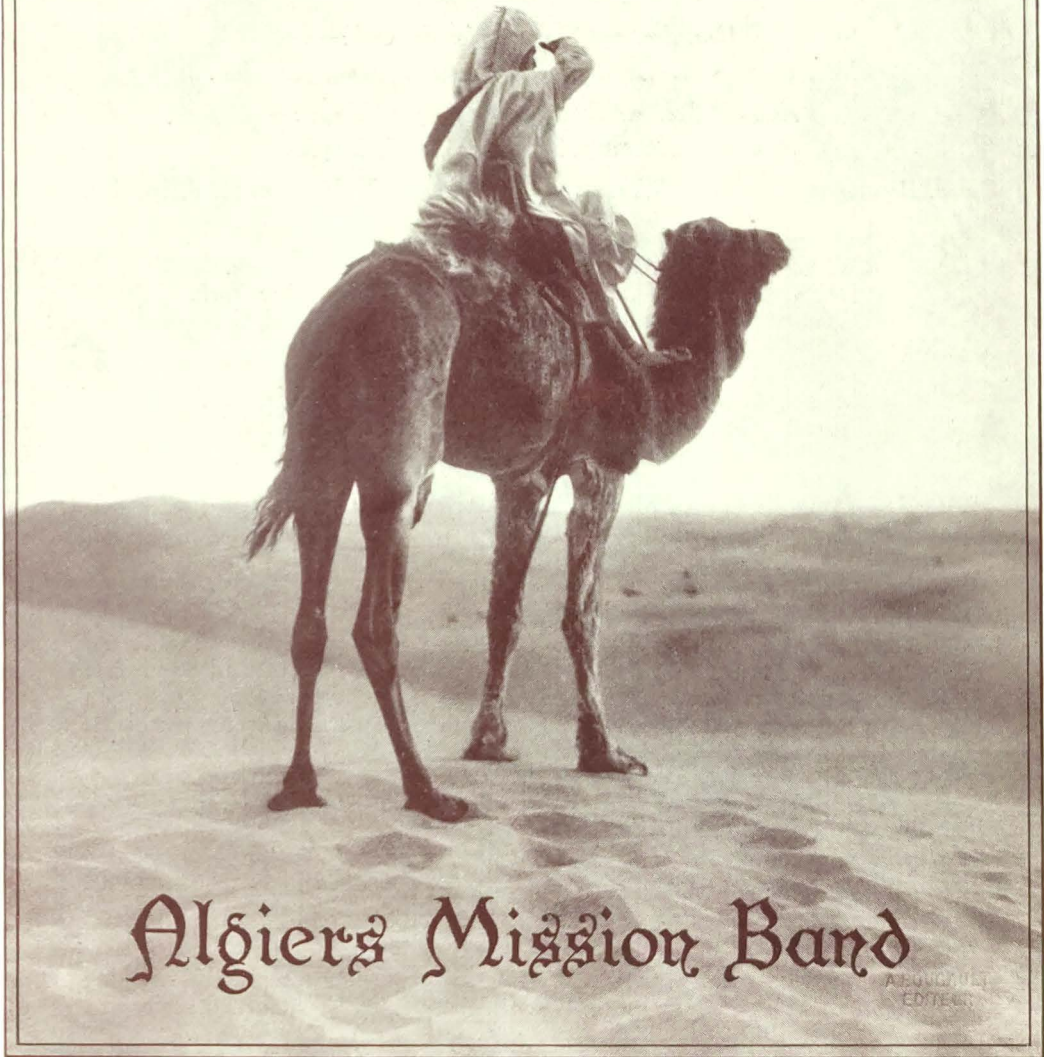


# A Thirsty Land



Algiers Mission Band

ALGERIA  
EDITION

# Algiers Mission Band.

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**INCEPTION & GROWTH.**—In 1888 work was begun in Algiers by Miss Trotter and Miss Haworth, who were soon joined by Miss Freeman. In 1907, after nineteen years of gradual growth, the name of Algiers Mission Band was taken. From one station the number has increased to fifteen stations and out-posts, with others on the horizon. The number of workers has grown to thirty.

**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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SPRING, 1928

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## A Thirsty Land and God's Channels.

### 4.—"The Way of the Wells."

The well system of the desert begins before the hills that bound it to the north sink out of sight. Caravan tracks skirt their long line of chiselled peaks and hollows and trend off to the nearer groups of oases. The wells in these northern stretches of the Sahara lie near enough to one another to make it a mere matter of inconvenience if one gets choked or runs dry. Such a mischance along the trade routes further south may be a case of life or death.

The way of the wells is not the way of the watercourses or the way of the springs. The watercourses quietly receive their supply from above and pass it on; the springs yield to the gentle pressure from within and set it free, but for the wells it involves sterner work to reach their resources. "He turneth the hard rock into standing water and flint stone into a springing well." But the prize is not lightly won.

For when a man sinks a well he determines that he will get through at all costs to the utmost of the hidden treasure: everything must go that would hinder his

reaching it; all that comes in the way of the search is flung out as worthless. "This one thing I do" marks each hour of the quest, breaking through hindrances unknown till they were brought to light as the work went down.

As you go out into the Sahara the unfathomed resources widen and deepen. In the nearest group of oases, the Oued Souf, you can mount the great sand dunes that surround them and trace the windings of the subterranean river, marked by the dotted palm gardens that it nourishes. Down through thirty or forty feet of ever shifting sand-drift goes the seeker, and then through a rock stratum of crystallized gypsum that shuts down the supply. Beautiful things they are, these crystals that lie embedded there, fashioned like stone carving and often a hand-breadth across, sometimes star-shaped, sometimes chiselled like flower petals, sometimes winged like butterflies. But ruthlessly go pick and shovel, tossing them out whole or in fragments, round the pit's mouth. Then the yield is reached and the upspringing comes, and the water rises to the brim

of the well and keeps it level-full, no matter how many scores of times a day the leather bucket swings in and out for the irrigation of the palm garden planted in the sand-pit.

Beyond the region of that buried river the supply spreads into vast underground lakes, only now it has gone far deeper and it is by artesian wells that its wealth is being won. As the toilers sink the shaft they find first a sheet of salt water, worse than useless; far below lies another sheet, sweet and still. Then comes the fight for the overflow. Down and down they drive, piercing the rock till the last inch of resistance is shattered and from the depth, it may be of 300 feet, comes the flood-tide, rising till it mounts above the surface of the desert in a great crystal dome, yielding in many cases up to thirty thousand litres a minute, night and day.

For in these regions there comes into view a new law, linking the seen and the unseen realms. The hill streams showed us the impelling of the water to seek the lowest place: the wells reveal the further fact, that water, shut into that lowest place, must seek the level whence it flowed.

"Whoso drinketh of this water shall thirst again," that is the world's salt water that only mocks at our need, "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst," that is the cool pure water revealed to the heart that finds Jesus. But there is a third stage, "And the water that I shall give him shall be in him (literally, shall become in him) a well of water springing up into everlasting life." And although we cannot lay down mechanical rules in the inner workings of God, there is a sequence that bears the semblance of a law: it is that this upspringing demands a price for its release.

For to begin with, there may be remote regions in our spiritual life where God's working must penetrate, breaking up unre-

cognised barriers of "I," "me," "mine," that may remain after the obvious elements of the self-life have been dealt with by Him. To the very last we need these searchings, this clearing of ourselves, and that with a broken and contrite heart under His touch; when He chides us for our negligences and ignorances, we must not grudge even seemingly beautiful things, like the rock crystals, that must be thrown aside in the quest for the deepest depth that will reach the spring. Down and down He must go in His tender relentlessness. "The sweet heart-shattering of His way with us." And when the last resistance yields, we shall find "the end of the Lord" as did Job of old—an outflow and an overflow from "the undiscovered in God."

But the lesson of the wells does not finish here. The wayfarer in the Northern Sahara goes further out, only to find that the depths lie deeper and the up-spring rises higher. Look at St. Paul: his path led far into lonely walks with God and through all his epistles echo, so to speak, the sound of the blows and the uprushing of the fountain. "Death worketh in us but life in you" rings as the keynote of the apostolic life. For St. Paul was learning the mystery of the filling up that which is behind in the afflictions of Christ for His Body's sake, which is the Church. "Bonds," "contentions," "adversaries," and a score of other tests to endurance in the Heavenly service, borne in union with his Head, were expected to liberate sources of grace for the converts. "For though He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you."

But for St. Paul and for many another who has followed in his train, those words "the fellowship of His sufferings" tell of wells that go yet deeper to reach the hidden ocean of the Love that is Life. There are words in the Epistles that reveal something

of this, the "even weeping" over the false professors who were enemies of the Cross of Christ, the "great heaviness and continual sorrow" over stubborn Israel, so intense that he felt he could have thrown his own salvation into the balance if it would have availed. Those passages show that the Apostle knew what it meant to stand in the Holy Place of the Lord's soul-travail over the transgressors, and catch there the vision of His broken Heart. Do we know that there is such a place? Have we ever had even a desire to reach it?

It was in that place of fellowship that Henry Martyn and David Brainerd of old, and Praying Hyde in our own day, found the flooding up and overflowing of the Spirit, and it has been entered by many another unknown saint whose intercession has made history in the unseen world.

And for us in our small measure there is one, and one only, place where we can find the deepest heart-brokenness, it is down before the broken Heart of Jesus, broken for our sins, for our selfishness, for the sin of the whole world for which we have cared so little.

Emptiness, yieldedness, brokenness: these are the conditions of the Spirit's outflow.

The Cross shows Christ in the stripping bare of the watercourses, in the yieldedness of the springs, in the brokenness of the wells. Such was the path taken by the Prince of Life to set free the flood-tide of Pentecost.

He steadfastly set His face to go that way. Shall we follow His steps?

I.L.T.



"When we stand before the Throne, we shall see what we might have been."

McKIE (Salvation Army).

## To His Praise

from

"The Green Wing of Algiers."

Some thirty years ago when Belcourt had more right to the name written above, given it by the Arabs, the pioneers of the Band took a room over here for Arab meetings. This suburb of Algiers was even then a big residential quarter, inhabited largely by members of influential Arab families. These were specially installed at the foot of our almost perpendicular hill round the shrine that dominated and still dominates the Arab and Kabyle religious life of the district.

No sooner, however, was the portent and force of the Gospel message realised, than the people of the house said that the room could no longer be spared. They pointed out another house near, with a room to let, and so, not too sadly, the workers moved into that. The next step was that the latter themselves had to give notice. They had been sent intentionally to a house of ill-fame! "But," said Miss Trotter triumphantly to me, going over the old story, "we preached to the wretched women before we left—we determined they should have one chance of hearing, and how thirstily they listened!"

I wonder whether that day of apparent defeat will prove in eternity to have been a famous victory over which rejoiced the angels of God!

No other room being obtainable, there was nothing for it but to retreat. Miss Freeman and a staunch Arab friend saw the native plenishings brought back to Headquarters. And for years and years Belcourt could only be visited at infrequent intervals, for the missionaries were busy with more welcoming folk elsewhere.

It was not till 1921 that it was borne upon me by several unsought introductions to

Belcourt homes that its time had again come. Walking about it and praying for light and guidance, the idea was given to test this by taking furnished rooms, if they could be got, not near the strong centre, as attempted by the pioneers, but on one of the upper shelves of the district, with the thought of working downwards. Two rooms were found very quickly, and God blessed the move forward made at His command. But being in the midst entirely for six weeks only increased the urge forward—I longed for a Mission Station to be started, however small. Praying that I might be hindered if I were mistaken, I again went to Miss Trotter for permission to advance. Realising it was a call from God to me, the Committee agreed to allow it, if I could find cheap premises.

Now the "crise-de-logement" over here then, especially for cheap flats, was such that whole families were thankful to instal themselves in a motor-garage or even sheds. So I felt quite safe should that which was "as-rare-as-gold-Mademoiselle-just-now-every-workman-wants-what-you-want," be offered me that it would be as decisive as the tests over Gideon's fleece, on which story I was living just then. God did find a place, so spoilt by having been a jam factory that few coveted it, and by the autumn I was settled, little realising how very difficult it would prove to attack such a stronghold single-handed.

I was called upon to set aside all my pre-conceived plans for working. Everything that had seemed a reason for coming had to go. My high-class acquaintances kept their girls busy embroidering for pin-money, and did not want regular Gospel-teaching and reading because it might spoil their marriages. Still I knew God wanted me over here and that I had been willing *not* to come, so again waited on Him to show His plans. Then step by step He unfolded His purpose to my wondering eyes. Difficulties, material ones as well as spiri-

tual, crowded each other, but He brought the weak under-staffed little work through it all. He did the apparently impossible once more, and, under His guidance as to methods, I was able, to my surprise and that of others, to start classes for girls. Boys crept in and again came an order from my Heavenly Headquarters to form a boys' class. I did it in fear and trembling, knowing what it meant. I found afterwards I had been led to it just when a Koranic school had had to be temporarily closed for extension. By the time its premises were enlarged a tiny class of twelve to fifteen boys was established.

It may be well here to tell of the environment of these some ten thousand Arabs amongst whom God called me to work, for it affects their life and mentality. Picture a high, very high, steep cliff. At the bottom of it is the shrine of Sidi Mohammed, Belcourt's pride. The famous enclosed Arab cemetery in which it stands is still garden-like. On Fridays it becomes feminine Belcourt's "country-club," or perhaps out-door drawing-room. Men shut out, the women sit about in the shrine itself or round the grave of a member of their family. Veils thrown back, they gossip happily and believe incidentally they are keeping the last relative buried there from feeling lonely. A tram-line, on a good road, skirts the cemetery wall, and from thence to the sea, half-an-hour's sharp walk away, straggle on the flat ground factories, huge sheds filled with old iron, big yards of business premises, barracks, to the left a race-course, abattoir, etc., etc. There are also long streets of mean shops, with tall houses of modern flats above them, housing a busy hive of workers native and European.

On a level with the shrine itself are three interminable roads, crossed by others bordered largely by native houses and shops. A climb of two hundred or more steps, cut in the cliff, brings one to a new

quarter on a boss of the cliff, of tiny houses and shaky shanties and sheds, run up in feverish haste as one household after another found itself homeless. Or zig-zag up the hill twenty minutes through native homes, though in modern villas, to the little God-found Mission Station, for I was turned out of the first one after two years.

Rents are high over here. This is no jam-factory, but a tiny flat with a wee garden and a very big view, excellently placed in a side track. But its chief attraction to me was the store-room outside, that, as the Arab friend who had found it for me said, "will make a class-room for thy children." When for the third time God was not calling me to trust for the extra rent. So I asked as a sign that the amount needed might be sent in for the year. The decision was due Christmas Day. On Christmas Eve the sum wanted dropped out of a letter from a quite unexpected quarter.

So I knew then the place was for us. For three years that amount came in *in advance* "that you may not be wondering." We moved in, and the little store-room *did* become our much loved and much-used Arab play-room and class-room, where I trust victories have been won for Christ.

We play we live in the country, a post-office being half-an-hour's walk or more from most of us. But great steamers come in before us in the harbour below—ten minutes tram-ride away is another world, Hotel-land, with which we have nothing to do—aeroplanes fly continually over our heads. But we live a simple life hidden under the boulevard, most of the fathers and many of the women, if European, going down to town to earn their living.

You can imagine how desperately worldly wise are our children with all this before their opening eyes. There is in them more of the quick-silver, more of bird-wittedness

than even in most as they chatter away now in Arabic, now in French interspersed often with Spanish or Italian words.

God and the angels only know how and why the simple games and Bible-class of the Mission-house draw them on their bi-weekly holidays, with all Algiers' gay sights and sounds within reach of their active feet that, often bare, dash up and down the tracks as steep as steep roofs to save a long zig-zag round. They almost hurl themselves down these short cuts.

But they believe—oh what *don't* they believe of ignorant animism? Islam proper, even loyal as they are to it, is above their understanding. Djinns and spirits, charms and spells, the evil eye, spirits of the dead, all these fill their childish minds.

It is a lovely thing to be among them, to substitute with boys a Bible-story and bright hymns for gambling, smoking and swearing in the streets, to see the class-room turned into a play-room sometimes, while the evil things stand back for a short while.

And best of all is the joy of teaching little mothers-to-be how to meet all the sorrows to come by the help of a loving Saviour, a better way than by a dearly bought charm and incantation from sorcerer or sorceress with their dangerous unsuspected powers of hypnotism and suggestion.

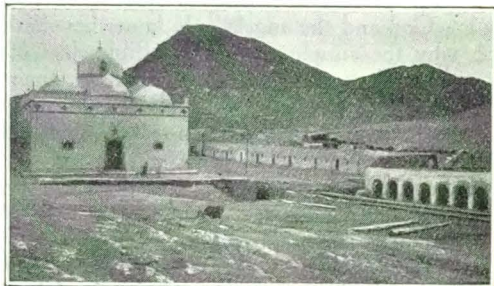
And a few have, however ignorantly, cried up to God and put their sins under the shed blood.

Here, as elsewhere, have death beds been easier for hearing of the Saviour. He has, too, in His love, given to one and another striking answers as, in their blind pain or grief, they cried to Him. Even those who seem farthest from forsaking Islam yet say in times of sorrow, "Only God and the Lord Jesus can help in this." Little things, but they give courage to "stay put" in the midst of the turmoil of a fight that underneath is long and fierce beyond imagining.

M.W.



## The Zaouia.



A Zaouia

In missionary literature describing work among Moslem peoples, the word Zaouia is frequently encountered. To those unacquainted with eastern terminology the meaning of this word is somewhat obscure. In the following article we shall endeavour to give the definition of a Zaouia, its position in the past and its significance to-day.

In the early writings of Mohammedan literature there is no mention made of the Zaouia. The first record we have is by Si Ben Jubair who, in the seventh century of the Hedjira (A.D. 1300) remarks, "A Zaouia is a secret place in the mosque where students, hidden from the view of the outside world, can pursue their studies in quietness."

About 100 years later another description is given by Si Ben Batoota of the Zaouia as existing at that time in Egypt. During this period a decided advance had been made in the religious life of Islam. The seed of mysticism had begun to germinate, and men, becoming dissatisfied with the barren and formal manner of their studies, sought for a warmer and more experimental knowledge of the truth. Union with God now became the one absorbing thought of their lives. Religious orders sprang into existence with unprecedented rapidity and

wandering fakirs began to draw together in a more definite manner. Brotherhoods were formed and fixed meeting-places arranged. Thus Si Ben Batoota asserts that "A Zaouia is a collection of rooms in which are brought together men of piety and good manners, Persians and many Sufi mystics." During this century changes had come into the Zaouia. The simple room for quiet study had developed into a place where kindred spirits met to apprehend the Eternal. Si Ben Batoota in observing this new development said, "What strikes me most about the Zaouia to-day is its close resemblance to the Christian monastery."

Commenting on this passage a modern Arab professor says, "It is evident that the Zaouia is of Christian origin. At first it was simply a cell, then it became a hermitage, and finally a meeting-place for disciples." We might add in passing that, although the Zaouia resembles the Christian monastery in many respects, it differs in one. The inmates are free to come and go at will, therefore take no vow of celibacy, and married as well as unmarried men are received in its precincts.

The modern Zaouia, while retaining many points of the early one, is of a far more complex nature. One of the first to make a study of the Brotherhoods of Algeria thus describes the functions of the present-day Zaouia.

"It is a chapel which serves as a burial-ground for the descendants of the founder.

It is a place of pilgrimage where, at certain seasons, the faithful honour the departed saints.

It is a mosque, a common meeting-place for united worship.

It is a college where all the sciences are studied, a school of theology for the seeker.

It is a retreat for the oppressed in which any one pursued by an enemy may find an inviolable refuge. A shelter for the homeless and a lodging-place for the traveller.



(During the past winter the mosques were filled with refugees rendered homeless by the recent catastrophic floods).

It is a library in which are conserved all the traditions and learning of the past."

This important institution has developed to such an extent that now it touches the daily life of the people at every point. A large proportion of the Moslem population to-day is connected in some way or other with the many fraternities existing throughout the land. In our missionary programme, whether by prayer or direct effort, it is plain that we cannot afford to neglect this power-house of Islamic influence. Something has already been accomplished in this direction by the placing of Bibles in the libraries, but the system as a whole is almost untouched territory. A map has been drawn by an eminent French authority of the positions of the Brotherhoods in Algeria. We could well write across that map the word used by early geographers in regard to so many vast portions of the world, "Terra Incognita," an unknown land, for to the Christian missionary to-day it is still an unexplored region. Only on rare occasions have we been favoured with glimpses of the inner life of this vast organization.

During the past year it has been my privilege to be present at two separate "Dhikrs." This ceremony is an act of devotion practised by the various sacred Moslem orders. The most prominent feature is the continued repetition of the word Allah. The leader, after chanting several passages from the Koran, takes his place in the assembly and begins with the word "Huwa" (He is). The company then takes up the answering refrain "Allah" (God). Some of these exercises are accompanied by physical contortions. These are supposed to facilitate the absorption of the soul into God. The first order which we visited this year was of that type. Frenzied movements marked the whole

proceeding and reverence was conspicuously absent.

The second assembly was of a totally different character; quiet, orderly and subdued. The worshippers were gathered in an inner chamber, all of them maintaining an air of quiet devotion. It was a great contrast to the noisy excitable procedure of the gathering first mentioned. The satisfaction they seemed to attain, the calmness with which they ended, made an atmosphere in which a soul might well approach its Maker.

The last ceremony was the sprinkling of rose-water. Every disciple as he left the room received some of this perfume. Each person who had come to the place of worship took away with him an all-pervading fragrance, an unmistakable evidence that he had been present at the service.

Can this current of earnest devotion, so often lost in barrenness like native streams in desert sand, be diverted into more enduring and more fruitful channels?

There are those among us who have aspirations and visions. Is a future Christian Zaouia, a place hallowed by the presence of the Lord Jesus, where men could come and learn of Him Who is the true and only Way, an impossible longing? A spot as unbound from conventionality as their own Brotherhood homes, a centre of spiritual power, is this an unattainable desire?

The entrance upon this mystic way of the Brotherhoods is called "taking the rose" and the question put by one member to another is, "What rose do you carry?" Is the day too far ahead, is it too distant to hear this response, "The Rose of Sharon?"

Let us return to the earliest and simplest definition of a Zaouia, "A secret place," and there what will be the answer to our many aspirations and deferred hopes?

"Thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." A.E.T.

## In the Desert of the Sand Dunes.



Our Start.

These extracts tell the experiences that have grown out of your prayers and ours that were called for in our Autumn number. You remember that the help of Madame Pagès of the North Africa Mission was kindly lent by the Council for facilitating a journey far down into the desert, to a land visited by us at long intervals only and always with the same sense of marked access and of great possibilities for Christ's cause. For the race of people of those oases is one of the finest in character in the land owing to their stern fight with the difficulties of natural surroundings.

Mme. Pagès' son, the "Jacques" of the narrative, had just finished his military service in a native regiment, and Miss Walton, one of our Short Service workers, completed the trio.

Their starting-point was our desert station of Tozeur and their goal lay in the oases of the Oued Souf, one hundred and twenty kilometres or so to the West by the

old cross-country route used by the camel caravans, in preference to the tourist motor-route that skirts the mountains.

And now you, whose prayers have helped to give those people the hearing of this winter, shall be told how it fared.

Près de Nefta,

Sunday Afternoon, 4/12/27.

We arrived here yesterday at 3 o'clock after our first stage. I went into Nefta alone this morning and had a good long meeting in a house with about twenty women and men, and I am invited to go again this evening. We sang hymns and talked in all freedom, and afterwards the people showered gifts upon me, oranges, pomegranates, two pigeons, and perfume was poured over my head. It was wonderful, because it was such an impromptu affair. I had only thought of going to the Post Office and having a look round. Your prayers are heard. I shall go alone again this evening, and it will be dark, but I am

going with God's blessing.

We are very comfortable in the big tent, and Jacques has the small one. We have five camels and three men.

Monday, 5th Dec., 1927.

I had wonderful opportunities in Nefta which amply repaid for the fatigue of the long walk. I stayed there nearly two hours and distributed some literature. Finally, when I returned to camp, it took three men to carry the presents behind me, oranges, pomegranates, about sixty pounds of beautiful dates, twenty eggs, and two pigeons, all from different people. There was opposition to what I said, but it did not seem to make them angry with me personally, for as I told them, how could I stand before God if He said, "There is so-and-so who would have repented and been saved if you had told them faithfully the way of salvation."

To-day we have only been able to do a stage of four hours; pouring rain and bitter cold made it cruel to oblige the men to go on when they asked to stop. The three men could be shown as examples to many Christians; wet to the skin, not one grumbled, chatting and joking. They worked with Jack and in less than half-an-hour the tent was up, the fire lighted and the kettle boiling. Then we all had tea, they round their fire and we round ours.

Tuesday evening, the 6th.

We have had a long day. We started on the camels soon after half-past-eight this morning, and went on without stop till just before sunset. It was urgent to get on as we could not go a third day without water.

Yesterday we had to go to bed on wet mattresses, with wet clothes and wet blankets; we slept pretty well, being tired, but woke up cold, everything still wet. If we were on a pleasure trip we should surely catch cold, but our text in the morning was, "He knoweth the way that I take."

Wednesday, the 7th.

We met three caravans and exchanged salaams, though I notice our men are rather shy of the other caravans, and always camp in a hollow out of sight. Stopped at a well, such a pretty sight, our five camels round the trough and the men drawing water and pouring it out for them to drink. They are thirsty, it being the sixth day of journeying since the last well. I wondered at the beauty of the Sahara desert with its velvety dunes of sand. When we reached the place of rest at last, the stormy red sky, and a fine rainbow on the immense white sea of sand, made it quite impressive. Just as the sun went down we all three "limped" up a dune and sang the doxology. We are beginning to look rather dilapidated my sunshade is only fit to be a scarecrow, having one broken rib and two spokes out without covering.

Thursday evening, the 8th.

There was quite a storm last night. I went up a dune and watched the camp down in its hollow, a sight never to be forgotten. The two tents with a homely light inside, a little further on the luggage, and near by our natives round the fire, and our five camels.

This morning we started late. The sand dunes are beautiful, but it is tiring work up and down all the time. We passed three oases, sure sign that we are near El Oued. I had a nasty fall. It made a great upset in the caravan, the men shouting and running about. One of them lifted up my head and wiped away the sand which was stifling me, and after a rest I was mounted on the camel again. We shortly after stopped and set camp. We are very thankful for God's keeping us. We shall reach El Oued to-morrow, God willing.

El Oued, Friday, the 9th.

We arrived about an hour ago, all safe.

Friday, Dec. 9th.

(From Miss Walton).

We have had a perfect journey and are at El Oued, near to your beloved Kouinine.

We are in an ideal spot. All is well. I get less tired every day. I made my own saddle, and felt fit to go on to Nigeria. Camel riding I find much more comfortable than I can say.

Kouinine, Dec. 12th.

The Kouinines seem more unspoiled than the people of El Oued; the mark of the tourist is there already. We are facing East, a most glorious view. The welcome was good, and I liked the head man. Everything causes thankfulness, even the rain! No terrible days of burning sunshine.

A letter by the same post from Mme. Pagès tells of the arrival at Kouinine; it was written only two hours after they got in. They had had a very nice reception from the head man. He said he had no house, but a "fondouck" (caravansary) a little out of the town. Here are some extracts from her letters.

Dec. 15th.

It seems to us we have been here quite a long time. We are all three well and happy, everybody putting up cheerfully with the many little inconveniences and small hardships.

From the first day we have had a continual stream of visitors, first the notables, and then the lesser folk. I generally sit outside on the sand, and there we read and talk.

The last two afternoons Miss Walton and I have been visiting, and Miss Walton has several patients already; her nursing knowledge is much appreciated and opens hearts. She nurses while I talk. We have not once had to go after people; everything seems to come naturally. We just wait and pray and doors open of themselves. Jack talks to the young men. (From Miss Walton). 20th Dec.

"Lacked ye anything?" They said "Nothing." We are seeing signs in answer to the prayers of many old warriors and to the Word spoken faithfully by

"Saieda Baschera." (This is the name by which Mme. Pagès is known, being a pun on her French name and the Arabic for "woman bringer of good tidings."—I.L.T.)

(From Mme Pagès). 20th Dec.

I forget a little where I left off, our days are so full here. We start our day by lighting our wood fire and putting on the kettle, and very thankful we are to warm ourselves and drink a cup of hot coffee. After prayers we busy ourselves with one thing and another. There is no need to buy vegetables, for they are willingly offered to us. Unhappily there is only one sort to be had, turnips, so we have boiled turnips at mid-day and boiled turnips at supper, but we have also managed to get some potatoes and some onions. That with a sardine or an egg or two, is our usual menu, but Saturday we were invited to a six-course dinner. Jack has had a good time with the young men and boys with his football, even the notables having a kick at it; it is a great success.

Now about the work. I don't know where to begin. In the morning I get on a little dune in front of the house with Bibles, books, hymn-books, etc. There are always two or three groups who come then, as they know it is the time when they can see me and talk and read. Never before have I found work so easy; I simply follow the lead. I am much struck by that message given three times to me by the men of Kouinine themselves: "Be not afraid, but speak. Give us all the message God has given you for us."

Dec. 22nd.

I spoke to our visitors this morning on the law of suffering, the necessity of the Messiah's suffering. We read through passages from Genesis, Psalms, 53rd of Isaiah, John, the corn of wheat, etc. It was a very hard message for them. However, they thanked me much. "We all rejoice that you speak to us from God."

Women also came, but they stood afar off, and so could not hear. I asked Miss Walton to go and speak to them. Our afternoons are all occupied in houses; women and children crowd about us. Opposition has apparently not yet been aroused. How refreshing to see the earnestness and hunger! Not one comes with the idea of gain or begging. All come to learn what message God has given us for them.

Thus far the openings and the eagerness of the people are simply wonderful. I can only praise God and worship Him. We all three have the spirit of prayer upon us we pray about everything, and never start visiting or speaking without first praying. (From Miss Walton). 29th Dec., 1927.

This morning I was alone in the houses treating eyes, and a group sat in a circle all in order, as they know I like silence and room to move; then they sent one saying, "Come and tell us of the near return of Sidna Aïesa." "No, no," said the patient (whose one eye only had been finished), "finish my eyes!" They had almost learnt one hymn before I left. I get thirty children, boys and women in the courtyards to watch operations of washing eyes, etc. If they behave and stand far off there is a chance for a message to them; otherwise they have to stay out.

Please put us on all your prayer lists. Praise for the whole of every day, and for the kindness and interest which can only be by the Holy Spirit's influence. (From Mme Pagès). Jan. 3rd, 1928.

Nowhere have I found the work so easy, so "prepared;" we need not knock at doors, for they are opened before us, nay . . . we are pushed in. We are urged to visit house after house, every day we enter two, or three, sometimes more, new houses.

After the above a break comes in the circular letters, for Mme. Pagès was suffering from an attack of illness, and as there was

no possibility of any comfort in their camping life, they wisely moved into the little inn at El Oued, where they spent the last ten days of their stay. The weather had changed, and rain storms, almost unknown in that district, came down, breaking communication either by railroad or car. So that for some days it seemed doubtful how the three would find their way back to Biskra and civilisation. Miss Walton was still able to do visiting, and even to get back on foot for anything special in Kouinine. I quote from one of her letters at that time:—

"I went to a small group of houses outside El Oued, and had a beautiful time speaking to three women and many younger ones. At the end, after I had sung for them, a child of seven or eight suddenly said in a clear voice, 'He saved us from our sins.' The women turned to her and she slowly and distinctly repeated it, more than once. Then the leading woman said 'You pray?' I said, 'Yes, shall I pray now?' as that seemed to be her meaning. At the end she said, 'You prayed for yourself a clean heart.' 'Shall I pray for you too?' I asked. They said 'Yes.' One felt that the Holy Spirit was using the tiny message from God's Word."

\* \* \*

That was one of the last messages left behind, for news came that finally the road was passable for cars between El Oued and Biskra. Some days later one of these, a caterpillar car, was secured, and after a hazardous, eventful journey of twenty-three hours the party arrived at Biskra in safety.

Here ends the outward story of these God-given weeks. The inward story is but begun, if we continue in prayer and watch in the same with thanksgiving. The responsibility for following up the advance rests on us, and the next phase in any case must be in the place of intercession. May He make and keep us faithful to the charge.

## Editorial.

Mr. J. H. Smeeton would wish our readers to know that as the Government has undertaken the care and control of all indigent blind in Algiers, some of his blind men have been placed in an Institution. Prayer is asked that the seed sown in their hearts may be watered by the Spirit and bear fruit to life eternal and that those who remain may be more effectively taught and nurtured, also that from their number God will call out those who will bear witness among their own people.

We hope in a future issue to tell the story of Mr. Smeeton's work alongside us on their behalf.



### Spring

#### Literature Issues—A.M.B.

Hardly Literature this time, as you would define it at home, but of intense importance in this semi-literate land. Pictures with a short scripture passage at the back in large type are understood and remembered and passed on with vivid *viva voce* explanations to the remotest dwellers in huts and douars.

The right pictures have been the lack, for they must be clear, outstanding, not lavish in figures and above all absolutely "native" in their setting. The ideal is met in the drawings of Miss Elsie Anna Wood of Cairo, and the picture-sharing scheme lately planned by the Central Literature Committee there places them within our reach.

We have now before the next A.M.B. Literature Committee the planning how best to use two sets of electros that are in our possession:—

- (i) Six of the Parables (16 mo.).
- (ii) Twelve (quarto) of the infancy of Moses.—These will take the New Testament message at the end through the story

of the Infant Jesus saved from the slaughter of the Innocents to be the Deliverer of His people.

Also twelve beautiful quarto drawings of the Prodigal Son which are our special joy and hope.

As the way opens to issue these, they can be used as picture books, half size and whole size, colloquial Arabic and French; as magic lantern slides and as wall-sheets, and we believe that through them the promise will be fulfilled "Thy Word runneth very quickly."



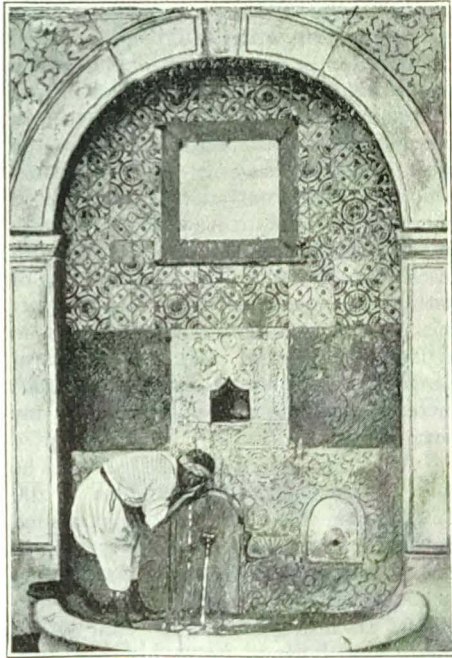
## The Home of Many Martyrs.

In the previous article we have seen the early Christian Church of North Africa go down finally under the Moslem onslaught, and the question arises, how was it that a Church with so noble a list of martyrs was overwhelmed, while the Coptic Church in Egypt under the same pressure has been enabled through all these centuries, in the midst of a Moslem population, to keep the Christian faith? The Rev. J. J. Cooksey in his very interesting "Land of the Vanished Church" gives these two reasons which I will venture to quote verbatim. First, "The Scriptures were never translated into the languages of the great Berber nation which formed the mass of the people outside the coast cities. They were taught by men who were Latin scholars, working through teachers who spoke the native tongue. . ." The second great reason which led to the decline and fall of the North African Church is that "it never appreciated the duty, nor realised the safeguard of missionary enterprise; for the great mixture of nationalities and conflicting temperaments of the people constituted



a menace. This was at the root of the persistent and violent schisms which were its greatest weakness, whilst heresy never found in her the congenial soil it found at Rome and Alexandria. The Carthaginian was restless and enterprising: the Berber intense in emotion and uncontrollably independent and dogged. The Byzantine Greek was refined, surpassing in pure intellect the ordinary mortal . . . The Roman was strong in habits of order and obedience to authority. There was only one safeguard against a violent clash of these heterogeneous elements, a great missionary enterprise."

The Arab invasion advanced in mighty waves. In A.D. 640 Egypt fell under its dominion; in A.D. 648 the Mahomedan



Slaves were allowed to Drink here on First Landing.

General Okba ben Nafa took Carthage and as we know carried forward his victorious hosts till he stood on the shores of the Atlantic.

To the conquered Christians three alternatives were offered; apostacy from the Christian faith and acceptance of Islam, death, or a servile life as tributaries. Yet as the centuries passed God did not leave Himself without a witness in this tortured land. Haedo, a Spanish Benedictine monk, writing in 1612 when the Arabs had long taken to piracy, writes of numberless Christian slaves who in North Africa, lived and died "confessors and holy martyrs of Christ, whose blood and happy deaths have consecrated this country."

Of these there comes to mind the story of Geronimo, the young Arab Christian who, on his repeated refusal to deny his Lord, was thrown into a large mass of cement and built into the wall of the fort called "the 24 hours fort" just outside the Algiers city wall. Less known perhaps is the story of the monk who, with many of his fellows, was captured in an attack by Algerian pirates on the Spanish coast and brought as a slave to Algiers. In spite of the hardships of a life of servitude under Arab masters, he kept up his jovial character and appearance until one sad day when, finding that through forgetfulness his name had been omitted from the list of his brethren for whom a ransom had been paid, he, in bitterness of heart, denied his Lord and became a rich and pampered renegade.

No gifts or position could quell the voice of conscience and, in a year's time, in spite of all the luxury with which he was surrounded, he became so thin, so miserable-looking, that those who had known him in his slave days could not recognise him. At last he could bear the burden no longer and, presenting himself before the Dey, he said, "I have committed a sin in denying the Lord Jesus which will never be for-



given, but I cannot go on denying the Lord who died for me."

Threats and promises were in vain and he was thrown into prison only to be brought out in a few days' time to die. The Christian slaves could not reach him to comfort and cheer him, but much prayer was made, and those who could, joined the crowd that accompanied him to the place of execution. Utterly hopeless he looked, as the procession moved on, and those near him heard the low refrain, "I know I cannot be forgiven." Then there came a wonderful moment when he evidently saw Someone invisible to others, and he cried out in a voice full of joy, "Oh, He has come, He has come," and so strengthened by his redeeming Lord he went unshrinkingly to his death.

It must be confessed that there were many renegades who, hopeless of escaping from their miseries as slaves, yielded to the temptation and became Moslems. Often they were promoted to high places which meant great earthly riches, yet even among them some there were who, drawn by the grace of God, came back to the truth.

There is an interesting incident in the life of St. Vincent de Paul who, in his young manhood, was enslaved in Tunis. Sold to a sailor he was passed on to an Arab doctor; this man, when he was dying, bequeathed him to his nephew and eventually he fell into the hands of an Italian renegade to whom he was made the means of conversion and in time, master and slave, now brothers in the faith, escaped to Europe.

In the porch of the English Church in Algiers there is an alabaster plaque to the well-deserving memory of the Rev. Devreux Spratt, a portion of whose diary is quoted in Murray's Handbook for Algeria and Tunis. He writes, "October 23, 1640.—I embarked on one John Filmer's vessell which set sayle with about six score passengers; but before we were out of sight of land we

were all taken by an Algire piratt, who put the men in chains and stockes. The thing was so grievous that I began to quote Providence and accused Him of injustice in His dealings with me, untill the Lord made it appear otherwise by ensuing mercye. Upon my arrivall in Algiers I found pious Christians which changed my former thoughts of God, which was that He dealt more hard with me than with other of His servants. God was pleased to guide for me and those relations of mine taken with me, in a providential ordering of civil patrons for us, who gave me more liberty than ordinary, especially to me who preached the Gospel to my poor country-men among whom it pleased God to make me an instrument of much good. I had not stayed there long but I was like to be freed by one Captain Wilde, a pious Christian; but on a sudden I was sould and delivered to a Mussleman dwelling with his family in ye towne, upon which change and sudden disappointment I was very sad. My patron asked me the reason and withall uttered these comfortable words, 'God is great' which took such impression as strengthened my faith in God, considering thus with myself, shall this Turkish Mahumetin teach me, who am a Christian, my duty of faith and dependence upon God? After this God stirred up ye heart of Captain Wilde to be an active instrument for me at Leagourno in Italy amongst the merchants there, to contribute liberally towards my ransome, especially a Mr. John Collier.

"After the Captain returned to Algiers he paid my ransome which amounted to 200 cobs. Upon this a petition was presented by the English captives for my staying among them; yt he showed me and asked what I would do in ye case. I told him he was an instrument under God of my liberty and I would be at his disposing. He answered hoe I was a free man and should be at my own disposing. Then I replied, 'I will stay, considering that I

might be more serviceable to my country by my continuing in enduring afflictions with the people of God, than to enjoy liberty at home."

There is, however, a hope that this brave shepherd of souls was eventually released with his flock, for some years later sufficient money was collected to ransom all the English slaves in Algiers, and later again the name of the Rev. Devreux Spratt is found in a church register in England as having celebrated a marriage.

But all were not so fortunate. Thousands were called on to endure to the end and thousands obeyed the call. Not until Lord Exmouth's victory over the Algerians in 1816 were the last Christian slaves delivered from Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli, 3,003 in number, and fourteen years later the French began their conquest of North Africa which has brought peace and stability to that storm-tossed country.

As the smiling tourist passes up and down the narrow streets of the Arab town, he finds them dark, and so they are, for since they were built the sun's rays have never penetrated them; dirty, so they are—the shops seem to him dismal little cubby holes. Does he ever think of the martyrs and confessors from almost every European nation, who here wore out their lives, not accepting a deliverance to be bought by the denial of their Lord? Does he ever think that this martyr land must be won back for Christ?

F.H.F.



## Home Notes.

This winter has been one of opening doors and widening horizons, at home as well as on the field, and as on the field God is calling us to go forward in faith to make the most of the day of opportunity which is so surely dawning on Islam, so at home He is bringing us in touch with those whom He wants to be His channels, through

whom He can supply the growing needs of the work. Let us see to it that no forward move on the field has to fall back for lack of support from home.

In February, the Deputation Secretary spent a week in North Ireland. He took part in Faith Mission Conferences in Belfast and Roughan, the former being a large gathering of 700 or 800 and much interest was aroused. At Ballyalbany and Laghey the interest existed already, as two of our workers come from these districts, and one realised the value of personal prayer-backing of individuals at such meetings. A very good meeting was also held at Ballymena, the centre of the Irish Revival, where fine aggressive Christian work is still being carried on, and at Bessbrook and Portadown also the Deputation Secretary received a warm welcome. In all the Irish meetings, as in the meetings in Scotland last quarter, it was encouraging to notice that in the audiences as many men as women were present, and occasionally men predominated, and many of the young men seemed keenly missionary hearted.

At Purley, St. Ives and Wellingborough there were good meetings with groups of young people. The attendance at the grown-up's meeting at Saffron Walden was diminished by a torrential downpour of rain, but the children turned up in good numbers to their special lantern talk on the following evening, and some of the older people also came along then.

All these opportunities of broadcasting our needs have been made possible through the help of our local representatives, whose services we much appreciate.

Mr. and Mrs. Theobald hope to be in England on furlough during the summer and will be available for Deputation work in July and August, and any who are desirous of securing them should communicate with the Deputation Secretary, 62 Tuddenham Road, Ipswich.

## Requests for Praise and Prayer.

### Praise.

For the wonderful access given during the weeks spent in the Oued Souf. Pray for God's shielding and tending of the "incorruptible seed" left behind.

For the beginning of Heaven's "Go forward" in the men's extension work through two definite offers (one accepted, and one under consideration). With this come unlooked-for facilities for receiving these men candidates on their arrival.

That the classes for boys and girls at Beit Naama (Algiers town) have been resumed, and that the Book Depot in a street near by is prepared for re-opening.

That the Dellys class-room has been opened and is prospering.

That the village openings round Tozeur and its town work among women and girls have had their turn for concentration this winter.

That notwithstanding repeated counter-attacks in various directions, most of those lately led to Christ in Relizane, Tlemcen and Bou-Saada have been kept true.

That all financial needs have again been supplied. He said, ". . . 'lacked ye anything?' and they said 'Nothing'."

### Recent Books and Booklets.

*Bearing on the Work in North Africa.*

"Thamilla." A story of the mountains of Algeria. by M. Ferdinand Duchêne. 7s. Postage 6d.

"The Land of the Vanished Church." A survey of North Africa. By J. J. Cooksey. (World Dominion Press). 2s. Postage 3d.

"Islam and its Need." A concise book for study circles. By Dr. W. Norman Leak, M.A. 6d. Postage 1d.

"In Desert and Town." Illustrated. By M. M. Wood. 1s. Postage 2d.

All the above can be obtained from The Secretary, 38, Outram Road, Croydon.

### Prayer.

That among the new avenues of service that seem opening before us this spring, we may all walk fearlessly with God as He leads us on.

That He will be preparing help for the under-staffed Stations. Those who can be trained for future leadership are specially needed.

That we may have wisdom from God in using to the full the help of the little band of converts scattered among our Stations, and that they may in these early days of their spiritual life receive the fulness of the Holy Ghost and thus go steadfastly forward.

For the following up of the ever-increasing number of prayer-groups that stand behind us for victory. Let us remember specially the rallying for intercession now going on in the North of Ireland.

That those on the field may be kept in heart-sensitiveness and obedience to the Spirit; for He seems moving now in a special way among the natives and Europeans. Pray that there may be no check in His purposes of Grace.

"The Lily of the Desert." (Peril of Hasheesh and Way of Deliverance). By A. E. Theobald. 3d. postage 1d.  
 "The Way of the Sevenfold Secret." (A book for twilight souls). By I. Lilius Trotter. 1s. Postage 2d.

*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.

"A South Land," with coloured plate. 2d. Postage ½d.

"Focussed." 3d. Postage ½d.

## Location of Workers, 1927-28.

### DAR NAAMA, EL BIAR.

1888. Miss I. L. TROTTER.  
 1906. Miss S. PERKIN (part time).  
 1912. Mr. J. H. SMEETON.  
 1919 & 1922. Mons. & Mme. PIERRE NICOUR  
 1922. Mr. & Mrs. A. E. THEOBALD.  
 1920. Miss A. KEMP.  
 1926. Miss BRADING & Miss WALTON, S.S.  
 1927. Miss JOHNSTON & Miss ARMITAGE, S.S.

### BELCOURT, ALGIERS.

1909. Miss M. WATLING.

### BLIDA.

1909. Miss F. K. CURRIE.  
 1909. Miss M. H. ROCHE.

### RELIZANE.

1907. Miss RIDLEY.  
 1926. Miss RUSSELL.

### MILIANA.

1907. Miss M. D. GRAUTOFF.  
 1926. Miss D. RICHARDSON.

SIDI BEL ABBES. 1912. SENOR & SENORA SOLER (evangelist).

### MASCARA.

1891. Miss F. H. FREEMAN.  
 1912. Miss F. HAMMON, Mission Helper.

### TOZEUR.

1920. Miss V. WOOD. Miss EMERSON (temporary).

### MOSTAGANEM.

1906. Mlle. A. GAYRAL.

### COLEA.

1920. Mr. & Mrs. H. W. BUCKENHAM.

### TOLGA.

1906. Miss S. PERKIN (part time).

### TLEMCEM.

1916. Miss K. BUTLER.  
 1927. Miss D. GRAHAM.

### DELLYS.

1914. Miss A. M. FARMER.  
 1922. Miss I. SHEACH.

### BOU-SAADA.

1909. Miss A. McILROY.  
 1919. Mlle. A. BUTTICAZ.

## ENGLAND.

### Local Representatives:

- ALL NATIONS MISSIONARY COLLEGE.—Mr. Francis Ewing, A.N.B.C., Beulah Hill, Upper Norwood.  
 BARKING TYE.—Mr. P. J. Butler, Barking Hill, Needham Market.  
 BARTON, GREAT.—Mrs. Ed. Johnston, "Campfield," Great Barton, Bury St. Edmunds.  
 BEXHILL.—Mrs. Brownrigg, Gorse Cottage, Terminus Road.  
 BIRKENHEAD (Emmanuel).—Mrs. J. D. Drysdale, Emmanuel Training Home, 1, Palm Grove.  
 BRIGHTON.—Miss E. Bullen, 14, Clifton Terrace.  
 BROCKLEY, S.E.4 (Girls of the Realm Club).—Miss L. E. Brittle, 31, Wickham Road.  
 BURY ST. EDMUND'S.—Miss F. H. Davies, 121, Queen's Road.  
 CARLISLE (Willow Holme).—Mr. T. Child, 11, Ferguson Road, Longsowerby, Carlisle.  
 CRAWLEY.—Miss M. J. Cheal, The Nurseries.  
 DARLINGTON (Pierremont Mission).—Miss E. Armstrong, 37, Green Street.  
 ELSMSWELL.—Mr. N. Mulley, "Rosebank," Elmswell, Suffolk.  
 ELSENHAM.—Mr. C. H. Kohn, Mission House, Elsenham, Essex.  
 FORNHAM.—Mr. P. F. Quant, Fornham All Saints, nr. Bury St. Edmund's.  
 HIGHAM.—Mrs. Barcham, Higham, nr. Bury St. Edmund's.  
 HINDERCLAY.—Mr. Scott, Hinderclay, nr. Diss, Norfolk.  
 ILFORD.—Mr. Walter Sarfas, 121, Coventry Road.  
 ILFORD (Grantham Road Mission).—Mr. H. J. Payne, 106, Landseer Avenue, Manor Park, E.12.  
 ISLINGTON MEDICAL MISSION.—Miss Day, 13, Windsor Street, Essex Road, N.1.  
 LEEDS.—Miss J. Falconer, Calverley House, near Leeds.  
 LEWES.—Miss Lee, "Cobury," 20 Prince Edward Road.  
 LEXDEN.—Miss G. WAYRE, 12, Straight Road, Lexden, Colchester.  
 MANCHESTER.—Mr. F. Kirkham, "Ashlea," Rivershill, Ashton-on-Mersey.  
 MANCHESTER (New Bank Street Mission).—Miss E. McDiarmid, 84, Birch Street, West Gorton.  
 NEW CROSS.—Miss D. M. Appleby, 3, Arbuthnot Road, New Cross, S.E.  
 NINE ELMS (St. James' Mission).—Mr. C. H. How, 204, Stewart's Road, Clapham, S.W.8.  
 NORWICH (C.A.W.G.).—Miss C. Mumford, C.A.W.G., St. Giles, Norwich.  
 PURLEY (Baptist Ch. C. E.).—Mr. J. C. Dinnage, "Ventnor," Whytecliffe Road.  
 SAFFRON WALDEN.—Miss E. Midgley, "Larchmount."  
 SIDCUP.—Rev. G. R. Harding Wood, Christchurch Vicarage.  
 SIDCUP (Girl Guides).—Miss V. Martin, Roslyn.  
 ST. IVES (Hunts).—Miss F. Stuttle, "Verdun," Market Lane.  
 WELLINGBOROUGH.—Miss W. Purser, 23, Hill Street.  
 WINTON (Bournemouth).—Pastor W. G. Stalley, "Kurichee," Norton Road.  
 WOODBRIDGE.—Miss M. Fisher, 24, Chapel Street.  
 WOOLWICH TABERNACLE.—Mr. S. H. Powell, 19, St. Margaret's Terrace, Plumstead Common, S.E.18.  
 WORTHING.—Miss Gotelee, White Lodge, Mill Road.

## SCOTLAND.

- DYSART.—Mrs. Muir, "Ansford," Dysart, Fifeshire.  
 FAITH MISSION TRAINING HOME.—18, Ravelston Park, Edinburgh.

## IRELAND.

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| <p>BESSBROOK.—Miss R. Bailie, Woodside Cottage.<br/> <i>Co. Monaghan.</i><br/>                 CLONES.—Mr. A. B. Henry, Clones,<br/>                 STONEBRIDGE.—Mr. B. Kennedy, Stonebridge, Clones.<br/>                 SILVERSTREAM.—Mr. George Quinn, Hand and Pen,<br/>                 Silverstream.</p> | <p>BALLINODE.—Mr. John Dunwoody, Ballinode.<br/>                 WATTSBRIDGE.—Mr. J. Ritchie, Wattsbridge.<br/>                 GLASLOUGH.—Miss Crone, Glaslough.<br/>                 MIDDLETON.—Mr. Robert Wilson, Shelvins, Glaslough.<br/>                 CASTLESHANE.—Mr. W. Eagle, Braddox, Castleshane.</p> |
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Algiers Mission Band  
 Sketch Map of  
 Algeria and Tunisia

