



NEWS SHEET
REPLACING PRO TEM.

A THIRSTY LAND

The Quarterly Magazine
of the
ALGIERS MISSION BAND

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Home Office : Campfield, Great Barton,
Bury St. Edmunds,
Suffolk.

Headquarters : Dar Naama, El Biar,
Algiers.

No. 73.

SUMMER, 1945.

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“The love of Christ constraineth us.”—II COR. 5. 14.

*“ Speak to us, Lord, until our hearts are melted,
To share in Thy compassion for the lost ;
Till our souls throb with burning intercession,
That they shall know Thy Name, whate’er the cost.
Speak to us, Lord, till, shamed by Thy great giving,
Our hand unclasp to set our treasures free ;
Our will, our love, our dear ones, our possessions,
All gladly yielded, gracious Lord, to Thee.”*

The spirit of sacrifice shown by so many during the war years has constantly filled us with gratitude and wonder. May the love of Christ, shed abroad in our hearts, constrain us to serve Him to the utmost, for “He is worthy.”

Many matters call for prayer in this News Sheet, although we have not had news from all Stations. Conditions on the Field are difficult, and the future looks extremely problematical, but, as Miss Perkin writes, “We are not called upon to meet difficulties

before they materialise. They may be 'chained lions.'"

All our missionary friends have had a very great pressure of work, under difficult living conditions, during the years of war, and some in particular are very tired. They will need our prayers now in the hot months of summer, with furloughs overdue.

Mme. Lull wrote, from their desert Station, **Tolga**, "Famine here becomes worse and worse. The natives have very little food. For a three months' ration, a pound of sugar, a little oil, and six pounds of flour, per head! The wealthy buy in the black market and the poor die of hunger. Yesterday a boy of eight, not a beggar, asked me to sell him a bit of bread. He had not eaten for two days. His mother has no milk for her tiny baby. The boy was crying, and it was our dinner time. I sat him down and gave him a good plate of vegetables from our garden and some bread. We praise God for giving us a fine garden, with plenty of vegetables. Monsieur Lull drove away the locusts for three days and they did little harm to our garden, but elsewhere they have devastated fields of wheat and barley. It seems to us more and more needful to have a class for girls. Men complain to us, specially the young ones, that their wives are not good housekeepers. I always tell them, in reply, that this is their own fault. If they had wished their daughters and sisters to be taught there would have been schools provided for them, and they would have learnt housewifery, sewing, mending and other things. We pray that God will send someone who will give herself to work among the girls."

Monsieur Lull has had an encouraging colportage tour in the Biskra district. He writes, "At Chetma I met a good number of men and youths who in previous years had attended our meetings at Tolga during the date season. Several bought Gospels eagerly. At one place two men came in while I was visiting the Sheikh of the village, to give me back the books they had just bought. The Sheikh himself bought the two books and a Gospel as well, and encouraged the men present to buy. I had

to shorten my journey on account of the bad condition of my bicycle. I had hoped to go to Saada and to two other villages about thirty miles south-east of Biskra, which we have never visited. They must wait for next season, if I can find a better means of transport. I have made fruitless efforts to get new tyres." Monsieur Lull would, it seems, like to have a car, but, though many are being discarded they seem very difficult to get hold of. Our Father knows the need of His faithful colporteur, and will surely supply it in His own time and way.

Mlle. Butticaz wrote from **Bou Saada** at the end of April. "Here we are short of every mortal thing, but our Heavenly Father keeps me well, and my cup is always running over." Mlle B. is probably now at Dar Naama.

The **Canteen** (Y.M.C.A.) at **Dar Naama** has been closed down like so many others. **Monsieur Nicoud**, who was working in two canteens in Algiers, writes that most of the Christian men with whom he came in contact are now in Italy. He reports that they distributed and sold over £100 worth of Bibles and New Testaments to British Forces, not counting those received from the S.G.M. and other Societies. Monsieur Nicoud adds that they were much encouraged also, in the work among French soldiers.

Mr. Buckenham writes that the work among the Allied Forces at **Blida** has greatly diminished, but the Arabs are coming to the Mission House, in increasing numbers.

Miss Nash has sent an interesting account necessarily abridged here, of a visit paid, with a friend, to a great Sheikh who is known as "The Lion of the Desert." The elaborate meal of which they were invited to partake seems in strange contrast to the shortage of food in other places. But the account was written some months ago, and this man of great possessions evidently uses them liberally. Miss Nash would have much joy in sharing the dates he gave among needy Arab friends. It

may surely be that God has purposes of blessing for this man who has shown such kindness to His servants.

Miss Nash writes, "The Lion of the Desert is a mighty Chief of the Nomads, and he has been a faithful friend to us. Since the cold weather set in he has seen to it that we are not without wood, including us among those to whom he sends regularly. Every week he sends his secretary, a negro, with gifts of eggs and other things for various people.

"One day the Chief's eldest son called and invited us to his father's house the following day and we accepted the kind invitation. Towards twelve o'clock next morning a car came for us and we set out. We drove over sparkling sand, past salt lakes, and villages, until we reached our destination, a town much larger than Touggourt and exclusively native. At the entrance of the town is a large compound, and here we stopped. Our host in his flowing robes, followed by his retinue, advanced to welcome us and then led us and others to a large room reserved for honoured guests.

"A long European table in the centre of the room was spread for a feast, and the dishes followed each other in solemn succession. After the meal, and hand washing, we were given coffee, and this was followed by interesting talk around the fire. After a while three negresses came into the room and crouched down in a far off corner, where one, a blind girl began to sing in a melancholy voice to the accompaniment of a tambourine, the others taking up the refrain. Seizing the opportunity of a lull, I went over to them and, kneeling down beside them told them the parable of the Lost Coin. They were so pleased, and I hope will have retained something, short as the time was. Another opportunity came, when our host took us into an inner court to see his daughter. His son joined us, and the Lord guided the conversation into a channel from whence to launch into deeper things. It was most inspiring to see one after another of the attendants creep out from different doors round the compound, and, standing at a respectful distance from us, listen eagerly. The son took us to see the

house he was having built for himself, and introduced us to his dear little wife, a timid child of about thirteen.

Finally we said we must be going so as to arrive home before dark. We saw one of the attendants struggling to get two chickens into a basket to offer to us, while another presented us with a big case of dates and other gifts. The Sheikh could not do enough for us, and this is the way he treats all his guests.

"We got into the car and reached our own door just as the sun was setting, bathing all in that wonderful pink light peculiar to these southern lands. And thus ended our visit to the Desert Lion."

Monsieur Millon, Algiers, reports that work among the Moslem students is difficult. They are few and have preoccupations with other than spiritual matters. He notices that Christian literature published in Arabic has very little appeal. They have their own religious literature for those whose Arabic education is sufficiently advanced, but most of them are more at home in French, and religious subjects seem more acceptable to them in that language.

Miss Perkin, writing of the shortage of things, says: "The clothing problem is incredible. Arabs, after six months have been able each to buy under two yards of cotton material." In her letter Miss Perkin tells of Fifine's husband, Lakdar, having been on leave at Dar Naama. After a very happy time with his wife and little son he has now returned to France.

Miss Farmer arrived safely home on a much-needed furlough some weeks ago.

Miss Phyllis Russell was all ready to start for Algeria and was waiting for a passage. At Eastertide her mother passed into God's presence, after a very short illness. Our friends will, we know, join with us in expressing our deep sympathy with Miss Russell and her family in their great sorrow. Mr. Neville Russell is our kind Auditor and is a member of our Home Council. Miss Russell is staying on with her father and sister till after the summer, when she hopes to go back.

HOME NOTES

Dear Friends,

“**Evangelism is not enough.**” This is a challenging statement made to delegates of more than a score of Missionary Societies who met in London recently for the Annual Conference of the Interdenominational Missionary Fellowship. It was uttered by a veteran missionary from India, the Rev. A. McLeish. The Fellowship had met to face the great need of Christian Literature on the Mission Field. Examination of this only made more painfully clear the staggering proportions of the problem, and how pitifully small, in comparison, has been the effort of the Christian Church to meet it. In all lands where literacy is increasing there is a voracious demand for reading matter. How well the enemy of souls is taking advantage of it, and in face of the flood he is pouring forth, the amount of pure, healthy Christian literature is a mere trickle in spite of the fact that the Bible is still the best seller in the world.

The speaker was right. The printed page stays after the missionary has delivered his message, it penetrates where he cannot set foot. It has the power of the silent insistent witness that no clamour or heckling can drown.

Our Mission Band, with its founder leading the way, has always recognised this, and with the Word of God ever to the fore, we have sought to present the Truth as it is in Jesus to the masses of semi-literates and young people of North Africa in the form of simple printed messages. From Miss Trotter's own hand went the message of “The Seven-fold Secret” to the “Brothers of the Way,” the mystics of Islam, not only in North Africa, but to all the Moslem World, in various languages.

We are glad to report that the recent conference on the subject is bringing about a closer co-operation in this important branch of missionary activity, which will mean added strength to the effort. Some societies found that others had prepared just what they were longing for. Knowledge was given which will prevent waste of time and effort and so help forward the

production of the needed munitions of the Holy War.

To the two A.M.B. representatives it was an inspiration to meet with so many delegates of other societies, who stand with us on the same grounds of Evangelical Truth, for the more effective prosecution of our common task of evangelisation. The sense of the Holy Spirit's Presence and Control was most marked, and that fruit will result correspondingly, one can be assured. We commend the whole matter to your prayers.

We need to pray continually also that God will send us men and women for the great task. Everyone rejoices at the cessation of hostilities in Europe. Clouds may remain or regather, they are but “the dust of His Feet,” the “heralds of His Coming,” for “Behold, He cometh with clouds!” They should make us seek more earnestly now to fulfil our mission, casting all that we have and are at His Feet for His Service. Joyfully seeking and clasping other hands who are prepared to throw in their lot with our's for the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

Ere this will have appeared the annual conference of the Fellowship of Faith for Moslems will have taken place at “Slavanka,” Southbourne. It is good to know that this fellowship is carrying on that ministry of guiding the prayers of God's People into effective channels touching the whole of the Moslem World. We gratefully recognise the constant spiritual help and influence it has afforded our Band hitherto. We pray that it will increase and “put on strength” in the days to come.

We would like to point out the urgent need for sustained prayer upon the situation in the Levant and the Mediterranean area. Prayer will effect much in bringing about divine over-ruling of all circumstances, and giving wise statesmanship in the present handling of events, for the sake of the Kingdom of God.

Yours in His Service,

HAROLD W. STALLEY

(Secretary).