



Dutch and English on the Hudson; A Chronicle of Colonial New York Volume 7

Maud Wilder Goodwin

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This historic book may have numerous typos and missing text. Purchasers can usually download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. Not indexed. Not illustrated. 1919 edition. Excerpt: ...keen as the delight of the Dutch children may have been, there was in their minds the hope of even better things to come a few weeks later, at their own especial, particular, undisputed feast of St. Nicholas, the beloved Santa Claus, patron saint of children in general and of young Nether-landers in particular. The 6th of December was the day dedicated to this genial benefactor, and on the eventful night a white sheet was spread on the floor. Around this stood the children singing songs of welcome, of which the most popular was the familiar Saint Nicholaes, goed heilig man, Trekt uw'besten tabbard aan, En reist daamee naar Amsterdam, Von Amsterdam naar Spanje. If the Saint would ride forth thus accoutered and if he would do what they asked of him, the children explained that they would be his good friends, as for that matter they always had been, and would serve him as long as they lived. At last the fateful moment arrived. A shower of sweets was hurled through the open door and amid the general scramble appeared the Saint in full vestments attended by a servant known as Knecht Ruprecht, and, after the Dutch settlements in America, a black man, who added much to the fascination and excitement of the occasion. He held in one hand an open sack into which to put particularly ill-behaved children, while in the other hand he carried a bunch of rods, which he shook vigorously from time to time. The good Saint meanwhile smilingly distributed to the children the parcels that he had brought, and, after these had all been opened and the presents had been sufficiently admired, the children dropped into their trundle-beds to dream of all the glories of the day. When the dust-sheet and litter of wrappings had been removed, the older people gathered...

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