againſt that monarch ; and ſo much was he wrapped in this project, that even in his dying moments it teemed to pre­vail over every other consideration@@\*. His meaſures, however, were adopted by his ſuccessor Queen Anne ; and the French monarchy had nearly ſunk under the united efforts of the for­ces of Britain, Holland, and Germany, headed by the experi­enced generals Marlborough and Eugene. But at laſt the whole plan was diſconcerted by a revolution in the Britiſh miniſtry ; the Dutch were diſappointed in the moment of their expectations, and obliged to conſent to the peace of Utrecht, which left them expoſed to the attempts of France as much as ever. A barrier composed of a great number of fortified towns was indeed granted them ; but barriers of this kind are a ſlender defence againſt the modern improvements in war. In the war of 1739, theſe towns were taken one after another by Marſhal Saxe, who thus revenged the exploits of the duke of Marlborough ; while the Dutch and Britiſh army, commanded by the late duke of Cumberland, were driven from place to place, without being able to make one ſucceſsful effort from the beginning of the war to the end of it. See Britain, no 342—429.

It is probable that the bad ſucceſs of this war cooled the affections of the Dutch towards Britain ſo much, that ever ſince they have acted rather as concealed enemies than friends. In the war of 1755, their attachment to France was evident ; and in the laſt, it proceeded to ſuch an height, as to oblige the Britiſh miniſtry to declare war againſt them. The iſſue of this war is ſtill freſh in our memories. A single naval engagement was the only event of conſequence that took place, and ſhowed that both were formidable antagoniſts to each other.

This war was undertaken in oppoſition to the wiſhes of the ſtadtholder, who having been maintained in his preroga­tives chiefly by the powerful influence of Britain and Pruſſia, could have no motive for making a rupture with the court of London. The ſubſequent tranſactions of the States- general have been related under other articles (see Prussia and Revolution). Having deſerted the grand alliance formed againſt the diſturbers of the peace of Europe, and the office of the ſtadtholder being aboliſhed, the Dutch re­public, under the name of an *ally,* is now in reality little better than a province, of France. The conſequence of this alliance is what might have been expected. The Britiſh government, obliged to attack its enemies wherever it might find them, commenced hoſtilities againſt the United Pro­vinces, and in the compaſs of a very ſhort period wreſted from them their moſt valuable posseſſions both in the eaſtern and in the weſtern world.

The ſeven United Provinces being in great part ſurrounded by the ſea, lying low, and abounding in marſhes, have a damp and unwholeſome air. Rains and fogs are frequent ; and the gout, ſcurvy, rheumatiſm, and agues, very common and difficult of cure. The effects of human induſtry here are wonderful in the dykes and dams erected for defending the country againſt the inundations of the ſea, and in ditches, canals, mills, and ſluices, for draining the marſhes. The quantity of grain produced is not sufficient for home conſumption ; but the paſtures in the marſhes are so rich, that they can ſpare a great deal of butter and cheese for ex­portation. They have alſo a good breed of ſheep, whose wool is highly valued. There is turf, madder, tobacco, ſome fruit, and iron ; but all the pit-coal and timber uſed in this country, and indeed moſt of the necessaries of life, are imported. All the provinces either lie upon, or communi­cate with, the North Sea, by means of that called the *Zuyder,* or *South Sea* ; which was formed partly by the Rhine’s right branch, then increaſed by the Vecht, which has now another outlet, overflowing the low ſwampy grounds thro’ which it passed ; and partly by the sea, in the 13th century, breaking in, and overflowing a large tract of ground conti­guous to that before laid under water by the Rhine. The principal rivers are the Rhine, the Meute, the Scheld, and the Vecht. the firſt is divided into ſeveral bran­ches, one of which joins the Old Issel, and after that falls into the Zuyder Sea ; another named the *Leck,* at the vil­lage of Krimpen, mingles with the Meuse; a third, called the *Crooked Rhine,* is branched out at Leyden into canals, of which one runs into the lake of Haerlem, and another loses itſelf in the sand hills between Catwyk on the Rhine, and Catwyk on the ſea ; and a fourth, called the *Waal,* falls into the Meuse over-againſt Workum. The Meute, after dividing itſelf into two branches, and again uniting theſe, falls into the North Sea below Rotterdam. The Scheld below Ant­werp divides itſelf into two branches, called the W*estern* and Eastern *Scheld,* the firſt ſeparating Flanders from Zealand ; and the other, running north by Bergen-op-Zoom, and af­terwards eaſt, between the iſlands of Beveland and Schowen, falls into the ſea a little below. The Vecht runs from eaſt to well through the province of Overyſſel, and falls into the Zuyder Sea. There are many ſmaller rivers that join theſe, and a vaſt number of canals ; yet there are few good har­bours in the provinces. The best are those of Rotterdam, Helvoetſluys, and Flushing. As to the harbour of Amſterdam, it is indeed one of the largeſt and ſafeſt in Europe; but there is a bar at the entrance of it, over which large vessels cannot paſs without being lightened or unloaded. There are no mountains in theſe provinces ; and the only lake, pro­perly ſo called, is that of Haerlem, The provinces are ex­tremely well cultivated, and very populous ; eſpecially that of Holland, which, in this reſpect, perhaps has not its equal in the univerſe. The towns are very agreeable, being kept clean, and having canals in the middle of the ſtreets, planted with trees. The number of inhabitants is computed at about 2,000,000. The animals here are much the ſame as in England ; but their horſes and horned cattle are of a lar­ger ſize. Storks build and hatch on their chimneys; but, being birds of paſſage, they leave the country about the middle of Auguſt, with their young, and return the Febru­ary following. It is ſaid there are ſome wild boars and wolves here ; and that neither oyſters nor herrings are to be found upon the coaſt : but of other fiſh they have the ſe­veral sorts, both in their ſeas and rivers, that we have in Bri­tain.

The eſtabliſhed religion here before the Revolution was the Preſbyterian, or Calviniſm : none but Preſbyterians were admitted into any office or post in the government, except­ing the army ; all religions and ſects, however, were tolera­ted, and had their reſpective meetings or assemblies for pub­lic worſhip, among which the Papiſts and Jews were very nu­merous. Since the late alliance with France, no particular religion is eſtabliſhed ; and the phlegmatic Dutch have drunk deep of the cup of infidelity, mixed by their new and volatile allies.

There are five universities in the provinces, viz. thoſe of Utrecht, Leyden, Franeker, Groningen, and Harderwic ; but the three laſt are inconsiderable. The dissenters in England often ſend their children to theſe universities for edu­cation. Before the Reformation there was an archbiſhop at Utrecht, who had for his ſuffragans the biſhops of De­venter, Groningen, Middleburg, Haerlem, and Lewarden The language here is a dialect of the German, but French is much ſpoken by the better sort.

With regard to the commerce of this country, their Eaſt India company had the monopoly of the fine spices for more than 100 years, and was long the moſt opulent and power­ful of any in the world. Though the country itſelf pro-

@@@[m]\* See Britain, n⁰ 339, 340.