

and wholesome food. Chocolate and cider were the common beverages, especially at supper. Coffee and tea were little used. The general breakfast of rich and poor was "suppain" and milk. Tea-parties and family festivals were frequent, and Christmas and New Year's day were celebrated with open-handed hospitality.* From those early settlers has been handed down to all American children the fascinating fiction of Santa Claus, and from them we have inherited the American fashion of New Year's calls.

The institution of negro slavery added another element of picturesqueness to the life of the Colony, but it existed only in a modified form, principally for household service, and there was little distinction in the character of work performed by the black slaves and by the older children of the settlers' families.

A large proportion of the early families were inter-related; and, isolated in a new country and thrown largely upon their own resources, they clung together closely in social intercourse. Sunday was devoted, after attendance at religious

*Two travelling Labadists, Jasper Dankers and Peter Shnyder, who visited Long Island in 1679, have left on record this description of a dinner at the home of their entertainer, Simon De Hart, at Gowanus: "We had for supper a roasted haunch of venison, which he had bought of the Indians for three guilders and a half of secwant, that is, fifteen stuivers of Dutch money (fifteen cents), and which weighed thirty pounds. The meat was exceedingly tender and good, and also quite fat. It had a slight spicy flavor. We were also served with wild turkey, which was also fat and of very good flavor; and a wild goose that was rather dry. Everything we had was the natural production of the country."—Ostrander's "Brooklyn," i, 121. Irving also gives us this comical enumeration of the delicacies of a feast at an old Dutch farm-house, typical of the early days: "Such heaped-up platters of cakes of various and almost indescribable kinds, known only to experienced Dutch housewives! There was the doughy dough-nut, the tender oly-koek, and the crisp and crumbling cruller; sweet cakes and short cakes, ginger cakes and honey cakes, and the whole family of cakes. And then there were apple pies, and peach pies, and pumpkin pies; besides slices of ham and smoked beef; and moreover delectable dishes of preserved plums, and peaches, and pears, and quinces; not to mention broiled shad and roasted chickens; together with bowls of milk and cream, all mingled higgledypiggledy, pretty much as I have enumerated them."—"Legend of Sleepy Hollow."