects the Dutch achieve are largely through age and chance.

BESIDE the suburban station here is an exquisite Dutch picture: a bright green meadow dotted with buttercups and daisies, in which black and white cattle are feeding; in the background a farmhouse almost hidden by feathery trees; and behind that the dunes meeting the sky. There is a look about the dunes and the blue sky that makes you smell the sea beyond.

YESTERDAY I went to Marken, the island in the Zuyder Zee. I fraternised with a little Parisian, and we explored together. We were met on landing by a young married girl, who took us to her mother's, where we dressed in Marken costumes, and photographed each other. Then, still in costume, we walked through the village to her home, where she tried to persuade us to buy old (?) Delft and copper at an exorbitant price. We returned to the mother's and had tea, boiled eggs, and bread and butter — a special sweet bread, made only on Sundays. The life of the island was repulsive to me. Their costumes, though quaint, are crude in colour. The little rooms they so proudly show to tourists are grossly vulgar — the walls stuffed with plates and cheap pictures and tawdry little productions of their needles. I came away with a feeling of nausea, and knew the luxury of high civilisation as I washed from my basin where the water almost refused to ooze away.

Afterwards, Mlle. and I compared notes about the Dutch. We agreed that they are economical in food, and in water for washing. I couldn't help smiling to myself: the French call the Dutch economical; the English call the French economical; and the Colonials call the English economical!

VISITED Rotterdam yesterday afternoon. For once, reality was grander than forethought. I have always heard Rotterdam spoken of disparagingly as a place to visit. I imagined a puny port — not this great busy monster. Boats everywhere — on the busy Maas; and on the canals that are choked with them, great flat barges on which children and dogs play, and washing dries in the sun. You can find sharp contrasts in Rotterdam: leaving the busy traffic, you suddenly find yourself by the side of a great meadow, where sheep are feeding, and you look on Rotterdam from the outside; or you can peer behind the imposing new Town Hall and find slums there — tall old picturesque houses and old canals. I found the Groote Kerk in this old part. The young policeman whom I asked to direct me to it did not at first understand me, owing to my total lack of guttural. I had to produce a postcard and show him the spire. Then he blushed crimson at his lack of perception in the first place.

Coming home in the train, I saw a most glorious sunset: the sky was like a mighty fan — all the long clouds converging to the golden centre. The earth was a mighty plain of mirrors to hold the gold, and the quiet cattle, and the quiet willows. In that bright glare, everything was diminished: the windmills were pairs of rabbits with sharp, pointed ears, and the cattle were the stiff little figures from a Noah's Ark.

—E.M.