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1939 BEST WISHES



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THE CROWDED INN

By HELEN CLARK WENTWORTH

ALL day long they had been going by the inn, camels and donkeys stirring up dust, weary men and women resting by the stream outside the inn yard. The little country maid had never seen so much travel.

Just outside the city of Jerusalem, near by the village of Bethlehem, there were plenty of people who stopped for refreshment. And Jeremiah kept a good inn. He was a good man too. But he was hard, sparing neither man nor beast. And his niece Rebecca was hard put to do the tasks that were set before her.

"Why are there so many travelers today?" she asked the little slave girl who helped her prepare the evening meal.

"The tribesmen," replied Fatima, "are going to Jerusalem to be numbered, so that they may pay their taxes. And this will continue for days. These are not times of rejoicing and feasting for us!"

Rebecca looked up as a bearded man, leading an ass on which a young woman rode, entered the courtyard. "Is the inn keeper here?" he asked gently. "My wife and I seek shelter."

"There are no rooms left," Fatima told him, going on with her work. But Rebecca looked up at the woman, whose face was weary and touched with pain.

"I will see what provision can be made," the little maid exclaimed. Her eyes never left the young woman's sweet face. The woman smiled at Rebecca, and her husband smiled too. Rebecca's face lightened eagerly and even Fatima found herself softening.

Rebecca had some difficulty finding her uncle, busy as he was with many things. Then it was hard to make him listen.

"There must be some place, uncle. That new stable, with the clean straw, would be warm and comfortable. She cannot go farther, I know."

"So be it," he answered. Then, as they neared the group, he too was impressed by the young woman's beauty and the lovely warmth of her smile. "There is naught but the stable," he told them, "but Re-

becca will seek to make you comfortable there."

Even after she had done everything she could, and had crept into her own dark corner for the night, Rebecca found she could not forget the couple in the stable. Mary, the man had called his wife. There was such a radiance about her. "I wonder what makes her so different," Rebecca thought. And she opened her eyes.

In amazement she saw light in the courtyard, so much that it seemed the dawn must have come. But the light came from a star that shone just about the stable. Out into the yard the girl crept, and suddenly she heard a child's cry, a cooing, happy sound.

Rebecca looked about. No one was stirring. Far off, on the hillside she saw what looked like a group of men, shadowy, indistinct, seemingly moving toward Bethlehem. It must be her imagination. Possibly it was Ephraim's vineyard she saw. Soon she stood in the stable doorway.

There, lighted by a lantern, was Joseph, bending over the young woman and holding in his arms a tiny baby—her firstborn. At Rebecca's exclamation he turned, and into her outstretched arms he handed the little figure and showed her the snowy lengths of swaddling cloth. Tenderly the maid clothed the infant and laid it beside the mother.

"Thank you," Mary whispered. "For the child's sake and in His name, I thank you for what you have done. We thank her, don't we, Jesus?"

The baby opened his eyes and smiled. "He smiled at me," Rebecca exclaimed. "I shall never forget, a new born babe smiled into my face to say thank you."

Mary drew the child into the shelter of her arms. Her eyes closed, Joseph walked to the doorway and watched Rebecca as she returned to her room. He, too, saw the clump of trees or vines, or was it a group of men on the hillside? Then he returned to the manger and settled down beside Mary and the sleeping Jesus.



December Bad Month For Pedestrian Accidents

Warning Oregonians that the month of December, 1938, had been the worst month of the year for pedestrian accidents, Earl Snell, secretary of state, today urged motorists and pedestrians to exercise great care during the present month in the hope of preventing a repetition of last December's record.

Of the 28 persons killed during that month, 14 or 50 percent were pedestrians. With the exception of November, no other month had that many pedestrian fatalities last year. All told there were 196 pedestrian accidents, 65 more than during January, the next worst month for pedestrian accidents.

"During the holiday shopping period, streets of our cities are crowded with shoppers, many of them loaded down with packages so that their visibility is seriously impaired," Snell pointed out. "Added to this is the fact that the streets are crowded with more vehicles than normal. Under such conditions it is plain that unless extra precautions are taken by both motorists and pedestrians, there will be more accidents than normally might be expected."

The secretary of state urged persons on foot not to load themselves down with bundles, interfering with their ability to watch for traffic as they cross the crowded streets and he warned motorists they must be more than ever on the lookout for



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pedestrians.

Fifty-seven percent of the pedestrians killed last December were committing an obviously unsafe act at the time they were struck, Snell's figures show. Four persons were killed while crossing the street between intersections and others were struck while crossing intersections diagonally, walking into the side of passing cars, walking with traffic on highways and stepping into streets from between parked cars.

For Sale: Pheasants, hens and roosters, tame, \$2.50 a pair. These pheasants were hatched August 14. Mrs. Clyde Maple, Sardine creek, Phone 461, Gold Hill.



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