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History.] Flanders, originally the country of the ancient Belgæ, was conquered by Julius Cæsar, forty-seven years before Christ; passed into the hands of France A. D. 412; and was governed by its Earls, subject to that crown, from 864 to 1369. By marriage it then came into the house of Austria; but was yielded to Spain in 1556. Shook off the Spanish yoke 1572, and in the year 1725, by the treaty of Vienna, was annexed to the German empire.

HOLLAND, OR THE UNITED
PROVINCES.

miles.

Length 180	} between {	51° 20' and 53° 30' N. Lat.	}	<i>Sq. miles.</i>
Breadth 145		20 and 70 East Longitude.		10,000.

BOUNDED east, by Germany; south, by the Austrian and French Netherlands; west and north by the German ocean. Containing 113 towns, 1400 villages.

Divided into seven provinces :

<i>Provinces.</i>	<i>Chief Towns.</i>	<i>Inhab.</i>
Gelder,	Nimwegen,	12,000
Holland,	Amsterdam,	212,000
Utrecht,	Utrecht,	30,000
Zeeland,	Middleburg,	24,000
Friesland,	Leuwarden.	
Overijssel,	Deventer.	
Groenigen,	Groenigen.	

the land, can only be prevented by strong and expensive dykes, from overflowing a spot which seems to be stolen from its natural domains. Notwithstanding these difficulties, which might seem insurmountable to a less industrious people, the persevering labours of the patient Dutchmen have rendered this small, and seemingly insignificant territory, one of the richest spots in Europe, both with respect to population and property. In other countries, which are possessed of a variety of natural productions, we are not surprised to find manufactures employed in multiplying the riches which the bounty of the soil bestows ; but to see, in a country like Holland, large woolen manufactures, where there are scarcely any flocks ; numberless artists employed in metals, where there is no mine ; thousands of saw mills, where there is scarcely any forest ; an immense quantity of corn exported from a country where there is not agriculture enough to support one half of its inhabitants, must strike every observer with admiration. Among the most valuable productions of this country may be reckoned their excellent cattle. They export large quantities of madder, a vegetable much used in dying. Their fisheries yield a clear profit of many millions of florins. The trade of Holland extends to almost every part of the world, to the exclusion, in some branches, of all their European competitors.

Capital.] AMSTERDAM, which is built on piles of wood, and is one of the most commercial cities in the world. It has more than one half the trade of Holland ; and, in this celebrated center of an immense commerce, a bank is established of that species, called a Giro Bank, of very great wealth and greater credit.

Government.] Since the great confederation of Utrecht, made in the year 1579, the seven United Provinces must be looked upon as one political body, united for the preservation of the whole, of which each single province is governed by its own laws, and exercises most of the rights of a sovereign state. In consequence of the union, the seven provinces guaranty each other's rights, they make war and peace, they levy taxes,

&c.

&c. in their joint capacity ; but as to internal government, each province is independent of the other provinces, and of the supreme power of the republick. The provinces rank in the order they are mentioned. They send deputies, chosen out of the provincial states, to the general assembly, called the *States General*, which is invested with the supreme legislative power of the confederation. Each province may send as many members as it pleases, but it has only one voice in the assembly of the states. According to the latest regulations, that assembly is composed of 58 deputies. At the head of this republican government, is the Prince Stadtholder, or Governor, who exercises a very considerable part of the executive power of the state.

Religion.] The Calvinist or Reformed religion is established in Holland ; but others are tolerated.

None but Calvinists can hold any employment of trust or profit. The church is governed by Presbyteries and Synods. Of the latter there are nine for single provinces, and one national Synod, subject, however, to the control of the States General. The French and Walloon Calvinists have Synods of their own. In the seven provinces are 1579 ministers of the established church, 90 of the Walloon church, 800 Roman Catholic, 53 Lutheran, 43 Arminian, and 312 Baptist ministers. In the East-Indies there are 46, and in the West-Indies 9 ministers of the established church.

History.] These provinces were originally an assemblage of several Lordships, dependent upon the Kings of Spain ; from whose yoke they withdrew themselves during the reign of Philip II. in the year 1579, under the conduct of the Prince of Orange, and formed the republick now called the seven United Provinces, or Holland, that being the most remarkable province. The office of Stadtholder, or Captain General of the United Provinces, was made hereditary in the Prince of Orange's family, not excepting females, 1747.