

A Thirsty Land



Algiers Mission Band

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“With Thee is the Fountain of Life.”—*Psalm 36, 9.*

To-day's "find" was beautiful to the inward vision as well as to the outward. Clusters of exquisite wild lilies, white and fragile and fragrant, growing out of the hot salt sand that drifts into dunes round the stunted juniper or lentisk bushes of the fringing shore. They spoke such a message of the reserve forces that had gathered below the surface in the lily bulbs and could well-over into a tide of life that scorned all the difficulties of its environment in sultry days and arid soil. Not a leaf had come to give sign of their existence; the green and white flower buds thrust their heads straight out of the scorched sand, laughing to scorn the difficulties of their surroundings.—I. L. TROTTER.

Dear Friends of the A.M.B.,

Well do I remember finding these lilies of which Miss Trotter writes, for the first time! the thrill of seeing such freshness and fragrance under a burning sun, on a sultry summer day is with me still. For ourselves and for those who are dear to us, life may sometimes seem as impossible as it would appear to be for the sand lilies. Yet, with Christ our Lord is the "Fountain of Life," and His supply knows no limit and is unaffected by difficulties, whether of time, or place, or circumstances.

The days of an Algerian summer are wearisome and the hot sirocco wind, blowing for spells by night as well as by day, taxes body, mind, and spirit. This summer must have been a trying one for those workers who were not allowed to leave their Stations. A holiday by the sea or in the mountain forests, makes all the difference

to health and energy. Most of our British workers were denied a change, but their letters are full of gratitude to our Heavenly Father for His provision for their needs, for the beauty of His creation, and for the lovingkindness of His people. There is much, of course, that can not be told in letters, but it is good to glimpse the true fellowship in Christ, shown to the missionaries, by Algerian Christians and others during these difficult days. Such friendship is specially refreshing and cheering in a foreign land.

Letters have told that Miss Grautoff was ill in the late spring, but most fortunately Mlle. Buticaz was able to go to Miliana at the time, to help Miss Russell. We were thankful to know of Miss G's recovery, but we hear that Miss Nash, who was ill also, is still far from well. Tired after the heat of summer and facing a winter which must mean privation, specially of fuel and cloth-

ing, the workers need our prayers, that a fresh inflow of Life may be theirs.

Our non-British workers are allowed freedom of movement, and this is a great comfort ; moreover they can visit other Stations and act as messengers from Headquarters. Mlle. Buticaz, to see her aged mother, and the Nicouds to visit their boy, have pluckily faced the journey to Switzerland this summer. They had a delayed and difficult time some of the way, but reached Geneva safely.

The Lull family have spent part of the hot weather in the lovely mountains above Blida, and it was good to hear that the Thomsons had been allowed to go up there also, for a holiday. Restrictions vary somewhat in different localities, and Mrs. T. has been free to go for a little time also to Chercelle, to stay with N.A.M. friends there. The Buckenhams have not been able to leave their Station (Blida) and were rejoicing in cooler weather after a very hot spell. Mr. B. told of fellowship with Christian friends, native and European. Edmund had taken his Baccalaureat Exam., and was going later to a Scout Chiefs' Camp at the seaside.

Miss Grautoff needed a change and rest after her illness and hoped that she and Miss Russell would get a permit to go to Algiers. But she writes, "We have not been able to get the change we hoped for this year. In fact we can not even take a walk outside this town, but we are making the best of it. We had the pleasure of a visit for a few days from the widow of our former (French) Pastor, and enjoyed her company, she is a very real Christian. Those friends (French) of yours too, who live here are the true sort. Swallows have built their nest in our courtyard, over the front door. We are interested watching them, the Arabs say they come from Mecca. Grapes are now beginning and glorious peaches and melons. We patch our clothes and exchange books with one Station and another—they are so good in lending. We have holidays now, that is, only six or seven visitors yesterday and six this morning! Please remember us for we want to help those around us. Y (blind woman) needs

prayer, her husband is so very unkind at times, through drink. Buchta (a christian woman) and her family are well again after typhus. I did not think she would recover. Remember her and 'House Beautiful' please." Miss Russell reminds us that Ramathan, the great Moslem Fast, was beginning on September 12th. It lasts a month, and will be harder than usual as many are underfed to begin with.

Miss Perkin writes from Algiers of contacts with various interesting people. One woman, a widow named Ourdeea, has been coming to Dar Naama and making use of a bonfire of dead leaves, grass and twigs to fire the pottery which she makes, in the garden. Miss P. says, "All her tools are, two smooth stones, a bit of flat wood, and one hand, the other is nearly useless, paralysed. She makes all sorts of utensils, drinking pots, food vessels, etc., and has a good many orders. Ourdeea is a very religious (Moslem) young person. She was taught to pray when she was ten, and also has the habit of ejaculatory prayer about all her personal needs. She has heard a good deal of Truth here, and has learnt hymns, but she does not understand much yet, and needs careful teaching." Miss Perkin tells among other things, of the keenness of some of the British, interned out there, for Bibles and for the ministrations of the Chaplain (who is also the agent of the B. and F.B.S.). Bibles are not easily procured in the various languages, under present conditions, and arrive at rare intervals from various quarters. But in wonderful ways the need has been supplied. A story which has warmed my heart is one which can only be glimpsed here, of one of our own countrymen, in prison (not a member of the British forces) to whom a parcel of books was sent by Miss Perkin. Among these was a booklet which was used by God's Spirit to lead him to Christ. His testimony, from his prison, is as follows, "This past week has been the happiest one of my life. I have been truly 'Born again.' This is not a sudden exalting emotion, but a happiness deep, deep down within me. I know that never again shall I fear, that I can face life in faith and knowledge of His love." Later

he wrote, "There is growing within me a great desire to live in service for Christ. I mean real 'active service,' I want to go and tell others of the old, yet ever new, story of Jesus and His love. To tell of the one true way of life here in this existence, and life for evermore in the faith of our Lord.—What great opportunities there are for the service of Christ in these days." Again, he writes rejoicing in the gift of a Bible, and says, "My Bible has become a real companion and source of inspiration. I read it daily and think much about that which I find there." Here is surely a call to prayer! that the Holy Spirit Who has in such a wonderful way led this young man to Christ, may teach, lead, and prepare him in his loneliness for whatever is before him. Such a one surely might in future days be called of God to be a messenger of Christ to the Moslems of North Africa.

Letters from Tlemcen have told of the need of "Andrew" for prayer as he has sore temptations. Mrs. Stalley asks prayer for two Jewesses. They are a mother and daughter who asked for the loan of a New Testament, and said they wanted to know the truth. They gratefully accepted the New Testament as a gift. May their eyes be opened to see in Jesus their true Messiah!

Monsieur Lull's tournée which was mentioned in the last News Sheet was made by train and cycle. He wrote, "From start to finish the door was wide open and I felt that God was leading me. I first visited Touggourt and three neighbouring villages. From the very first the sale of books was splendid, and by the evening I had emptied three bags full. In most of the villages which I visited next day, the sales, specially of Gospels, were good. In one I met a man who had worked at Tolga last winter and had come to the meetings. He told the others what he had heard and wanted me to spend the night at his house. I had a good time at Temacine where I sold many Gospels. In the Jewish quarter of Touggourt books were bought, and I had a very blessed time. The question of the coming of the Messiah is much in their minds at present. Zech. 12. 10, made a great impression on

them. When I got to Djama I had done between thirty and forty miles, in the day, and had visited two villages. The hotel was full, and I slept for two nights in the waiting room at the railway station. I visited six villages round Djama and sold three bags full of books. It was an encouraging day. On my homeward way two days later I had a good sale of Gospels in one large village, and visited a number of others also. At one place out in the desert I sold the last twenty Arabic Gospels I had left to nomads and workmen. I did indeed find doors and hearts open. God heard and answered our prayer, made before I started, that His Word might be widely distributed. I sold about 680 Gospels and booklets. I found my cycle most useful and a great economy in time and money."

God has most graciously supplied our needs, and our year's accounts (ending in June) have been kindly audited once more by Mr. Neville Russell. We hope to publish the Balance Sheet in our next number.

News has come of the Home going of Mrs. Gordon Logan, Secretary of the Fellowship of Faith for the Moslems, and dear and faithful friend of the A.M.B. We offer our deep sympathy to Mr. Logan and their family. Mrs. Logan has entered into the joy of her Lord, whom she served with such whole-hearted love and consecration. But her loving letters, sympathy, and prayers, will be missed by missionaries in every part of the world.

I should like to remind you of the two books, "Between the Desert and the Sea," written and illustrated by Miss Trotter, and "I. Liliat Trotter," by Miss Blanche Pigott. Both these books are sold from this office, and cost only 3s. 6d. each (postage 7d. extra). They will make very lovely Christmas presents in these days when it is so difficult to find gifts.

Many thanks for various magazine subs. safely received.

Your fellow worker,

MILLICENT H. ROCHE.