

Merry Christmas!

By Helen Morton

IT WAS enough to make one hate Christmas! Betsy was so tired that she could hardly stand. This counter in the middle of the aisle had become a nightmare to her. The crowds hurrying by, pulling the neckties off as their coats brushed against them, fingering them over and then tossing them back on the table carelessly.

Still, it was good to have a job, even a temporary one. For she had been without work for a long enough time so that she had "eaten" and all her possessions she could borrow money on.

No time to be standing here thinking, though. That fat woman looked as if she was going to buy several ties. "These are very nice, madam. And so reasonable; 35 cents a piece, or three for \$1.00. This is an exceptionally pretty one," and Betsy showed her a navy blue. But the fat woman dropped the ties and hastened away with her friend, leaving a pile of ties on the floor.

Wearily Betsy leaned over and began picking them up. "Let me help?" a friendly voice asked. Betsy looked up into a handsome face, curly brown hair, deep blue eyes, and a mouth that curved into a smile at the surprise in Betsy's eyes.

"I want to get some ties for my family. I've been up here for the past few weeks, and so I don't know what the kids want, but I think it'll be safe to give 'em ties. Socks are so commonplace."

"Your brothers?" Betsy asked as she held up one or two she liked particularly.

"Yeah. Three brothers and a sister. She's about your age, I reckon. What does a girl like, anyway, when you've only a little to spend?" He looked imploringly.

"Let's get the brothers fixed up first, and then see about her. How's this for the 17-year-old?" Betsy inquired.

"Fine. You know, I'm tickled pink to be able to do anything for the family. I struck a bad spell, was down with flu for three weeks, and lost my job. I just got another last week. But I'd have hated to have the day go by with nothing from the big boy." His face was shining.

"I'll have them wrapped as gifts. Then you go over to the counter there and select something for your sister. Here, I'll take you over and get a girl from my home town to wait on you. She'll help," and Betsy went along with him.

"You're not a city girl, then? No wonder you were so helpful. I'm



"I want to get some ties for my family."

scared of these sophisticated girls in most of the shops. That's because I've been here only a few months, and in my home town everyone knew everyone and it was, well, it was different. Say, you don't think I'm getting fresh, do you? I'm just so homesick." His face was red with embarrassment.

It was Betsy's turn to look troubled. "Sure, I knew how it was. I don't chatter away with every customer this way, either. I'm like you new here, and lonesome for my own people. I was hating Christmas time, with so much confusion and no real Christmas spirit. So I'm glad you told me about your family."

She turned him over to Marie at the women's wear counter, and went on with her tie selling. They seemed prettier, fresher and more attractive, than they had before the curly-headed fellow had come along to buy some.

ONLY a half hour off for supper, then she'd have to work until the store closed at nine. Christmas eve meant lots of last minute gifts to be bought in this big city. As she turned away from her counter to go out to eat, a friendly voice sounded at her shoulder.

"If you're going to snatch a sandwich, do you mind if I go along and we learn something more about each other? Your friend told me you'd have just a little while for lunch, and I want to get acquainted, if you'll let me." It wasn't just a "pick-up." This was a homesick boy, wanting to talk with a small-town girl who knew his language.

There was just a moment's hesitation before Betsy said, with a grin, "Sure enough. Lead me to the lunch counter. You're no more lonely than I've been. As it is, I really feel like I can say 'Merry Christmas' when tomorrow comes."

Jap Villagers Kneel at Mound They Call Christ's Burial Place

TOKYO.—Peasants in a remote northern Japanese village do not celebrate Christmas but they believe Jesus Christ died in Japan.

Nor are they Christians, but each year they kneel before a strange mound which they believe is Christ's burial place.

This takes place at the village of Herai where Buddhists or Shintoists gather each year around a mound surmounted by a pillar on which are three Japanese characters and a six-pointed star composed of interlocking triangles, like the Hebrew emblem.

How this strange tradition arrived in Japan is not known, but visitors notice that the village, which is located in Aomori, near the extreme tip of Honshu island, is no great distance south of Mount Yadaijin, which is pronounced almost like the modern Japanese word for "Jew."

The six-pointed star is completely foreign to the people, yet some peasants are familiar with the Biblical version of Christ's death. The Aomorian story, which they have believed for 20 centuries, is this:

During the reign of the Emperor Suinin, the eleventh emperor, a young white man came to live in the district. Twelve years later, at the age of 34, he disappeared. His name: Soraitaro.

Fifteen years later he returned and told the people he had been to the land of his birth teaching religion and that, because of his beliefs, had been sentenced to death by crucifixion.

Soraitaro is then said to have told



the natives that his younger brother, Iskiri, sacrificed his own life on the cross. Then he traveled for four years, across Europe and through Siberia. Finally reaching Aomori again, he died at the age of 105 in the eleventh year of Keiko Tenno's reign.

Near the alleged burial mound is the ruin of a stone building which villagers call "Tsukino-Tatte," the House of the Moon. Many foreign articles are reported to have been unearthed from this place. People say it is the place where Jesus worshipped.

They do not worship His memory in a religious way, nor is the mound especially sacred. They describe Jesus as a "Sei-jin," a saint or wise man.

TRICKY BOX.

A tricky box for a man's desk is a laquered metal box with sections for paper clips, rubber bands and pins. It is equipped with an adjustable roll calendar and a roll top.

MEN LIKE THESE.

Ads in the Press-Courier call attention to men's furnishings as gifts and if they are suitably chosen there is nothing more pleasing to the average man.

Christmas Comes But Once a Year—Almost Any Time!

Merry Christmas is whatever you make it, whenever you make it. From December 3, when Saint Nicholas arrives for Dutch children, to the Aleutian islanders' Christmas on January 7, someone is celebrating this festive day most of the time.

Holland chooses December 5 as the eve of the festival day which the church has set aside in Saint Nicholas' honor. In Hungary Santa Claus pays his first visit several weeks ahead of the Yuletide, leaving boxes of candy in preparation for his second visit.

Most of the unusual celebrations, however, come after December 25—indeed, fall after New Year's day. Remote Shetland islanders north of Scotland celebrate January 5, still clinging to the old Julian calendar and refusing to accept that of Pope Gregory which most of the world has used for two centuries.

January 5 is also Christmas day in at least one part of the United States proper, isolated and windswept Rodanthe island off North Carolina. The custom, apparently a holdover from "old Christmas"—the Twelfth night, or Epiphany—the occasion finds all 300 residents hanging their stockings and awaiting Santa Claus.

In Alaska, where mid-summer delivery of Christmas presents makes them suitable either for last Christmas or the coming one, part of the residents celebrate on December 25 and the rest, January 7. The latter date is observed chiefly by Aleutian islanders, which is populated by natives who were interbred with Rus-



Don't Marry the Girl Day After Christmas

If you believe the early monks, don't select the day after Christmas to get married, start a new job or put on that new suit. It's Childermass day, commemorating the slaughter of the Holy Innocents by Herod, and in the early days was considered an occasion of the greatest ill-omen.

Children, according to legend, were soundly whipped Childermass day to impress on their minds the story of the baby martyrs.

So intense was the fear of this unfortunate festival that the coronation of England's King Edward IV was postponed in order to avoid the fatal date.

sians hundreds of years ago. They use the Russian calendar, which has not been changed to conform with that used by the rest of the world. By this calendar, New Year's is celebrated January 14.

Men of Christmas

Postmaster General James A. Farley receives Christmas cards at the rate of 1,000 a day during the Yule season.

Vasco Da Gama, the great Portuguese navigator, was born on Christmas day in 1469, discovered Natal, Africa, on Christmas day, 1497, and died on Christmas eve, 1524.

Oscar Phillips, postmaster at Santa Claus, Ind., cancels a half-million pieces of mail each Christmas season.

President Roosevelt gets a toothbrush and cake of soap in his stocking each Christmas—an old family custom.

Edward Keenan, who has enacted the role of Santa Claus in Milwaukee since 1927, keeps a small herd of reindeer all year round for this purpose.

PATTON METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

James A. Turner, pastor. Church school at 10 a. m. Preaching at 11 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. every third Sunday. Epworth League at 6:30 p. m. Mid-Week Bible Class Wednesday evening at 7:30.

The Christmas entertainment will be held on Friday evening, December 22nd, at 7 p. m. The public is welcome.

The Christmas Cantata will be rendered by the Choir on Sunday evening, the 24th, and the public is invited.

The mid-week Bible class held on Wednesday evening at 7:30 o'clock, is an occasion of great interest and spiritual uplift to all who are attending. The theme is: "You Can Win," in life by giving place to the Spirit of God in your heart.

The "UPPER ROOM" for the first quarter of 1940 is on hand. What a nice thing it would be if you would purchase a few extra copies and make presents of them to your friends. They make first class Christmas presents.

William J. Palmer, Judge of the Superior Court, Los Angeles, California, has this to say: "The Upper Room" is very helpful in keeping the flame on the family altar aglow. I regard it as a very valuable contribution to the religious life of the nation, and that, of course, means to every phase of our national life.

When the worst of a long siege of illness sis over and a girl actually begins to think in terms of personal attractiveness again, she simply can't bear another day in a dull hospital gown. A manufacturer of fine lingerie now introduces a convalescent coat of pure dye silk crepe in becoming pastel colors and white trimmed with fine Val lace, that meets all hospital requirements, yet is attractive enough to please the most exacting invalid. The coat closes down the back with non slip ties, is comfortably roomy, above knee length, flatteringly yoked and colored, and has a deep, useful and ornamental pocket.

One of the Mighty Fine Things About the Christmas Season

IS THE OPPORTUNITY IT GIVES US TO SEND GREETINGS OF APPRECIATION TO OUR MANY FRIENDS

Many GROUNDHOG Brand Products

Have appeared as guests in your homes this past year. We are hopeful that our visits gave enjoyment and happiness and that we may look for more frequent visits in the years ahead.

Like Aladdin's Lamp, may every joy be yours on Christmas Day, and may you have the fullest realization of Health and Prosperity for 1940.

Punxsutawney Beef and Provision Co.

Manufacturers of GROUNDHOG BRAND PRODUCTS OF MERIT