

A Thirsty Land



Algiers Mission Band

ALGERS
MISSION BAND

Algiers Mission Band.

FOUNDED IN 1888 BY I. LILIAS TROTTER.

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BASIS.—The A.M.B. is interdenominational and desires to have fellowship with all who form the One Body of Christ. The Band holds and teaches :—

- (1) Absolute Faith in the Deity of each Person of the Trinity.
- (2) Absolute confidence in the full inspiration of the Old and New Testaments.
- (3) Absolute belief in the Cross of Christ as the one means of access to God, and the redemptive power for the whole world.

COMMISSION.—The aim of the A.M.B. is the Evangelization of the Arabic speaking Moslems with special emphasis on the needs of the practically untouched regions of the interior.



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A Chain of Prayer across the Ages.

“Grant us, even us, O Lord, to know Thee and love Thee and rejoice in Thee.”

This was the prayer of St. Augustine more than fifteen hundred years ago, and on the very page with these far-reaching words I find prayers over the dates of A.D. 590—1795—1809—1830, all expressing the same needs, the same longings, the same anticipations of which we are most conscious to-day. It may be sometimes we see ourselves so few in number among the myriad souls around us; the thousands of Keswick seem a dream and we feel rather like the young Christian Arab when his comrades asked him: “After all, how many of this new faith have you seen, those you call your brothers and sisters?” He answered “Perhaps eight or nine.” “Not many,” said his questioners, with a laugh, and we feel sometimes “Not many.”

Let us rather look back through all the ages on the countless souls in all lands and in every time who turn hungering and thirsting to the Cross of Christ; even as we hunger and thirst to know Him, and we shall realise that we are not alone. They, as we, have found in Him an answer beyond

all thought and asking, only of this answer they are seeing more of the fullness than we as yet have grasped.

They may seem far from us in time and place and attainment, and yet they belong to us and we to them in the Lord, knit together. “Part of the host have crossed the flood and part are crossing now.” Never let us be so short-sighted as to feel lonely or outnumbered; when such thoughts do hover round us and seek an entrance let us turn in heart and mind to those who once suffered and fainted, who prayed and were restored, and our thoughts will win through to Him Who was their Refuge as well as their Strength.

“Almighty and Everlasting God, the Comfort of the sad, the Strength of sufferers, let the prayers of those that cry out of any tribulation, come unto Thee, that all may rejoice to find that Thy mercy is present with them in their affliction, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (A.D. 494).

Let us rouse ourselves out of our little ruts and corner of work and take a consci-

ous place among the hosts of the Lord. Beyond the A.M.B. and the A.M.E. and the N.A.M. and all the other letters of the alphabet, far, far out, and beyond the horizon of our mortal sight and mortal life, reach those hosts of the Lord, truly our brothers and sisters in Christ, bound to us and we to them by no imaginary ties, but by the word of the Lord which liveth and abideth for ever. We are not a little band of twenty weaknesses—we are part of a host, many millions strong, more than conquerors through Him that loved us.”
Amen and Alleluia.

Editorial.

The year has opened with its usual tale of ups and downs, but a very serious down to us is that we will be faced, at the end of June, with the enforced retirement, through ill health, of our dear Secretary, Mrs. Brading. We can but offer her our warmest thanks for the past years of loving interest and work, and we would at the same time express our happiness that she remains a member of the Home Council and still so closely linked with the work.

On the other hand there seems to many of us to be a moving of the Spirit on the face of the dark waters. An old marabout priest, unreached as far as we know by Christian literature or by missionary influence, sent for one of our number and said to her, “I am rich, I have friends and a house and lands but I know all these things pass and I want eternity. I have read about your Lord Jesus in the Koran, but it does not tell me much; what have you to say?” Another Arab—one supposed to have been made holy by his pilgrimage to Mecca—said, “The prophets! they are all like trees that hide the sun from us.” “Broken without hand” was a favourite verse with Miss Trotter when we

felt our own weakness before the great powers opposed to us, and it does seem as if the crumbling had begun.

At one place the Arabs tore up some of the books offered to them and the others they burnt; but when the evangelist had returned to his hotel he was followed by a few men who bought copies of Miss Trotter’s “Sevenfold Secret;” so that in spite of all, some rays of unquenchable truth remain in that unwilling town.

By the time this Number has reached our friends, we believe that Miss Trotter’s Life will have been published. Miss Pigott, who wrote it, was anxious that the pages should present the real personality known and deeply loved by so many, and we have a very definite hope that in this she has fully succeeded.

F. H. FREEMAN.

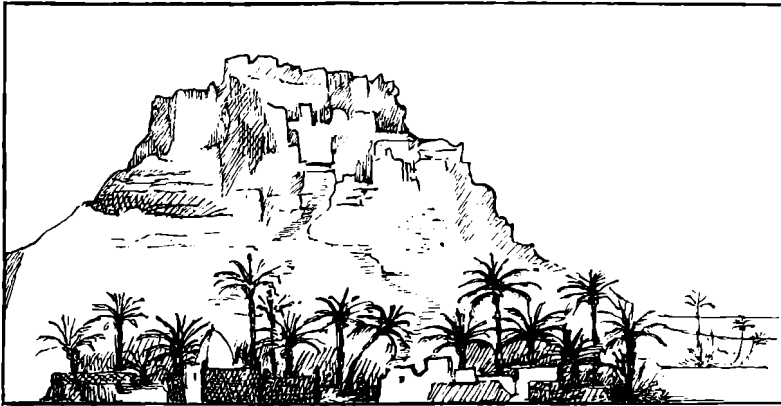
You cannot find, I believe, a case in the Bible where a man is converted without God’s calling in some human agency—using some human instrument.

D. L. Moody.

We can never draw out the good in others unless we first see in them the good that is not apparent. It takes ability and character to do this kind of seeing. It is not easy work. To see defects is easy; any mediocre person can do it, and can cultivate and encourage those defects by seeing them and talking about them. But to see the hidden good and develop that, is the work of the highest type of character. Every time we fail to see the good in others we are tying our own hands against helping them. And the fact that we do not see good in one never means that it is not there; it always means that we lack the ability which we ought to have.

American Sunday School Times.

Visiting in the Beni M'zab and El Golea.



The Ksar—El-Golea.

It is two years since we last visited this unique interesting people who has made for itself a little republic of seven towns in a desolate desert land some 500 miles south of Algiers. Driven out of other towns several centuries ago by the orthodox Moslems, they sought refuge in this isolated region and by painstaking industry created palm-gardens and worked out a system of irrigation for this purpose. The origin of the race is a debated question among students, but it is probably Berber. Before the French occupation the M'zabs had many slaves from among the Sudanese negro tribes: their freeing and the inevitable intermingling of the races has brought a darker strain into the M'zab type.

Their laws are strict, their women even more closely shut-in than those of other parts of Algeria, for a M'zab woman never leaves her country. The men are great travellers; they are the traders and shop-keepers in most of the northern towns, a hard-working industrious group, often good linguists, proficient in both Arabic and French, though among themselves

and with their women they speak a Berber dialect with a complicated grammar of its own.

On this last visit I went partly to find out how far the simple colloquial Arabic of the country would be understood by the women and children, and I was surprised to find many Arab women married to M'zab men hidden away in these towns and Arabic spoken in their houses.

Our first halt was Laghouat, beautifully placed on magnificent rocks amidst wonderful palm-gardens, with the sand hills and desert beyond. Here we spent about six days visiting native friends made in our former itineration. Much interest was shown in our picture books illustrating the stories of Moses, the Passover and the Prodigal Son. Some of our best times were spent in the old Arab quarter which nestles under the rock. Here, after school hours, the lads would gather round for a talk; or again in a quiet square we would call off from their card-playing a group of little Jewesses and Arabs to see our pictures.

Our next objective was Ghardhaia, which meant a run in the postal service bus of some 170 miles along the desert track. This big town is not purely M'zab—it has also a large Arab and Jewish quarter, and in the valley many Bedouins have their tents. The first open door was made for us by a Metlili woman who let us give her a lotion for her little girl's eyes and then asked us to sit down for a talk. A few days later the father, absent at the time of our visit, brought the child to us in the street to show us how clean and improved were her eyes.

One day we went to the sacred town of Beni Isguen. No stranger is allowed to sleep inside its walls and smoking and all alcoholic drinks are forbidden. The men spend their leisure when the labour of the day is over by sitting outside their houses and shops on M'zab carpets spread on the stone seats, watching the auction which is held each afternoon in the market square, the bidding being sometimes for a carpet, sometimes for a pair of shoes, or a bottle of tomato sauce, etc. We sat among them talking to those who came to us, friends from Miliana and Affreville, now visiting their homes in Ghardhaia. They would look at the leaflets and few gospels I had with me, for they were all able readers. We wandered up the back streets seeking to get a message to the shut-in women and presently a young negress beckoned to us to follow her and led us to the top of the town. (Their towns are all built on hills so the narrow streets wind up often to the central chimney-like mosque tower). Inside the dark M'zab house we found a young woman dyeing wools of many colours and she again led us to the roof. There a picturesque congregation—some very black, others quite fair—had scrambled over their roofs to come to us and there was much hand touching and kissing—very black baby paws some of them. It

rejoiced us to feel they spoke Arabic and understood my colloquial. I tried the Wordless Book with them and found by their comments they were intelligent, though a few covered their mouths in superstitious fear.

From there we were led along dark bewildering passages to another house; here we were the objects of wonder and had to be much examined, but I trust some words sank in.

We spent another morning in the big Ghardhaia market where I was interested in the books they were selling. I was able to give away a few leaflets but was turning away rather sadly when a young M'zab lad came up and asked us to go to his mother; she had heard of these strangers in the town who could speak Arabic and sent him to fetch us. After the usual courtesies had been exchanged and many questions answered, I told them one of Miss Trotter's stories out of "Heavenly Light on the Daily Path"—the Two Brooms story—for their house was clean and cared for, and then I recited a hymn which brings in the Gospel message. While we drank tea a poor blind beggar woman came in and sat with us and I tried using some few M'zab words I remembered—to her great joy. Each new word I attempted meant a fresh kissing of hands and correcting or giving me its plural or declension, and we were sorry when we had to leave, but we have a standing invitation to return.

The women wear black wool shawls with red borders; these are tied round the head and then fall like a cloak down the back. Often the little girls, who are dressed like their mothers, bind them on with a broad waist band and look like funny little women romping in the streets. But when their mothers go out they all wear white woollen haiks and show only one eye like our women of northern towns.

Bitterly cold winds troubled us some days and made walking difficult because of the sand storms. Beyond Beni Isguen, across a stony river bed, is Bou Nouar, built on high precipitous rocks. There is a negro settlement on the way, where two years ago we had met with a hearty welcome, so we called again. They were busy and could not stop to listen but while they worked we talked. The boys from the school almost mobbed us in this town, they were so keen to get something to read.

From Ghardhaia we went another 250 miles to El Golea, the first oasis of the *real* Sahara, to see what the openings would be for the Gospel message there.

"El Golea" means "a fortified place"—its original name was Taorirt. The oasis from above looks like a great palm garden with sand coloured hamlets scattered about it. The whole is dominated by the Ksar, a citadel built on a mighty rock. It was originally built by the Garamantes, the

first people to populate the Sahara; since then its history is a thrilling tale of siege and capture by various tribes and races till it was at last destroyed by the French in 1873. It was once a citadel of refuge where those flying from vengeance could dwell and be protected, and a well some 80 metres deep supplied the water in time of siege. Now the ruined houses are roofless and infested by scorpions.

As we climbed the narrow broken streets to the observation post at the top, a merry little negro lad accompanied us, making sweet notes on his reed pipe; and with him an elder lad, a self-appointed guide. But I was glad for I had things to tell him, so when we reached the top-most ledge looking right on to the Sahara, the lads sat at our feet and heard the Bible words for the first time. They understood "the lost sheep" (how easily it could be lost in that endless sand), and also "the prodigal son," who, in the eastern picture-book I had, was starting out from his father's



Looking across the Market Square, Ghardhaia.

home on his camel to the far distant town—a route full of dangers; again they understood, for it takes the camel-postman twelve days to go with the letters.

In El Golea we met few readers, but again we looked for the women and found groups of Sudanese women dressed in bright colours—merry, ignorant souls laughing with excitement that some one should tell them about their black hearts that could be made white; it was all so funny to them, such a thing had never happened before.

We found one sincere reader among the men who asked for a whole Bible that he might compare Old Testament teaching with the New—not as a gift, no, he wished to pay for it. We could not stay to talk with him; we had to “commit him to God and to the Word of His Grace” as well able to “build up” now as in St. Paul’s day. M. D. GRAUTOFF.

Live . . . Looking.

What will it be, O blessed Lord,
To see Thee face to face?
To know the breadth, and depth, and height
Of love’s redeeming grace?
One sight of Thee, and earthly care
Will pass like night away,
One moment of eternity
Life’s toils will far outweigh.
And yet there comes another thought—
What will it be to know
The opportunity is past
For service here below?
That nevermore my lips may tell
To fellow-sinners here
The story of Thy wondrous love,
That casteth out all fear.
That ne’er again reproach or shame
With Thee my soul may share;
In heaven, truly, I may serve—
Thy cross I cannot bear.

Ah, blessèd Lord, the days fly past,

And on the listening ear
Already fall the sounds that tell
Thy coming draweth near.

So let me live as though each day
My last on earth should be,
And ’ere to-morrow’s sun should rise
Mine eyes Thy Face should see.

Lord, make me wise some soul to win,
Faithful, Thy word to speak,
Instant in prayer both night and day,
Patient, the lost to seek.

Let not the life Thou hast redeemed
Be lived on earth in vain,
Nor let me be ashamed, my Lord,
When Thou dost come again.

Let the glad thought of Thy return
Hallow each common day,
And waiting, watching let me go
To meet Thee on Thy way.

Freda Hanbury Allen.

God’s Small Messengers.

1.—The Daisies.

The Daisies have been talking again. Somewhere, long ago, I saw that the reason why they spread their leaves flat upon the ground, so flat that the scythe does not touch them, is because the flowers stretch out their little hands, as it were, to keep back the blades of grass that would shut out the sunlight. They speak so of the need of deliberately holding back everything that would crowd our souls, and stifle the freedom of God’s light and air. In the life of Jesus there were times of pressure, but they were the exception, and only forced Him back upon God, for quiet, even if it had to be taken from the night hours. When the crowds dogged His way to the desert places He went up into the mountains to drink in through the long delayed stillness such fresh draughts of life as carried Him over the rough sea before dawn. I.L.T.

Visiting in Melizane.

If you could visit the Arab room in the mission house on any Sunday or Tuesday afternoon between the hours of one and three, you would see a most interesting little group of women sitting there in a circle on the floor. Would you like to be introduced to some of them? If so, I think the best way will be for you to come and visit in their homes.

We will begin with her named "Willow," the mother of one of the house girls. We push open the street door and walk into a courtyard into which several doors open, each door representing a home. Stopping at one of the curtained doorways a voice from within calls out, "Who's there?" though the inmate can see perfectly well through the curtain; this she quickly pulls aside and receives us with welcoming arms for she is a very old friend. We step into the one room which comprises kitchen, dining room, sitting room and bedroom for the whole family and she spreads a gaily coloured woollen blanket on the floor for us to sit on. There is practically no furniture in the room and light enters through the doorway only, there being no windows. The supper is cooking in a large pot over the little charcoal fire.

She is one of the most attentive listeners of all the women who come, never getting restless or distracted as so many of them do; she sits and listens and listens with such a look of understanding on her face. We believe that with all her heart she truly loves the Saviour and desires to follow Him and her one longing is that her husband and children should follow Him too.

Her eldest son, "the Desired," is a quiet boy of about fifteen. He always loved coming to the mission house and once in an expansive moment said that he loved Christ and had opened his heart to Him.

His time at the French school was cut short because there was not enough money to buy him books so he was obliged to earn his own living. Several times he has refused well-paid work in cafés because of the evil that so often goes on in them. He is now in touch with Mr. Wigg and is helping him with the language, and we are praying that this contact may be blessed. The next boy, named "the Multitude," is about five or six years old, an amusing little fellow. He has just started coming to the babies' class and loves it. The other day he went round the streets collecting all his playmates saying, "Come, there is great joy. Come to the class at Mademoiselle May's." Then another time when he got home he solemnly called a neighbour into his mother's house and told the story of Jesus as he had learnt it at the class. Then there is the baby "Blue"—poor little fellow he is so often weak and ailing and will just lie in his mother's arms for hours, looking round with big dark eyes, and sometimes giving the loveliest smiles.

The story of that whole court is a most interesting one. There are three other families, including the landlord, living there. The latter was once very bitter against the missionaries and threatened to kill Miss Ridley if she ever went into his court again. She did so however, and although he started by being terribly angry, after a while he suddenly changed and has been different ever since. To each one of these families it seems that God has very definitely spoken at different times and it has been chiefly through "Willow's" brave witness. One of the neighbours, Joy, came in while we were visiting there one afternoon and showed just as much keenness and interest as "Willow." There is a lovely story too about her and how in her

simple way she asked the Lord Jesus to cure her of jealousy towards her husband's second wife, and how wonderfully her prayer was answered. Ever since then she has shown the same attitude of simple earnestness. Will you pray that she too may have clearer light and learn what it really means to trust Christ as her Saviour. Before the visit ended that afternoon, "Willow" broke into such a heart-felt prayer. "Oh, God," she prayed, "Thou knowest we are Thine, we *are* Christians; do help us so to live that others may see that we are changed and that we are Thine." It was a real joy to hear her praying like this in her own home and before her neighbours. She has indeed caught the true missionary spirit and we find that if there is a newcomer to the women's meeting, it is usually she who has brought her.

A little further down the street you will come to Mary's house. She is the mother of another of our smaller house girls and is young and charming. The family are in a somewhat better position financially than "Willow's" people and so are the happy possessors of two rooms. Mary herself used to come to the classes as a girl, then she was married while still quite young to an Arab musician. (Such men are always in demand at weddings and other feasts and normally are well paid). Although always nice and friendly, she had never shown much desire after the things of God until about two years ago, when it seemed that her soul awoke and she came to the point of confessing her desire to follow Christ. With her, as with others, fear appears to hold her back from following all the way; in her case, fear of what the Light may reveal. She has not grown spiritually as "Willow" has. We pray that she may cease resisting and that into her soul may come that "perfect love which casteth out fear."

In quite another part of the town lives "Patience," a woman with a sad, tired

face, who has had a wearisome life. She has always been a somewhat helpless and incapable wife, consequently there has never been much happiness in her home. Strange to say her husband has not divorced her though at times he has shown her much unkindness. Once she ran away from him and came to Miss Ridley, who of course could not keep her but strongly advised her to go back to her husband and to the young baby she had left. This she consented to do if Miss Ridley would go first and pave the way for her. (What a variety of occupations a missionary has!!) Now into her sad and colourless life has come One making "all things new." Just recently the old mother-in-law who lives with them said to her, "My daughter, you are different now. What has changed you? You used to get cross and answer back but now you are changed. You are much 'nicer' than you were formerly." Wasn't that a beautiful testimony? This too, in spite of the fact that the past year has been full of trial and difficulty for her, because during the summer her husband became seriously ill and was threatened with blindness. As a result of medical treatment, however, a measure of sight has been preserved. She has a sweet small girl and boy who used to come to the classes and she says that now at home they will not start a meal without first saying a short prayer and they love to have a little service at night before going to bed. An empty box serves as a "biano" and a hymn is sung and the commandments are repeated! (What they know of them!) How often these little ones are the missionaries to their own family circles.

Since his illness the father has unfortunately thought it his duty to send his children to the Moslem school, but we trust that he may soon be led to allow them to return to the mission station.

There is another house where we are sure of a very warm welcome. It is that

of a young woman who heard much of the Gospel years ago but whose life since then has led her far from God. Recently however, in her sinful heart have arisen desires after better things. Several times last Autumn she sent for Miss Ridley and in one of these visits she came to the point of realising her need of a Saviour and definitely asked that Christ would come in and change her heart and life. She is now full of joy and eager to learn more from day to day, but she needs surrounding with prayer that she may be protected from every attack of the enemy either from within or without and be enabled to "witness a good confession" to her Lord.

* * *

A list of names? Or living personalities? which will they be to you? If you could only really see them, and many others like them, with their pretty clothes and their friendly faces, sometimes eager, sometimes wistful, sometimes sad, for life is often very hard to an Arab woman. How good it is to be entrusted with *such* a Message for them, and to be able to tell them of Him who is the Saviour of sinners, the Friend of friends, and the Bearer of burdens.

J. C. JOHNSTON.

Some Arab Proverbs.

Strike me, but do not speak evil of me.
The intelligent with a glance, the fool with a blow.

Take the advice of him who makes you weep, and take not the advice of him who makes you laugh.

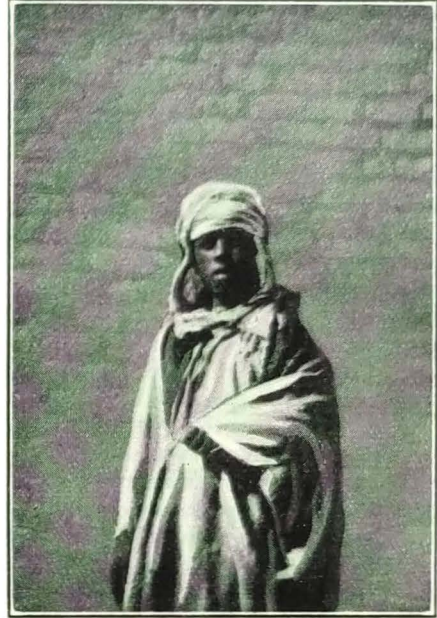
An egg to-day is better than a hen to-morrow.

Every hedgehog is to its mother a gazelle.

What is past is dead.

Who steals a needle steals a cow.

There is a Lad Here.



One of the many.

The problem of the Boy and how to win him for Jesus Christ and His kingdom of love and service is one that continually confronts the missionary. Our Lord Himself has left us an example of how it may be solved in an incident recorded in the opening verses of the sixth chapter of St. John's gospel.

The day was far spent, the Master was faced by a great multitude of hungry men and women. "He was moved with compassion toward them because they were as sheep not having a shepherd." It was a desert place and food was difficult to obtain, but there was a boy in that crowd of whom Andrew said to the Lord, "There is a lad here that hath five barley loaves and two small fishes."

Here in North Africa the scene is very much the same to-day. There is a vast unsatisfied multitude of men and women, boys and girls, starved in soul because of the husks that Islam has to offer. The day is far spent and the night is at hand—the night in which no man can work. The sterile soil of Mohammedanism is a desert place indeed! The great majority of the Moslems in North Africa are as yet unreached by the Gospel message. Many have never been given even one opportunity of listening to the Word of God.

Dark as this picture seems, it holds one great promising feature, for as of old, "there is a lad here"—yes, there are five hundred thousand of them. Those who have studied the needs of the people in this land believe that the best way to reach the great company of yet unevangelised peoples is by first winning the boy. In this last day of opportunity ANDREWS are needed to seek out the boy, discover his possibilities for service, and lead him to the feet of Jesus. What immense miracle-working powers lie in the heart of each Arab boy who would give himself to Jesus Christ!

Some of us who have seen the vision of the need, and who have yielded our lives to God for this service, are just beginning to tread the borders of Algeria's boyland. First, there is the steady plodding at the colloquial Arabic, a difficult task only to be achieved through prayer at home and continual application on the field. As one's tongue is gradually loosened there are openings for service in market visitation, and in class work among the boys. A favourite feature of the latter is the lantern meeting. The Arab boy, like his English brothers, loves a good story. He appreciates the thrilling pictures of the three men in the fiery furnace and of Daniel's adventures in the den of lions, while at the same time he is unconsciously absorbing the message that these stories

depict, the need of a Saviour Who offers complete and perfect deliverance in the time of temptation—One Who is stronger than the strong.

The boy is here in the crowd, but alas! he brings an empty basket. These young lives go hungry for want of the Bread of Life, the Living Bread from Heaven, God's Word in their hearts, Whom the Holy Spirit alone can reveal. The boy is here, but where is ANDREW?

"And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw Andrew casting a net into the sea, for he was a fisherman, and He saith unto him, Follow Me, and I will make you a fisher of men, and Andrew straightway left his net and followed Jesus."
H. T. BARROW.

—◆◆—

Gleanings from Rassouta, Volga, 1930

Jan. 20th.—"Yesterday we had fourteen boys in the morning and eight in the afternoon; and twenty this morning. Mesaoud remembers everything he has learnt and wanted to stay after the class yesterday for private reading. Then he recited everything he knew—the Commandments, Lost Sheep, Prodigal Son, and his hymns. He seems always to be in charge of a queer wee sister."

Jan. 25th.—"It is pouring this evening. It would be nicer for us if this compound could be like Gideon's fleece—we are delighted for the sake of the country and the beasts—and are trying to collect some rain so as to have a proper wash for once. The rain poured in on to my bed at first and into the middle of the room, but has subsided now that the wood has swelled."

Jan. 28th.—"Our groceries were a whole week later than we expected but

we had enough to go on with, our chief want being unsweetened milk—and now that it has come we have had two presents of milk. One was a fee to Miss M. for attention to a baby; the other I earned by prescribing for a woman who lives in a new house close by. She is charming, with a pretty daughter. When we go to her we sit on deck chairs; this afternoon there was a table ready spread for us with delicious Arab *patisserie*, choice dates, milk and eggs. The three last were brought to the house for us when we left, and yesterday a plate of olives. It was rather a climax that while we were being regaled by the dainty mother and daughter the grandmother should come in bringing a quantity of locusts as a *bonne bouche*! The men were devouring them in the market on Saturday. In the last house we went into this afternoon we were given dates and buttermilk—then a kid-skin of locusts was brought in and we were pressed to partake, but somehow we couldn't."

Jan. 31st.—"Saturday being market day, we don't have children, but every other day we have hordes—especially on Thursday. To-day we only had six boys, three of whom could read. Mesaoud was one, and I had such a good class with them. Yesterday there were twenty-six to begin with and they were in a bad mood—very difficult. Miss M. is so good at playing games with them; they love "drop the handkerchief"; and so do the little girls, but they are heavily handicapped by tyrannical "Its" adhering to their poor little backs—if they do deposit them on the ground so as to play unhindered there is a tremendous row and they have to take them up again and carry on the game as well as they can. They are wonderfully patient. The boys too are very kind to the "Its" they bring.

Two pretty well-behaved little girls come—daughters of a very exalted person-

age. I sent a message to the mother I would visit her, and she sent back word "Come." In the meantime the son, a quiet, refined student in a pale blue burnous came to look through our books and borrow some. I said to him that I was going to visit his mother, and he told me on no account to go—his father would not allow it, he was very strict and wouldn't have Europeans in his house. "My sisters told me they had been to you, and I didn't object, but don't tell them that I have been." I said I wouldn't go to the house unless the father invited me—I shouldn't like to get his poor wife into trouble.

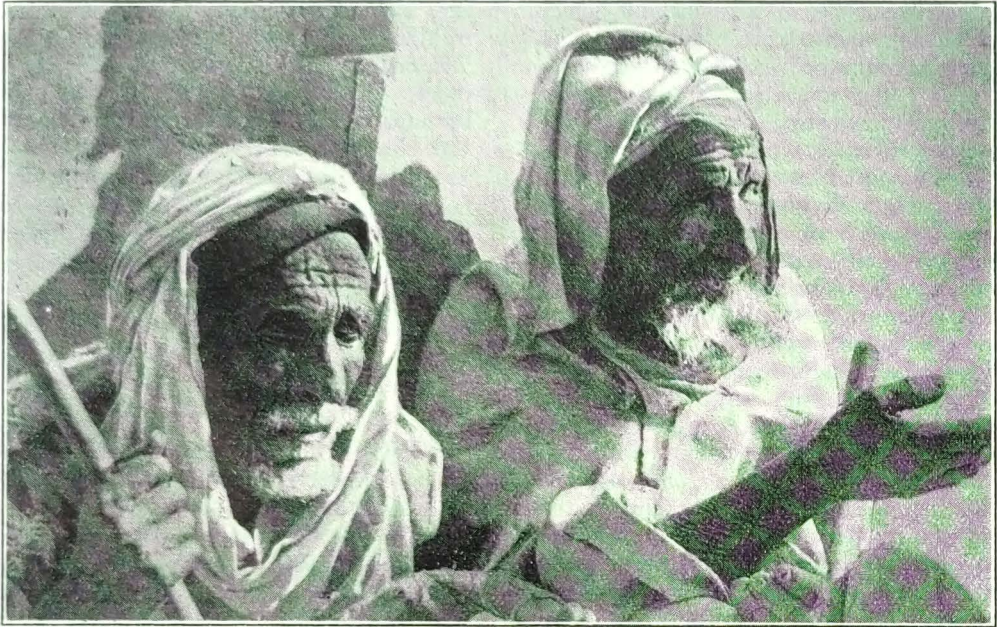
Rogaia took us visiting in Tolga yesterday. It is most amusing the way she gets us into a house and says: "Now then sing!" and she joins in.

An immaculate young Arab from Farfar told me he had been a chauffeur in France four years. He showed me his passport photo in which he appeared a rough European. Imagine living as a European all that time and then coming back to oasis life, and Ramadhan, and a little bride with clinking jewels! We went to his house at Farfar. He stayed outside because there were women he might not see."

S. PERKIN.

Almsgiving.

The last "Pillar of faith" with which we have to do is that of Almsgiving, to be thought of under two heads—Zaka which must be paid by every true Moslem—and Sadaka, a sin-forgiving righteous-making offering. We may think of Zaka as somewhat of the nature of tithes. It is most justly regulated, but somewhat intricate in its application for camels, cattle, sheep,



Algerian Beggars.

goats, horses, the payments upon the first four being governed by the fact whether they are stall-fed or browsing in the open, on horses whether they are in droves, used for merchandise, etc. No *Zaka* is due upon war horses or those used in agriculture. Also no *Zaka* is due upon the necessities of life or upon books of theology and science or upon tools or precious stones. The tithes may be given to the poor or for war or to slaves or debtors or to travellers. These rules vary slightly among the different sects but are generally accepted.*

Sadaka represents almsgiving freely given on various occasions. Mohammed is reported to have said, "The upper hand is better than the lower one. The upper hand is the giver of alms, the lower hand is the poor beggar."

With real spiritual insight many things

* Hughes Dictionary of Islam.

are accounted as almsgiving besides the giving of money—assisting the blind, smiling in a brother's face, good words, helping a man on to his beast, pouring water from your bucket into that of your brother, and so on.

In some parts of Algeria a less satisfactory view of alms comes before us when we remember that one such good deed is supposed to take away nine sins, and the good deed need not be a very great one. A young student came to one of our Band greatly puzzled that when after a violent fit of anger he gave a half-penny to the first beggar he met, peace did not enter his heart.

Still, whatever the source of the action, it must be acknowledged that the practise of such almsgiving often results in kind, hospitable and friendly deeds even to a wandering missionary.

F. H. FREEMAN.

First Impressions of Tozeur.

Autumn, 1929.

St. Paul tells us that "one star differeth from another star in glory." Surely it is also true that a desert oasis differs in glory from all other beautiful places on God's earth. It is delightful at all times of the day, but there is no experience quite like walking home through the oasis in the late afternoon, when the sun, in this crystal-clear desert air, takes on a hue of pure gold, filters through the blue-green fronds of the palms and catches the great bunches of amber and rust-coloured dates, turning them into splashes of golden fire. The violet shadows fall restfully upon the riot of foliage that shelters between the tall palms, and the never-ceasing ripple and murmur of the river, which means life to this desert town, lends to the ear the same sense of beauty that the eyes are feasting upon.

On the sandy paths sounds the soft pad of footsteps turned homewards, and the little donkeys heavily laden with grass, or with water-pots, trot patiently along.

Emerging from the shelter of the palms, one sees the houses, built of sand-bricks, lit up by the glowing sunlight, which touches also the white domes of the mosques making them look like great pink meringues.

Entering the big old door of the mission house, one mounts the outside steps to the flat roof to see the sunset. The oasis, seen now through the thin film of blue smoke from a hundred little supper fires, has become a hazy blue. The long line of hills on the opposite horizon is pink and mauve in the soft light. The western sky glows and reddens; the colour fades; and one comes down to the cosy lamplit room feeling indeed that "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork."

The windows of the mission house, opening on to the market square, are a never-failing source of interest. There goes a group of camels, heavily laden, goaded on by vigorous prods and yells. Little patient donkeys go past all day long carrying water, grass or dates in their pannier-baskets. A group of well-dressed lads, on their way to school, is a frequent sight, the thick, black silk tassels of their red caps reaching below the shoulders. Some little girls go chattering by seeming not to mind the heavy earthenware water pots that weigh down their supple shoulders. Here come two women—shrouded completely in navy-blue draperies, so that not even their eyes are seen. Their steps lack the freeness and independence of the woman of the west. What are they but household drudges, slaves in body and soul to the customs of centuries? A beggar shuffles past in his rags, mumbling unintelligible things, hand ever held out to receive the carelessly given alms. Further on a group of men and boys is gathered round an Arab story-teller who entertains them by a weird recital, accompanied by many contortions of face and body, and punctuated by resounding beats on his parchment drum.

No, a cinematograph simply does not compare with our sitting-room window!

Just outside the town, dotted about on the desert, are groups of dark camels'-hair tents, stretched low upon the sands. These are the homes of Bedouin Arabs who spend the winter months in the South. As we approach across the sands, wondering whether Miss Wood will meet old friends of previous winters or not, out from one of the tents comes a woman to meet us, having seen and recognised us from afar. This woman of the desert spaces moves with the free dignified bearing of those

whose lives are natural and uncumbered by the unnecessary things of a modern civilisation. Her garments of blue and red, fastened with handsome silver pins, flow about her as she steps over the sand. Her high head-dress of many colours, the heavy metal ear-rings and the plaits of black hair, frame a face of extraordinary beauty. The white teeth flash as she smiles her welcome. We enter with her the approach to her tent, enclosed by a low, roughly-made fence of sticks and palm-branches and are invited to sit. What more comfortable seat could one desire than the clean sands of the desert, with the fresh winds blowing around? Soon the enclosure is filled with people who have come to see what is going on, little children squeezing in between their elders that they may miss nothing. In the cool darkness of the tent, a young woman sits grinding her corn, with steady circular movements of her arms, her bright eyes turned eagerly upon the visitors, stopping her grinding every few minutes that she may listen more intently. After many salutations all round, and numberless questions as to who we are, where we come from, how we live and what we do all day, they crowd even a little closer, if that is possible, to hear "the Story" that to those in Christian lands is old, yet ever new. Will you not pray with us, that it may be to these desert folk more than just a beautiful new tale; that it may be "life indeed" to them?

At the hour of sunset when the Moslem call to prayer is floating down from the roofs of a dozen mosques, loud and imperative knocks begin to sound on the old door of the mission house. Soon the court is alive with boys of all ages and sizes. After a little while of play and chatter in the gathering darkness, they enter the classroom. A stone bench runs along the side with a strip of bright red material tacked along the wall behind to prevent the whitewash from rubbing off on many

restless backs. Bigger boys are seated here while smaller ones sit cross-legged upon the floor. The lamp, shining round the room, catches the eager faces and bright eyes of these desert lads. After hymns (sung in doubtful harmony!) and repeating of memory verses, comes the story-time, followed by a blissful hour when the boys, seated at tables in an adjoining room, exercise their artistic talent (of which some have a large share) by illuminating Arabic verses or pictures. To be sent away from class before painting time is a much dreaded penalty for bad behaviour.

For many years the good seed of God's Word has been sown in some of these young hearts. When is the reaping time to come?

R. SMEETON.

* * *

Autumn. 1894.

The first night at Tozeur will always remain among memory treasures. Our tent was pitched outside the town, the stars glittering through the palm fronds above us, and we felt a brooding of the Spirit over the place, strange in its intensity. Next day the rumour that we had books spread apace, and reading men came trooping over the sand dyke that hemmed in our camping ground. From morning till night for ten days they were there in groups, with a heart hunger to hear and understand that in those days was an almost unknown thing. Soon our supply of books ran short, and instead of selling, we could only lend: and there were men who would sit up half the night reading a gospel through, and come in the morning to exchange it for another.

Such was Tozeur's entrance into our annals.

I.L.T.

Home Notes.

Since our last issue the Deputation Secretary has had the privilege of visiting several of our live centres where both afternoon and evening meetings have been held. Amongst these might be named Reigate, Brighton, Eastbourne, and Bexhill in the South, and St. Ives, Lexden and Felixstowe in the Eastern District.

New points of contact have been made in Petworth, Hastings and Barry (Glamorgan) and at each of these and at the Dundee Y.W.C.A. we have secured representatives. We are particularly thankful for the living link established at this last named Association, where there is a splendid Prayer Group for Missions under the leadership of Miss Scott, President.

Mr. Collinson has also had a meeting with the students at All Nations Bible College, where he always finds a warm reception and eagerness to hear of the progress of the work on the men's side.

As we go to press, three days' meetings are in progress at Saffron Walden. Here the Deputation Secretary has been asked to conduct the local "Keswick" re-union as well as speak on behalf of the Mission.

We are grateful for the many expressions of appreciation we have received of the unique missionary book, "Between the Desert and the Sea," the work of Miss I. Lilius Trotter. We would remind our readers that this can be obtained from the Secretary, 38, Outram Road, Croydon, or 62, Tuddenham Road, Ipswich, and we much appreciate the co-operation of those interested in the output of this book, for which we are largely responsible. On the cover of this issue will be found an announcement with regard to the publication of the Life of Miss Trotter, a book eagerly anticipated by many.

Recent Books and Booklets.

Bearing on the Work in North Africa.

- "Between the Desert and the Sea." By I. Lilius Trotter. With sixteen pages of illustrations in colour. 6s., postage 6d.
- "Children of the Sandhills," a descriptive painting book. 1s., postage 2d.
- "The Land of the Vanished Church." A survey of North Africa. By J. J. Cooksey. 2s., postage 3d.
- "Thamilla." A story of the mountains of Algeria. By M. Ferdinand Duchêne. 7s. Postage 6d.
- "Islam and Its Need." A concise book for study circles. By Dr. W. Norman Leak, M.A., 6d., postage 1d.
- The "Outlook" series. Written by Members of the Band. 1d., postage ½d. 8s. per 100, post free.
- "Now, are they Black?"
- "A Province of Barbary."
- "The Problem of Moslem Boys."
- "Zenib the Unwanted."—What it is to be an Arab Girl.
- "A Thirsty Land and God's Channels." By I. Lilius Trotter. Reprinted from the Magazine. 2d., postage ½d. 2s. per doz., post free.

*English Translations of Books Written for
Mosems.*

- "The Way of the Sevenfold Secret." (A book for Twilight souls). By I. Lilius Trotter. 1s., postage 2d.
- "The Lily of the Desert." By A. E. Theobald. 3d., postage 1d.

*Other Books and Booklets by I. Lilius
Trotter.*

- "Parables of the Cross." Illustrated. 3s. 6d., postage 6d.
- "Parables of the Christ Life." Illustrated. 3s. 6d., postage 6d. Bound in one volume, 5s., postage 6d.

- "Focussed." 3d., postage ½d.
 "A Life on Fire," 1d., postage ½d. 8s.
 per 100.
 "A Ripened Life." Reprinted from the
 Magazine. 1d., postage ½d. 8s. per 100.

(The last two Booklets have been reprinted in response to many enquiries).

All the above can be obtained from The Secretary, 38, Outram Road, Croydon, or 62, Tuddenham Road, Ipswich.



Requests for Praise and Prayer.

Praise.

For the safe return of Miss Grautoff and Miss Ryff from the M'zab country and for the many daily God-given opportunities in the south as far as El Golea.

For the continued eagerness of the Arabs of Dellys for Christian literature.

For good literature sales to Jews as well as Arabs in many places.

For special help given in a time of difficulty.

For the help given by friends who accompanied our travellers to the Beni M'zab and to Tolga, thus rendering these itinerations possible.

For the women and girls who broke the fast of Ramadhan.

Prayer.

That God's blessing may rest upon Miss Trotter's Life and that through it many hearts may receive His messages.

During the past forty years the good seed has been ceaselessly sown; earnest prayer is asked that God's Holy Spirit may cause it to bring forth much fruit.

That there may be a deep work of the Spirit in the hearts of converts and secret believers.

For the tempted.

That though through illness the intended visit to the south lands in the new N.M.P. car was cut short, God's abundant blessing

might yet rest upon the work that was accomplished before the return home became necessary.

For the Hadj and the Marabout of Morocco mentioned in the Editorial—both seekers we believe after the truth—that they may speedily know more of the fulness of salvation.

Realising the short time that remains before the summer heat will prevent outside work, we would ask that we, one and all, may "redeem the time."

For guidance in the summer plans of each member of the Band.



Prayer pulls the rope below, and the great bell rings above in the ears of God. Some scarcely stir the bell, for they pray so languidly; others give but an occasional pluck at the rope; but he who wins with heaven is the man who grasps the rope boldly and pulls continuously, with all his might.

Spurgeon.

Location of Workers, 1929.

<p>At DAR NAAMA, EL BIAR.</p> <p>1891. Miss F. H. FREEMAN. 1906. Miss S. PERKIN. 1919 & 1922. Mons. & Mme. PIERRE NICOU.D. 1922. Mr. & Mrs. A. E. THEOBALD. 1920. Miss A. KEMP. 1927. Miss C. CROSS, M.H. 1927. Miss E. ARMITAGE (secretary) 1928. EDWIN WIGG. 1928. H. T. BARROW 1928. Miss G. BLACKHAM, M.H. Miss MARY MAY.</p> <p>MOSTAGANEM. 1906. Mlle. A. GAYRAL.</p>	<p>BLIDA.</p> <p>1909. Miss F. K. CURRIE. 1909. Miss M. H. ROCHE. 1929. Miss P. RUSSELL.</p> <p>RELIZANE.</p> <p>1907. Miss RIDLEY. 1927. Miss JOHNSTON.</p> <p>MILIANA.</p> <p>1907. Miss M. D. GRAUTOFF.</p> <p>MASCARA.</p> <p>1912. Miss F. HAMMON, M.H.</p> <p>TOZEUR.</p> <p>1920. Miss V. WOOD. 1929. Miss R. SMEETON.</p>	<p>COLEA.</p> <p>1920. Mr. & Mrs. H.W. BUCKENHAM</p> <p>TOLGA.</p> <p>1906. Miss S. PERKIN (part time). 1926. Miss C. RUSSELL (part time).</p> <p>TLEMCCEN.</p> <p>1916. Miss K. BUTLER. 1927. Miss D. GRAHAM.</p> <p>DELLYS.</p> <p>1914. Miss. A. M. FARMER. 1922. Miss I. SHEACH.</p> <p>BOU-SAADA.</p> <p>1909. Miss A. McLROY. 1919. Mlle. A. BUTTICAZ.</p> <p>SIDI BEL ABBES.</p> <p>1912. SENOR & SENORA SOLER (evangelist).</p>
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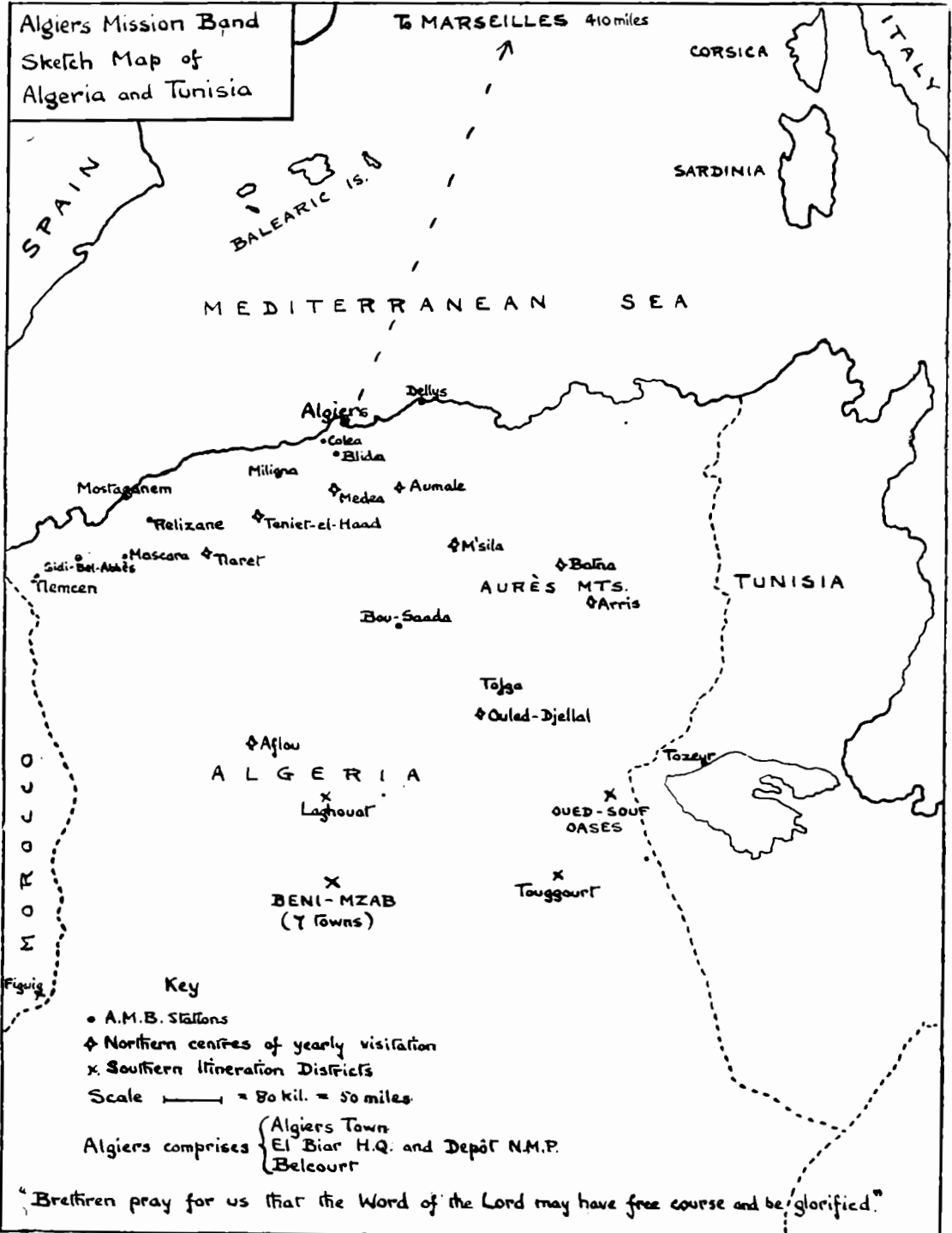
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Algiers Mission Band
 Sketch Map of
 Algeria and Tunisia



↳ MARSEILLES 410 miles

MEDITERRANEAN SEA

ALGERIA

TUNISIA

Key

- A.M.B. Stations
- ◊ Northern centres of yearly visitation
- x Southern Itineration Districts

Scale ——— = 80 kil. = 50 miles

Algiers comprises { Algiers Town
 El Biar H.Q. and Depot N.M.P.
 Belcourt

"Brethren pray for us that the Word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified."