

# A Thirsty Land



Algiers Mission Band

ALGERS MISSION  
EDITION

# Algiers Mission Band.

FOUNDED IN 1888 BY I. LILIAS TROTTER.

HEADQUARTERS :—DAR NAAMA, EL BIAR, ALGIERS.

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*General Treasurer* :—Mr. H. W. BUCKENHAM, Oulad Sultan, Blida, Algeria.

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W. CECIL COLLINSON.	MISS McILROY.	MISS PERKIN.
MISS FARMER.	MISS NASH.	MISS RIDLEY.
MISS GRAUTOFF.	P. NICLOUD.	MISS WOOD.

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M. le PASTEUR DECORNET, Vallon, Ardèche.

*Referees, Algeria* : M. le PASTEUR CARON, Algiers.

M. le PASTEUR ROLLAND, Tizi-Ouzou.

*Editor of "A Thirsty Land"* :—MISS M. H. ROCHE.

## Location of Workers.

DAR NAAMA, EL BIAR (Algiers). BOU SAADA.  
*Headquarters.*  
1906. Miss S. E. PERKIN.  
1907. Miss RIDLEY.  
1919 & 1922.  
M. and Mme. P. NICLOUD.

ALGIERS (City).  
1930. Miss I. NASH.  
1935. M. and Mme. MILLON.

BLIDA.  
1920. Mr. and Mrs. H. W. BUCKENHAM.  
1938. Mme. POQUET.  
M. POQUET (mobilised).

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

MILIANA.  
1907. Miss M. D. GRAUTOFF.  
1929. Miss P. M. RUSSELL.

MOSTAGANEM.  
1906. Mlle. A. GAYRAL.

SETIF.  
1914. Miss A. M. FARMER.  
1935. Mr. and Mrs. THOMSON.  
1937. Miss K. LAYTE.  
Miss SHEACH (in Scotland).

## Spring, 1940.

TLEMCEN.  
1934 & 1927. Mr. and Mrs. H. STALLEY.

TOLGA.  
1928 & 1937.  
M. and Mme. S. LULL.

NEFTA.  
1920. Miss V. WOOD (detained in Algiers).

OUT-POSTS.  
RELIZANE. Miss RIDLEY (part time).  
TOZEUR (from Nefta).  
Miss V. WOOD (part time).  
GHARDAIA (Beni M'zab).  
1907. Miss M. D. GRAUTOFF (part time).  
1929. Miss P. M. RUSSELL ..



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## Editorial

“Life! life! eternal life!  
Jesus alone is the Giver!  
Life! life! abundant life!  
Glory to Jesus for ever!”

The Spring Number!

Spring has come once more with its new life and blossoming in spite of the long dark winter and of the grim shadow of war.

In this magazine we seem to feel the soft life-giving wind of God blowing through the land, in desert oases, in southern towns, and in Mission Stations.

The story of the opening of the book-room at Tlemcen tells of an answer to the prayers of Miss Butler and others through many years.

Another very joyful answer to prayer will be found in the good news from Relizane. God was faithful in finding a “way of escape” for this dear girl, though not in the way expected.

There is a thrill in the stories told by those who have gone afield carrying the Good News, and our hearts go with them.

The pictures given are vivid and true. These men and women, boys and girls are alive to-day, and the seed is springing up in their hearts.

But the enemy of souls is doing his utmost specially against the converts, for he knows that his time is short.

Let us read the articles prayerfully, rejoicing in the promise of Life, asking— for God’s sheltering of all the tender shoots, and that there may be a rich fulfilment to His glory.

Our two new candidates may be going out in April; let us pray that God will bless them and will make His plan for them clear.

We send our loving thoughts and wishes to “Christiane,” a second little daughter, born to Mons: and Mme. Lull at Christmas time.

It is good news that the price received for the Mission car which was requisitioned on the outbreak of war, has sufficed to buy a useful second-hand car which has already started its work of colportage.

*A Thirsty Land* again has only twelve pages and one picture, a war-time economy which all will understand.

M. H. R.

## The Desert

We were up and out early, and went down to the river-bed. Looking back northwards, every crack and line of the hills lay reflected in a pool. Looking on and on, the desert stretched away like a great sea, broken only by an island of palms here and there, away and away to the Touaregs and the Sudan beyond. I shall never forget the feeling of that first sight of it. The sense of rest and silence that lies in the immensity of it grows day by day. The huge illimitableness of everything. One's soul can expand. It is a gift from God, who can give "largeness of heart, even as the sand."

### *The wind's mysterious work.*

Jesus said, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth, so is everyone that is born of the spirit."

In the sand of the desert you see the trace of the wind's work, changing the face of the desert world as the Spirit mysteriously changes the heart of the man that is born again.

Riding in the teeth of a sand wind, one day our camel's footsteps were obliterated as fast as made. Another night we camped on a dune, and when we closed our tent that dune seemed spoiled for ever by footsteps and signs of habitation. Not so, a wind arose and when morning dawned, and calm had come, not a sign or mark remained, a very parable of how He can "blot-out," who "walketh upon the wings of the wind." "According to the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions."

And the Holy Spirit of God blowing like the desert wind through our hearts can blot out our lower, shameful desires, if we will let His cleansing wind blow over us. As we climbed those mighty sand-dunes, we

could see camel prints on either side of the crest, but there on the crest where nought but the wind has sway, all earth-prints are gone!

### *Mirage and Pool.*

The traveller in the desert, riding on with parched throat and burning skin sees before him a lovely lake bordered with trees and perhaps a white building or so. And it is all a mockery, a picture made by the sun on the many-coloured sand-crystals, and the quivering air. Nothing is there save sand and pebbles and a stunted bush or two of camel-thorn.

Is there any mirage in your life? Are you satisfied down in the inner depths of your spirit? Is there no restlessness and disappointment there, as what looked like a pool turns out to be a stretch of burning sand? In the hidden centre of your life does there lie a mirage or a pool?

We pass the question of this world's mirage-like blessings. You are not expecting satisfaction there. But do you know anything of spiritual mirage? Was there a "heavenly vision" before your eyes of heart-holiness and power to help other souls? And have you found that, like the mirage-pool in the desert it lies always a little further on, never within reach? So may a hope melt on and on into the distance until life's journey is over.

Can this mirage-pool become a real pool? Our God is not a God who mocks His thirsting souls with promises that cannot be fulfilled. Long ago God said by one of His prophets, "I will make in the wilderness a pool of water and the dry land springs of water." He says, and this word of Christ is the spiritual counterpart of that promise: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall become a well of water springing up unto eternal life."

Only the conditions are inexorable.

If God is delaying it is because of some delay on your side. When the soul says "not yet," over some act of surrender or step of faith that lies between, God must say "not yet" over His living water. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall He also reap." When you come to "here and now" God will come to "here and now" too.

Make an end of your last "not yet"—put all that is on your side into the present tense, and see whether He will take long to do His work. "A day is with the Lord as a thousand years," you think He could do a good deal with your soul in a thousand years. Well; He can do a good deal to-day—given the conditions.

And as we go on, He shows us that *the* "pool" that He has, waiting for our thirsty lips, is just this—JESUS—that our hearts cannot live on any "experience," of His grace, however blessed, however needful as means to His end. His end for us is Jesus.

"Not alone the gloom and darkness—  
Earlier joys have passed away,  
As the stars in glowing sunrise  
Lose themselves in golden day.

"And alone—alone before us,  
Christ in cloudless radiance stands,  
On His head the crowns of glory  
And the nail-prints in His hands."

I. L. TROTTER.

## Going Forward at Tlemcen

On Sunday, December 3rd, just after the women's meeting, we held a little service of dedication for the new Bible depot, which has been opened on the premises. It is a room which Miss Butler originally built as a Prayer Room on the

further side of the garden, which has been slightly enlarged, and a door made to open into the street. Inside it is divided into two parts by the big stock cupboard, the part nearest the door being the actual shop, while beyond is a comfortable little room, furnished with a mat, chairs and table, where men can come in and sit down to read or talk. On one wall is a lovely picture of Christ healing a blind man (we trust there may be many blind eyes opened in this place in days to come), and on another there is a scroll with the words, "God is our Refuge and Strength, a very present help in trouble," in French. In the window looking on to the street there will always be an open Bible for passers-by to read, while a big notice proclaims that here one can obtain the Bible in one's own language, be it Arabic, French, Hebrew, Spanish or English.

This window has been a veritable Way-side Pulpit, for quite a number of times we have heard the open pages being read aloud by someone, either to himself or to a group around him.

The dedication was very simple and informal. The French Pastor was with us and he read and gave an appropriate message in French and prayed. This was followed by reading in Arabic and prayer in the same language. It was a great joy to have at least one Arab Christian sister with us on this occasion. May God hasten the day when there will be "brother" Christians too, to join us in worship!

At the time of writing the depot has been open a little over a week, and we rejoice that there have been a number of encouraging contacts with young and old, Arab, French, and Jew. Some have purchased for themselves, but all have taken away with them a message in some form or other. This side of the work, as well as all others, needs to be steeped in prayer. Already one feels that the powers of darkness in the spiritual realm have accepted the opening

of the Bible depot as a challenge and are directing their opposition in this direction. We need more prayer "in the Spirit" help than ever.

We thank God for answered prayer with regard to the work among the young men. Some we got to know last session have begun to come back, bringing others with them in the evenings. One has to be "ready for anything" in this work! When a group promises to come on a certain evening at a given time, it is almost certain that they will not turn up! But when nothing definite has been arranged, along they come, and we have had some very happy, informal meetings in this way. One evening two young Arabs turned up with three French soldier friends. An impromptu Gospel meeting followed at the requests of my Arab friends. They chose the hymns (in French), and did their best to help me lead the singing. You can imagine something of the astonishment of these three young Frenchmen, that their Arab pals should have brought them along to a place where Christian truths were being taught and sung. "Do you, a Moslem, believe these things?" asked one of them. The reply was non-committal, but God who sees the heart, knows just why these thoughtful young men are attracted and brought, perhaps in spite of many other attractions, to this place. That evening the soldier lads each took away a copy of the New Testament, and one told me next day that he had sat up until one o'clock in the morning reading it. (He happened to be on his own in special quarters.) It would be great if some of our young Christian friends at home would do more of what our two Arab friends have been doing. Since that evening this same group has come many times bringing others of their comrades with them.

J. STALLEY, and  
H. W. STALLEY.

## Praise and Prayer Requests.

### Praise.

For all new beginnings including the Tlemcen book-room.

For the opportunities of itineration and village visiting.

For all souls in whom God's Spirit is working.

For the answer to prayer for Sadeea at Relizane.

For need supplied.

### Prayer.

For the converts. That their witness by life and word may be used of God. Also for those who have stumbled, that the Good Shepherd may restore their souls.

For blessing on the Gospel literature disseminated during these last months, in the Beni Mzab and elsewhere.

That it may be possible to produce the new literature which is much needed, specially for boys.

For a renewal of the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of women who attended classes at Mission Stations in their girlhood, but are now shut away in Moslem surroundings.

\* \* \*

N.B.—It is hoped to send out a Prayer letter towards the end of May, midway between the appearance of this magazine and the Summer number.

### Late News.

Just as we go to press, news has come that Miss McIlroy was returning to Ireland at once owing to the death of her sister.

Word has also been received of the passing of Miss Edith Bullen, a most valued friend and Local Representative of the A.M.B. through many years.

To Miss McIlroy, and to Miss Emily Bullen, we send our loving sympathy.—Ed.





A VILLAGE AUDIENCE NEAR TOLGA. M. LULL (BACK VIEW) IN THE MIDST.

## Oasis Visits

The seventeen oases in the neighbourhood of Tolga represent a population of twenty thousand inhabitants and offer a magnificent opportunity for evangelistic work apart altogether from that in the Station itself. The greater number of these oasis villages have been visited every year for the last ten years. Thanks to my bicycle I have been able to reach the most distant ones which are over twenty miles from Tolga.

At the beginning approach was difficult. People were hostile to the Gospel message. But the same change that took place in the Station has also occurred in most of the oases.

To-day Gospels and tracts are asked for, and if one is in the centre of a village or in a street for even five minutes an audience of twenty to fifty will gather around. Those

present are generally quite ready to listen to reading and explanation of God's Word.

Half the villages have already been visited this year and in each of these we have been able to have one or two meetings and to preach the Gospel freely.

Boys are always lawless and turbulent, and sometimes hinder the work, but the men are generally orderly and listen quietly. At the end of each Meeting one or more usually voice the Moslem point of view, asking questions or contradicting what we have said. This gives splendid opportunity to discuss certain questions—such as salvation, the assurance of salvation, or the coming again of Christ.

Many times the Muezzin has given the call to prayer just when we were speaking, but the men continued to listen in the quiet without troubling.

At L., which I visited this Spring, the Sheikh of the village was most friendly and

helped us in our work. He accepted a Gospel for himself and pointed out to me those able to read.

Often during these last years we have had the joy of seeing in our evening meetings, or of welcoming for a talk, young men from these neighbouring villages who wanted to understand what we taught, more clearly.

These people are ready to listen and to read the Gospel. Doors are still open in spite of world events.

Praise God that He gives us the joy of bringing them the Message of hope in Christ, the only way of salvation for them.

(Translated.)

S. LULL.

## “ It Might Have Been ! ”

Hadda was a little mountain girl with wistful brown eyes. When her kindly father died she was in Algiers with relations, her aunt was an old friend of our Rue de Croissant household. Hadda was taken in by them for a short time, then she was welcomed into a French Christian family to be trained in housework. She was very happy with the girls who were about her age, until a peremptory invitation came from her mother in the Tablat mountains to return to her for the “ Feast of the Sheep,” in company with her uncle. She came to the Arab service at Dar Naama quite excited by the thought of the Feast, of new clothes, and of seeing the mountains again. Hadda’s English friends and the Arab women there warned her not to go, but she would not heed them ! She was only going on a visit she said, and would surely come back.

Weeks passed into months bringing no news of Hadda. Her employer Mme. D. and her children mourned for her, but she was far away beyond reach.

Then in course of time it came to pass that while Miss McIlroy and Mlle Buttica were itinerating in the Tablat Mountains, they met a wedding procession, and the little bride, mounted on a mule, was—Hadda !

Hadda’s husband, a lamplighter, brought her to Algiers and installed her in a dark, pestilential, incredibly small, room. There the untrained girl had to grapple with the impossible task of housekeeping in a way that would please her relentless taskmaster.

Gone for her the happy home life and pleasant tasks, gone the Christian Meeting ! Never was she allowed to visit her aunt, nor even Rue de Croissant.

“ My heart does not tell me to let her go,” said her husband in response to pleading for permission to take her for a few hours to the Dar Naama garden. “ Then your heart is very bad,” he was told !

This man is religious, he prays and goes to the Mosque regularly, and is, they say, upright and honorable.

A girl baby came, and when she was about a year old, Hadda enraged her husband. The beans that she bought for his meal were stringy ! He banged her head again and again on the floor—and broke some of her teeth. She fled with her baby to her aunt—and then was taken away to her Mother, declaring that she would never return to that man, and rejoicing in her freedom. But she could only retain her freedom at the cost of giving up her baby. She could not pay that price !

There was a family council and the husband was told that he must have his wife’s teeth repaired by a dentist, and that he must treat her properly in the future. So she went back to servitude !

Hadda’s new room was large and light, but now there was an exacting mother-in-law to work for as well as the husband. This old woman delighted to put her son against Hadda, telling him how ignorant and useless she was, and inciting him to beat her.



So life goes on for the poor little imprisoned wild-thing. She loves to have wild-flowers given to her, bringing her messages of the spring she may never see. The iron rule is never relaxed.

To make a long story short, Hadda has now three little girls, who are harshly treated by the father. Nearly all her married life she has had bad health.

This afternoon the children were at school so we were able to have a quiet talk and Hadda asked me to read to her. She is rather confused in her poor little dulled brain by her husband, who tells her that the religious leader whom he follows, and who professes to be a reformer of Islam, teaches the same things as the Christians. With reference to these things and because she was sitting trying clumsily to mend her husband's clothes, she said—"I don't know anything. I am only an animal. My little Fat'ma, Zohra, and Aicha are already more capable than I am. If I had not left Madame D. I should have learnt to sew and understand. Life would have been different."

Yes, the girl-life, that was beginning so eagerly to respond to sensible Christian treatment and teaching was crushed by a cruel marriage before it had time to develop.

S. PERKIN.

## “God is not unrighteous to forget”

A recent visit of two precious weeks in Relizane was again a reminder that God does not forget and that He careth for His own.

Could you have seen Saadeea sitting among these gathered together eager to hear the Word of God, you would not soon forget the vision of happiness she made. She was wearing one of her trousseau dresses of white satin trimmed with pearly

heads, and her lovely little face with its rosebud colouring shone with quiet joy as she gazed with fond pride at the baby form lying across her knees.

Prayers for her have indeed been answered. God did not deliver her *from* the marriage, but He has delivered her *in* the marriage. Her home is a happy one, and the little baby girl an added joy. A joy shared with the grandmother who carries her granddaughter away every night to her own home, and restores her in the morning to the mother. The father says, "My daughter is to be brought up as her mother has been." His wife not only reads to him but he now joins her in prayer as well. She is left free to follow the dictates of her own conscience in the matter of fasting, and even her "in-laws" do not interfere, though I did overhear her old aunt call her a "kuffera" (blasphemer). Saadeea, her mother, and the baby, all came to the Station meetings, and the former was allowed to remain after the women had gone, the baby departing with its admiring grandmother.

Fateema's marriage has not been so happy. She loves her Saviour, but the glitter of the world has been the cause of a bad fall. Neither first nor second marriage has been happy. The second was spoilt by the interference of her husband's women-folk, who have been far from kind, they tried to break off all intercourse with those who led her to Christ as a child. But her family stepped in and took her back home, refusing to allow her to return to her husband unless he could provide a room for her apart from his relations. Mahajouba, who in long past years was the "family" black-sheep, began her spiritual growth when we felt it was better she should remain at home instead of with the rest of our "family." There she suffered for Christ's sake, her eldest brother having a violent objection to her praying and singing. Her married life was short and un-

happy, and now she is a rejected wife with the one ambition of being baptised, and spending the rest of her life as a "teller of Good News." Though by no means perfect, her life is telling, and she has sown the "seed" in many of her neighbours' hearts. She was my "right hand" during those two weeks.

Our beloved Fat'ma, whose life story was sketched in one of the recent numbers of *A Thirsty Land*, has left many "seeds" behind her, and it was one of the many joys of that short visit to find at the daily prayer and morning service a tall woman whose smiling intelligent face—showing traces of pock-mark—was alight with eagerness to "hear the Word of God." She scarcely missed a morning, and often came a second time in the afternoons. The surprise was all the greater that in past years she was a notorious mocker of the Word of God.

How came the change? It seems that in recent years Fat'ma and she lived in the same Court, and over wash-tubs and cooking-pots they talked of spiritual things, till she, too, longs to know and understand the things of the Spirit.

There are other stories belonging to those two weeks' visit. We commit them unto the One Who does not forget, and beg you to link into your prayers and praise both told and untold joys.

E. K. M. RIDLEY.

## "The Redeemer Shall Come

*unto them that turn from transgression . . . saith the Lord."*

We have chosen the above title because of the rather special interest a number of Jewesses have been taking recently, in our New Testament pictures and the Christ-

mas messages given. They come on Saturday afternoons, and one cannot but realise that the truths of the Gospel are gripping them. We have had crowds before, but never so keen to hear.

There has been a very real sense of blessing, too, among the Arabs. One of our former class girls, now a married woman with three little children, begged us to give her a *Wordless Book*. "I want to teach my children," she said. She believes that their seeing the black, red, white, and gold, will help them to understand the story of redemption.

We have had most cheering visits to a house where another former class girl was visiting her mother. The girl is married, and has been living for some years in a far-off oasis—yet has made real progress spiritually. She told us that every morning, when she saw the sun rise, she remembered that the Lord Jesus said, "I am the Light of the World," and how greatly this had lightened her dark days. Miss Trotter would have called her a "twilight soul." And more light came, thank God! As we said good-bye to her, a thin, delicate figure in a long, blue dress, what a pull on our souls came in longing and prayer for her future. Several years may elapse before she can again come to Bou Saada.

A smart little lad (who has been living for a time in Paris) has greatly enjoyed the classes. He had seen a Christmas Tree in that city, and had heard about the Lord Jesus. He repeated: "Jesus is born—Come shepherds and wise men."

In contrast to the progress this boy has made, we think of a biggish girl, who must have suffered much to have become so nervous and silent. She comes to the class, and knits silently, but cannot keep still. She is dear to God's heart, and we are looking to Him for healing of mind and body. What broken lives there are in all dark lands! May the saving knowledge of God come to many this year, and "twilight

souls " become enlightened by the Sun of Righteousness, and more than conquerors over all the power of the Enemy.

" More than conquerors, more than  
conquerors are we,  
Through Him that loved us ; through  
Him that loved us,  
And gave Himself, for me."

A. McILROY.

## Sowers Went Forth

We left Laghouat early so that we could complete the last stage of our journey from Miliana to Ghardaia by motor bus in the one day.

It was a glorious February morning. We met many flocks of sheep and goats and it was delightful to see the lambs and kids frisking about and enjoying the lovely day which the Creator had given.

There were also droves of camels coming slowly towards us, the full grown ones bearing heavy and sometimes cumbersome loads with dignity, while jolly little donkeys hurried along more quickly, stimulated by the fresh morning air.

As we travelled further and further South, we saw less and less grass or green herbage, and in front of us we saw vast brown stretches of bare ground. There were a few shrubs whose leaves looked to us very dry but which the goats and sheep seemed glad to eat.

Already we were a long way from Laghouat, and I turned to look back. The sun was shedding its rays on the bare reddish mountains which stood out against a clear blue sky. The combination of colours and varying shades had a marvellous effect and made me think of Miss Trotter's descriptions in her book *Between the Desert and the Sea*. I turned again and again to look back at the wonderful sight, which I shall never forget.

We no longer, now, travelled on a road,

but on a track. It was not too bad but was rather trying because of the ruts, specially to someone beside me who was knitting a tiny garment !

In front of us every now and then we saw a camel outlined against the horizon. Here and there were flocks of sheep browsing on whatever they could find. There was nothing green and no wild flowers ; such a different countryside from that of Normandy or of England !

At last we reached Ghardaia and we found that this year many gardens have been sown with corn which is already well grown for the time of year. It seems that the unusual fertility is due to the rain and floods of last year.

In a few hours we made the house habitable and were very glad to lie down on our little camp beds. We are ready now for the children who continually knock at the door and demand a class, fairly boisterously sometimes !

Miss Russell has already begun work with a charming group of small Arab girls and boys. These children are very different from those in Algiers who have often such little pale faces. Those here have rosy cheeks, and bright eyes which tell of their eagerness to learn. It is a joy to hear them singing in Arabic, and even in French, some hymn telling of the love of Jesus for the children.

After this there is a class of Jewish girls taken by Miss Grautoff ; they also are quite determined to come, and though there is no friendliness between them and the Arabs, both must surely have a chance to hear the Gospel !

At midday we have boys and then late in the afternoon some older lads who seem interested. They weigh the facts we give them, comparing the teaching of the Bible with that of the Koran.

It is certain that God will one day bring fruit from some of the seed that has been sown in these hearts year after year.

Every day, between the classes, Miss Grautoff and Miss Russell visit, either in the Arab or Jewish quarter, or in the tents of the Bedouins, who are camped outside the town. Whether here or there, in families rich or poor, in houses that are clean (which are rare) or in dirty houses, we have hardly entered before a group gathers round us. After hearing news of one and another, and offering them some simple remedy or a word of advice, Miss Grautoff and Miss Russell give God's Message. They tell the good News to these people who have never heard or who have not yet understood that there is a Saviour Who is waiting for them to come to Him.

(Translated.)

SHORT-SERVICER.

## From a Blida Journal

*February 2nd.* When the outworks give way, and the citadel is in danger of falling, stiff resistance is set up. As the address was closing in the women's meeting to-day, and an appeal was being made, one woman spoke up for the virtues of Islam! The message had been the cleansing of the lepers, and our individual need of Christ's cleansing. This caused a flutter in the meeting, but better than indifference.

*February 4th.* LORD'S DAY. God specially met with us again in the afternoon gatherings. In that for the women He brought us face to face with His supreme gift through Christ, HIMSELF in the Person of The Holy Spirit, dwelling specially upon Acts 2. 17-18. Then our joy became full in that the "leader" of the young students came for the meeting in French which followed.

Another joy of the day was to hear M. Poquet's first address to the boys in Arabic.

*February 6th.* The day began with us early in order to get to the station in time

to see this spring's trio for the M'zab away on the first long stretch of their journey. Miss Grautoff, Miss Russell, and Mlle Guibé each seemed fit and longing to be "at it."

At about the same hour another trio were due to start from Dar Naama, on another of "the great roads that run south"—Miss Wood with M. and Mme Nicoud for three weeks in Tlemcen and district, in the car just purchased to replace that which was requisitioned at the outbreak of war. Cause indeed for thanksgiving that there are yet wide-open doors, workers to enter them, and the necessary means for doing so forthcoming.

*February 7th.* Another joy! Two others of the students have returned, one of whom next to the "leader" is the most serious. Then not long after their departure, the leader turned up; that he might be in time for the Intercession Service which we have on Wednesday, he had arranged with a comrade to have a taxi to bring him home from his five-mile distant place of employ. The Christian soldier was also up to this service, and it was refreshing to find them all reverently kneeling for prayer.

*February 8th.* Certain requirements necessitating a journey in to Algiers immediately after the boys' class, it was arranged that Madame Poquet should open the time of worship and commence the girls' knitting class if we were not back in time. The latter was in full swing when we returned, and proved Mme P.'s capability to handle alone when necessary this exacting task.

The weather has taken a delightful turn again; this has been one of Algeria's superb days. Nature, too, has its spring dress; springing corn, brilliant field flowers, heather, and flowering bush, combined to lift the soul in praise. The first stork we have seen this season was coming down into a field seeking his breakfast, as we went in.

H. W. BUCKENHAM.

## Christmas in War-Time

What about Christmas fetes in war-time? Well, Hitler or no Hitler, we determined that our little Arab children and women should have some brightness, and join us in singing, "O Come all ye Faithful to Bethlehem." It is sung in Arabic and also in French.

Owing to difficulty of transport there was a temporary shortage of coffee and sugar in our town—would they come in time for us to give the two coffee parties?

Then dolls, only ten this year! These came to us during the summer and were put away for Christmas gifts. Little hearts may break when only the first ten of good attenders have these, and others must be content with tiny cups full of sweets!

Entrance to fetes this time could only be by ticket even for the boys. Ninety were on the register, sixty-seven of these to be granted tickets and that only because the missionaries' hearts expanded beyond the regulation number of attendances. When the day came sixty-seven boys were admitted but on examining the tickets afterwards four were faked, and one lad had even drawn a star on his, a signal of extra good attendance! Possibly the young rascal had only been once, if at all.

Now for the fetes themselves: Coffee came in time and the room looked cheerful though we only had a small tree. We fortunately had some candles left from last year to add to the few coloured electric bulbs.

The crowd of little children surpassed themselves in repeating the Twenty-third Psalm in Arabic and part of it in French, and stories were told of the true meaning of Christmas, which specially thrilled the women and older girls.

The Pastor spoke to the boys and seven men who came with them. He marvelled at the progress in singing as boy after boy stood up to read out the French hymns such as,

Oh ! oui c'est vrai, je sais que c'est vrai,  
Il est écrit ; Cela suffit,  
Que Jésus m'aime ! Oh ! bonheur  
suprême  
La Bible me le dit.

For it was little Moslem lads who were reading aloud about the birth and death of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

A unique party was held on the Saturday evening when the French Pastor invited his parishioners to our Christmas Tree in the upper room. French and English flags were alongside, a veritable "Entente cordiale" with Marseillaise and our own National Anthem followed by hymns of praise and the Bible story of the Incarnation, and gifts for all of sweets and biscuits. Only one soldier was able to be present with his little son but prayer went up for the many relatives at the front.

Thinking back over this week there is much to praise for, and to encourage, yet alongside, a great sorrow was burdening our hearts. A young Arab Christian woman had gone partially blind as the result of a blow she had received, and we knew she was still in bitterness of spirit. Will you pray for her and her husband and two beautiful little children she has so cared for up till now? Pray that even in midst of this great tragedy, and out of it, spiritual light may come to her and to her husband; that they may learn to share this lifelong burden together and rising above the Moslem view may trust God and take courage. Outside, as I write, the Muezzin calls to prayer; let us pray that the love of God in Christ Jesus may be revealed to our Arab friends.

M. D. GRAUTOFF.



## The Hadj

The fifth pillar of the Mohammedan religion is the Hadj—or pilgrimage to Mecca. This journey, with all the observances it entails, is obligatory on every adult Moslem who is healthy, sane and has sufficient means for the support of his family during his absence and for his own needs in travel. The central object of the Hadj is the Black Stone, which receives an amount of veneration curiously at variance with the iconoclastic character of the Moslem faith.

Mohammed said that this stone, when it came down from Heaven, was whiter than milk, but the sins of men have changed its colour. In the Day of Resurrection it will have two eyes and a tongue by which it will recognise and speak in favour of those who touched and kissed it.

The few Europeans who—some at the risk of their lives—have penetrated to Mecca, describe the stone as being probably an aerolite whose fall from the sky gave it a character of sanctity. It appears to have been broken and mended; it is surrounded by a broad band of silver. Certainly it can lay claim to great antiquity, for a writer of the second century refers to it.

The approach to this relic entails much ceremony—the pilgrim must bathe, pray and lay aside his every-day clothes, donning the pilgrim robe. On the road he sings:

“ I stand up for Thy service, O God, I stand up!

I stand up! There is no partner with Thee—I stand up!

Verily Thine is the Praise and the Blessing and the Kingdom!

There is no partner with Thee.”

Arrived at Mecca the pilgrim kisses the Black Stone and runs three times round the Temple that contains it, then four times more slowly. Eight days pass in prayer and different observances, one of which

consists in running seven times between two mountains from whose top he recites the appointed prayer.

On the ninth day he goes to the three pillars of which the first is called “ the great Devil ”; against each of these he throws from a measured distance seven stones, saying, “ In the name of Almighty God I do this, and in hate of the devil and his shame.” The Moslem believes that this ceremony has taken place ever since the days of Abraham. Then follows the sacrifice—camel or cow or goat or sheep according to the wealth of the offerer. This is the last act of the pilgrim and a proud and happy man turns his face homewards—to bear all through his life the high title of a “ Hadji.” According to Mohammed, great are the merits of such an one, “ Free from poverty and sin as the fires of a forge remove dross . . . when you see a pilgrim, salute and embrace him, and request him to ask pardon of God for you, for his own sins have been forgiven, and his supplications will be accepted.”

Alas! this does not seem to be the experience of the stay-at-homes, whose proverb, “ If your neighbour has gone on the pilgrimage sell your house,” expresses a fear that on his return the holy pilgrim will be more proud and quarrelsome than when he set out!

F. H. FREEMAN.

## Home Notes

Dear Friends,

You have been splendid about sending in your magazine subscriptions, in good time; thank you very much. A good many box contents have come in also, and it is cheering to hear of the interest young people and children are taking, in some places.

A letter just received tells of some Jewish girls who have lately come to Jesus,

## 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 Evangelisation of the Arabic and French-speaking Moslems of Algeria and Tunisia with special emphasis on the needs of the practically untouched regions of the interior.

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## CANADA.

OTTAWA.—Miss Anderson, 92, Stanley Ave

and who want to pray for the work in Algeria. It is a joy to welcome such prayer helpers !

From a Mission Station in far-off Peru a letter told of help received, from an article in *A Thirsty Land* read to a gathering of missionaries. So the linking goes on in love and prayer.

Three of our local representatives have been obliged to give up their work for us, at Brighton, Teddington, and Woking. Three other friends have, in spite of war pressure, come forward to take their places and we are most grateful to them : Mrs.

Homewood, Miss Williamson, and Mrs. Brattle. At Leven, a new centre, Miss Sheach, is representing the A.M.B. We do want to increase the number of our friends and to gain fresh interest.

Let us not forget, as we think of young men who are serving in the Forces to pray for Kenneth Buckenham, elder son of Mr. and Mrs. Buckenham (A.M.B. workers at Blida), who has been called up.

With grateful thanks for all letters,

I am yours very sincerely,

MILLCENT H. ROCHE.

## HOW YOU MAY HELP

By becoming a Prayer Partner. Intercession on behalf of the work and the workers is greatly needed and deeply valued.

The monthly Prayer Letter giving the special requests and news from the Field will gladly be sent on application to the Secretary at Home.

By forming or joining an A.M.B. Prayer Group in your district, or by bringing A.M.B. needs before Prayer Groups already formed.

By taking the magazine *A Thirsty Land*, so that by following the reports given of the work, its needs and opportunities, your prayers may be definite and intelligent.

By arranging meetings in drawing room, hall, or church, thus giving an opportunity of spreading a knowledge of the work.

By undertaking to be a Local Representative for your district.

By purchasing A.M.B. publications, which include Miss Trotter's unique and helpful writings.

By supporting the work in a material sense in any way that God may direct, such as by taking an A.M.B. missionary box. Sums left to the Band by will, would help the work of the future.

By facing God's call "Who will go for us?" in view of the need of the Moslems for Christ.

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### Literature.

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