



Henry van Dyke (1852-1933) was an American author, educator and clergyman. President Wilson, a friend and former classmate of Van Dyke, appointed him Minister to the Netherlands and Luxembourg from 1913-1917.

While in The Hague, he wrote a poem about the clouds in the Netherlands.

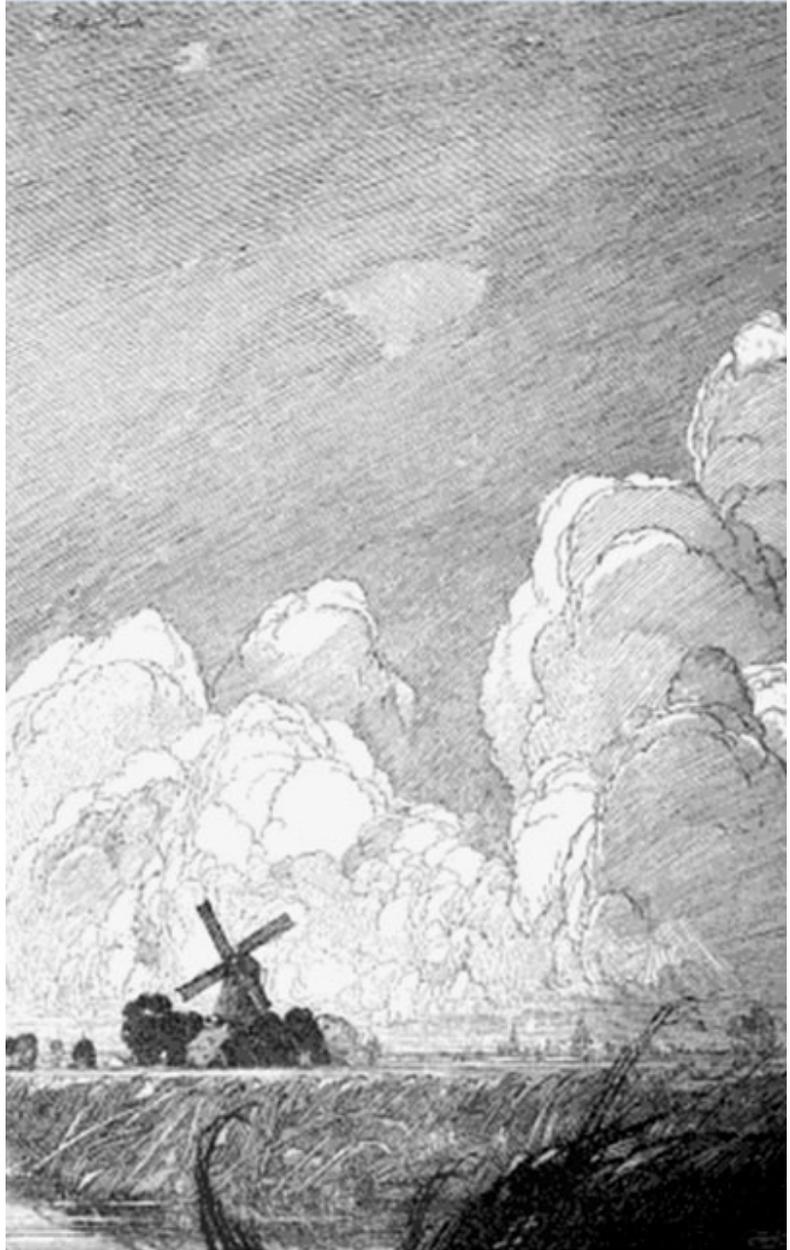
THE HEAVENLY HILLS OF HOLLAND By Henry van Dyke

The heavenly hills of Holland,—
How wondrously they rise
Above the smooth green meadows
Into the azure skies!
With blue and purple hollows,
With peaks of dazzling snow,
Along the far horizon
They march serene and slow.

No mortal foot has trodden
The summits of that range,
Nor walked those mystic valleys
Whose colors ever change;
Yet we possess their beauty,
And visit them in dreams,
While the ruddy gold of sunset
From cliff and canyon gleams.

In days of cloudless weather
They melt into the light;
When fog and mist surround us
They're hidden from our sight;
But when returns a season
Clear shining after rain,
While the northwest wind is blowing,
We see the hills again.

The old Dutch painters loved them,
Their pictures show them clear,—
Old Hobbema and Ruysdael,
Van Goyen and Vermeer.
Above the level landscape,—
Rich polders, long-armed mills,
Canals and ancient cities,—
Float Holland's heavenly hills.



Drawn by Franklin Booth

The Hague, November, 1916.