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Despite Holland's rich history as a major maritime power, by the time this work first appeared in 1876 the Dutch had long abandoned their exploration of the Arctic Circle. In this detailed study, noting the achievements of Dutch navigators, Samuel Richard van Campen (c.1833–c.1893) makes the case for new expeditions into the north, not only to investigate the possibility of Arctic passages to America and Asia, but also to pursue scientific research. The author delineates potential routes and difficulties, discusses ocean conditions, and examines both historical and contemporary expeditions for flaws and successes. The book also includes as an appendix a chronological table of Arctic expeditions ranging from ninth-century Viking endeavours to Allen Young's 1876 voyage. Reissued here is the second edition of 1877, which does not differ textually from the first. Despite the author's intention to continue the work, a second volume never appeared.

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THE
DUTCH IN THE ARCTIC SEAS.

BY
SAMUEL RICHARD VAN CAMPEN,
CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE DUTCH GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY,
AUTHOR OF "HOLLAND'S SILVER FEAST," ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

With Illustrations, Maps, & Appendix.

VOL. I.

A DUTCH ARCTIC EXPEDITION AND ROUTE.



SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:
TRÜBNER & CO., LUDGATE HILL
1877.

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A
DUTCH ARCTIC EXPEDITION
AND ROUTE:

BEING

A SURVEY OF THE NORTH POLAR QUESTION,

INCLUDING

*EXTENDED CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE RENEWAL
OF DUTCH ARCTIC RESEARCH.*

BY

SAMUEL RICHARD VAN CAMPEN,
CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE DUTCH GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY,
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TO THE
HONOURABLE BENJAMIN MORAN, F.R.G.S.,
UNITED STATES MINISTER AT LISBON,
IN RECOGNITION OF HIS PERSONAL KINDNESS,
HIS LONG AND VALUABLE PUBLIC SERVICES,
AND
HIS DEVOTION TO LITERATURE,
This Work
IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED
BY
THE AUTHOR.

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“'t Erkentlijk Vaderland, door liefde en vreugd gedreven,
Neemt weer zijn kindren op, die uit den dood herleven ;
Vergeldt hen, juicht hen toe, strooit lauwren voor hen heen,
En rekest d' uitslag niet, maar telt het doel alleen.”

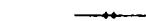
TOLENS.

“ . . . La Patrie, avec reconnaissance,
Prépare de ses fils la noble récompense,
Leur offre des lauriers, et, de leurs grands projets
Considère le but et non pas le succès ! ”

CLAVAREAU.

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PREFACE.



IN introducing the following work to the reader, some explanation is perhaps advisable respecting its origin; especially as in it (particularly in Volume I.) is involved, in a measure, the history of a public cause, or at least what the writer has wished might become such. Should the relation, however, embrace too much of the *ego*, I trust the reader will be indulgent, since these Dutch labours, albeit labours of love towards a venerated ancestral nation, are certainly not undertaken without some personal sacrifice and self-denial.

Volume I. is the greatly amplified result of the first of two short articles—the second applying similarly to Volume II.—which appeared in the “Transatlantic” magazine of July and August last, under the general heading which forms the title of the present work, and were inspired by the revival of the spirit of Arctic research in

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England, and the desire I felt to see a similar spirit awakened after so long a repose in Holland.

It was speedily found that to investigate the field of Dutch Northern enterprise alone at all thoroughly would involve no small amount of research. But I had proposed to myself a much wider field than this in view of the advocacy also of a modern Dutch expedition. This fact seemed to necessitate a glance at the whole North Pole question, and consequently involved the gleaning of data from the vast mass of literature existing upon this subject generally, the extent and formidability of which, for the thorough investigator, may be said to be only comparable to that which, in another way, the Arctic navigator is but too certain to encounter in the vast and formidable ice-fields of the Polar regions; for the far Northern voyages, however fruitless of results in other respects, considered as to their definitive aims, have rarely failed to add something to the accumulating mass of literature on this subject.

These remarks, however, apply more particularly to my researches since this book was resolved upon; and my later investigations have caused me to modify my views somewhat in one or two respects. If I ever entertained any other than serious views

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of the kind of enterprise which calls men from comfortable homes and genial climes to frozen and inhospitable latitudes, I now regard Arctic exploration more as work and less as play than I did even when the gaily-decked “Alert” and “Discovery” left the shores of England with a nation’s benedictions.

Of the original brief papers more notice was taken, particularly in Holland, than I could have hoped for; and I have to acknowledge here very encouraging letters from several of the *savans*, and even statesmen of the Netherlands, whose congratulations upon my having taken up this subject were highly to be prized. I may even mention the very cordial recognition of my too trifling services thus far by Mr. N. W. Posthumus, the Secretary of the Dutch Geographical Society, whose own zealous efforts for a renewal of Arctic enterprise on the part of his countrymen have been highly appreciated, and whose natural interest in this subject caused him, perhaps, the more readily to welcome a “*medestrijder*” from without. Nor should I omit mention of encouraging words received from Lieutenant Koolemans Beynen, of the Dutch Royal Navy, speaking for himself and Commodore Jansen; which were the more welcome since the former officer personifies, if one may so say, the principle of modern

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Dutch Arctic enterprise, having himself accompanied Captain Allen Young on his "Pandora" cruise last year to Peel Strait, and is now contemplating a repetition of the voyage with the gallant Captain in the present season.

To the editor of "Het Vaderland" at the Hague I am especially indebted. Prior recognitions of humble labours on my part of a more strictly patriotic character relating to Holland having come to my knowledge, I ventured to send to that paper the magazine containing the article advocating a Dutch expedition; also a copy of the "European Review" (of July 24, 1875) containing an article on the same subject, invited by its editor (Mr. Blanchard Jerrold), who had considered the subject as one which might fairly be regarded as of public interest. Both these articles were favourably noticed by "Het Vaderland," which quoted from the latter anonymous article the concluding and most considerable paragraph, in which I had gladly recognised the fact "that enterprise"—albeit not of the kind I was then urging upon their attention—"was not dead among the Netherlanders, nor, indeed, the spirit of discovery;" and also the following loyal expressions, which I venture to say were penned and quoted with equal pleasure:—

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“Whatever pertains to the arts and sciences in their higher as well as in their common forms and applications, is sure of finding a ready recognition on the part of the royal family of Holland. London, so recently favoured with the presence of the Queen of the Netherlands, needs not to be acquainted with the fact of her Majesty’s peculiar interest in matters of high public concern, nor have we reason to believe that the resumption of Dutch Arctic exploration would be at all unwelcome to her. It is not unknown in geographical circles, moreover, that Prince Henry of the Netherlands, the patron and honorary president of the Dutch Geographical Society, takes a lively interest in questions germane to this which we would now urge upon the consideration of Hollanders. And what more fitting enterprise than an efficiently organised and well-equipped Government Arctic expedition could there be, to crown the pyramid of giant undertakings which have characterised the rule of the restored dynasty, and particularly the twenty-six years’ reign of King William III.?”

These acknowledgments on the part of one of the leading papers of the Netherlands I could not fail to appreciate highly, and I embodied my thanks in a letter to the editor, which he was good enough to publish, supplying it with the exceptional Dutch feature of a heading indicating its subject; and perhaps a translation of the principal paragraphs of the letter may be appropriately quoted here as a part of the “history.”

“It was to me an agreeable task to pen those pages [the magazine article], hoping as I did that they might serve to incite the Dutch nation to take its place once more in the field of Arctic enterprise. I was, moreover, strengthened in this labour by the certainty I felt that the wish, at least, could not but be shared by some of the patriotic and enlightened citizens of the Netherlands.

“In the course of my somewhat extended Dutch researches in the British Museum, the part early enacted by the Netherlanders as, next to the English, the greatest maritime people, could not escape

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my notice; and the organisation of an English Arctic expedition drew my attention to the service Holland has performed in the special province of Arctic research. Unfortunately, however, the memorable deeds of the Dutch are in this respect wholly confined to the proud era of the old Republic—to the days of Maurice and of Frederick Henry. At a time, therefore, when neighbouring states—including some but now for the first time seeking recognition among naval powers, and, strictly speaking, interior states—are rallying their forces for an onslaught upon the vast *terra incognita* of the North, thoughtful and proud-spirited Netherlanders cannot but ask themselves whether they are not neglecting their duty, so long as the fatherland of Barents and Heemskerk remains behind. In those days of grand adventure, wherein Holland boasted a score of peerless navigators, and dotted the habitable globe with her colonies, the more distinctive aims of the seafaring nations were to add territory to their primal limits, and bring wealth to the coffers of the State.

“Now, at least, as applying to Arctic Discovery, this grain of selfishness is no longer apparent. It is at the call of *science*, of advancing *civilisation*, that England has sent forth her promising expedition *via* Smith’s Sound. For England’s old rival on the seas, the track of Barents remains invitingly open. Lag behind or fail to avail herself of this she must not. And ‘a spirit’—to conclude with words elsewhere employed—‘whose high courage, unyielding as the ice he encountered, was in the appreciation and pursuit of duty equal to adamant itself, such as that which William Barents reveals in his work for the admiration of all the ages, beckons with resistless power to the Netherlanders of to-day to take up once more the path of honourable distinction, and renew in the records of the world’s progress the glorious deeds of the fathers.’”

My thanks are also due to Colonel D. D. Muter (to whom, in earlier numbers of the “*Transatlantic*,” the author is indebted for the first encouragement to his pen) for enabling these Netherland notices to do double duty, by giving them in his weekly journal, and for editorially encouraging

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the enterprise. Nor are my obligations less great to the editor of the "Geographical Magazine" for a generous recognition of my earlier labours for the revival of Dutch Arctic research. In the autumn of last year, at the friendly suggestion of Mr. Nicholas Trübner, I sent through the latter one of the original papers to which I have alluded to the editor, Mr. Clements Markham, offering the articles to his magazine; quite conscious myself, however, of their being in everything but their subject unsuited to its pages. The papers were courteously declined; but the editor added to the refusal a suggestion most acceptable to me—viz., "I should, however, be very glad to insert a letter from you, urging the propriety of the despatch of a Dutch Arctic expedition, and a renewal of the enterprises of Holland in a field where she formerly won such renown."

The letter was accordingly written, and found a place in the January number of the "Geographical Magazine." I venture to reproduce it here.

THE REVIVAL OF DUTCH ARCTIC EXPLORATION.

To the Editor of the "Geographical Magazine."

"SIR,—The interest with which you view whatever relates to geographical research may warrant me in addressing you for the purpose of urging the propriety of the despatch of a Dutch Arctic Expedition, and a renewal of the enterprises of Holland in a field where she formerly won such renown. This subject is one in which

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I have taken particular interest ; and late recognitions of its importance encourage the belief that an appeal through your pages may prove of great weight. Perhaps, too, one may, as a citizen of what was once known as New Netherland, speak with not less hope of being heard, next, at least, after one of their own nationality ; and certain I am that the country which boasts its Kane, its Hayes, and its Hall among explorers of the American Polar regions, and as the real pioneers of the promising route chosen for the present English Expedition, would rejoice not less than England to see the countrymen of Linschoten, of Heemskerck, and of Barents awaking to renewed zeal in this field, and emulating their old adventurous spirit and activity.

“There is no doubt that the Dutch possess to a remarkable degree the qualifications essential to the successful prosecution of Arctic investigation. Habituated from the infancy of their nation to battling with the waves, their many discovery enterprises, and their widespread colonisation of the globe, has accustomed them to distant voyages, and upon almost every sea ; and if for upwards of two centuries they have surrendered to other countries all practical scientific efforts in the far Northern waters, they have, to reinspire them to Arctic enterprise, a heritage of brilliant deeds in past times. Though limited to a short period, the literature of the Dutch descriptive of their Northern voyages is perhaps the richest of any nation’s in truly romantic and thrilling story. What country, indeed, has not adopted into its language Gerrit de Veer’s faithful narrative of the three voyages of Barents ? And what Hollander is not stirred to the very soul by the grand poem of Tollens, portraying, in graphic verse, the scenes of the memorable third voyage, and the wintering in Novaya Zemlya ? Thus, in both their prose and poetic literature have the Dutch immortalised their Arctic heroes. The fame, moreover, of that early authority in magnetic and cosmographic lore, the indomitable Plancius, who spurred his countrymen on to the renewal of efforts officially stayed by the States-General, will endure so long as the literature of the Netherlands shall remain to furnish for it a fitting shrine. But now another Plancius is needed to incite the slumbering ardour of the Dutch to new enterprise—another Barents to follow up and complete the researches of the first. The enthusiasm of the race that gave to the world such men sleeps for the moment, awaiting, it may be, the distinct and persuasive utterance of tongue and pen, gifted with true eloquence, to call it