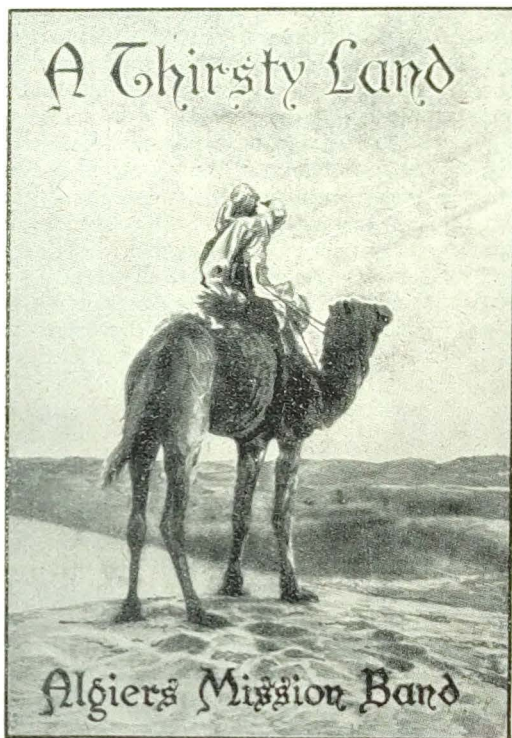


London Rally (D.V.) 3 p.m. October 18th, Alliance Hall, Westminster



NEWS SHEET
REPLACING PRO TEM.

A THIRSTY LAND

The Quarterly Magazine
of the
ALGIERS MISSION BAND

Secretary : The Rev. Harold W. Stalley.

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

Headquarters : Dar Naama, El Biar,
Algiers.

No. 74.

AUTUMN, 1945.

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"I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys : I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." Isaiah 41.10.

Our daily papers have told of the disturbances in Algeria during the spring, which were mercifully soon at an end. But the time was a difficult one for our workers, and the necessary general restrictions imposed have curtailed their work for the time being, specially itineration and colportage. The dry land must seem harder than ever and the atmosphere heavier and more oppressive. As, however, we read the reports in this number, we shall realise that the promise of our God is being fulfilled, in Christ, to His children, and that rivers of living water are flowing for them in a dry and thirsty land.

We have as yet no report from Blida or Tlemcen, but hope for these for next time.

The following account of the work in **Bou-Saada** was sent by **Mademoiselle Butticaz** who has been working alone in the midst of sick and needy people. Our hearts will be filled with joy and sorrow as we read, and we shall surely respond to this brave worker's request to us to pray. Col. 1. 17 : "He is before all things, and by Him all things consist."

"**Bou-Saada** Station reopened in the autumn of 1944, and the verse above became the daily motto. For a week or more the landlord's children had been expecting my

arrival at the bus office and they gave me a great welcome, escorting me with my many parcels to the house. They decided to help to clear dust and sand while their mother was preparing a nice meal for us all. Never during these years of loneliness had the little home been so happy. Soon the Arabs too, came, bringing in gifts to make me feel welcome among them. Early next morning groups of children were waiting for medical help or to attend classes ; many said, ' Oh, we have prayed that God would send you back !'

"Everything was parched, locusts had devoured even the bark of the trees and many were standing dead, like skeletons. What a thirsty land ! But the promise was ' He is before,' and day after day His presence prevailed. Boys' classes were such a joy, so keen to hear, to learn, to know the meaning of each picture hanging on the wall !

"British army visitors relieved, sometimes, the somewhat monotonous everyday activity, and left a spirit of sweet fellowship ; their interest in the work may yet bring fruit to the Kingdom of God.

"The medical work, although very much handicapped by the lack of remedies, went on. Once an Arab boy came, his leg torn in a gunpowder accident ; his wounds were large and deep and no one would undertake to tend him. For two days he lay in the Class room, while I cared for him, in fear that he might not recover, praying with him that the Lord would save his life. An English friend offered a remedy used on the battlefield, and in a few days the boy was able to go home on a donkey's back. Every other day he came, until complete recovery. Later on he brought his mother and sister so that they too might hear the ' Good News.' Other doors were opened in a similar way. One, by a little girl suffering from a growth on a finger of her right hand. Her parents had taken her to the doctor who gave the verdict, that the hand must be amputated. In tears they brought the child to me. ' Can you do something for our little girl ? Can you stop this unknown ill ?' ' No, I cannot, but the Lord Jesus can,' was my answer. At first I could not find a remedy, but after much prayer and

search I found one which proved to be exactly what was needed. In less than a month the canker fell off, and that day the ordinary class was turned into a Praise meeting.

"After typhus, and small-pox, we had recurrent fever. Many were ill in almost every house and little children died leaving desolate parents. One old woman told me : ' My husband, my daughter, her husband, and my grandchild were all sick at the same time ; nobody came near us to bring water or to help, so I remembered what you said, that Jesus was always ready to deliver and I cried, yes, I cried, " Jesus, Jesus !" It was wonderful, my husband got better, and, one by one, the fever left us. So I have come to praise with you and to bring you these (a few eggs) as thanksgiving gifts.'

"Jesus has been ' before,' and now as I look forward to the reopening of the Station please pray that many may ' follow Him.' Pray too that He will send forth labourers into His harvest."

Monsieur Lull who has gone with his wife and children to **Setif** for the hot weather, wrote as follows : " The year of work in **Tolga** has been encouraging on the whole. The first half of the year was greatly blessed ; almost every evening we had one or more meetings, and some who attended interested us greatly. Over and over again men and youths questioned us closely about what they would have to give up in order to become Christians.

"After the disturbances in the province, and the demonstrations which took place, even in our own town, we still felt that we should continue to act as we had always done, receiving and helping all those who came to us. Of the men and boys none came to the house except for medical help, though women and girls continued to come as usual. At El-Amri the meetings were well attended from October till the end of April. There were always twenty to thirty present at each meeting, and sometimes I held a second one for those who were not able to be at the first. Before leaving for Setif we were so glad to receive many expressions of gratitude and friendship such as, ' We look upon you as a father and mother in our midst,' or ' You have nothing

to fear living amongst us.' In spite of the setbacks and difficulties, we have only thanks and praise to offer to God for His goodness and His deliverance during this last year of work. Here all is calm again, but Cafes (Arab), and some shops, are shut, meetings and markets are forbidden at present, and permits to go to other villages are not obtainable. Thus, mission work is impossible for the moment, to my great regret. We are all well and the children are much better in the cool air of Setif. It is a welcome change after the great heat we had at Tolga during May."

Madame Lull asks prayer (1) For a teacher for the Arab girls, who would also be able to teach her own little girls; (2) For a missionary midwife to help the uncared-for women around them. It would seem that these great needs would best be met by Frenchwomen called by God to His work in this corner of the desert.

Mademoiselle Gayral who has continued to work at **Mostaganem**, writing of the difficult days, says, "I felt that there was a barrier between myself and the women, even those whom I knew well and who had been fond of me. But I think this is passing and spirits are calmer, even if things are not yet quite on the old footing. It is the God of Peace alone Who can bring calm into the hearts of leaders and those who follow them."

Monsieur Millon sends some account of the year's work among **students in Algiers**. He writes, "The scholastic year has ended in the University of Algiers without any fresh incident. The examinations are over and the students have dispersed. We shall perhaps be able to meet some of them in the library during the summer.

"Demobilisation will bring back some of the students that we knew in 1942, we have already seen two or three. We hope that the reopening of the University will be rich in students and that we shall be able to make fresh contacts.

"It is difficult to say what state of mind the students are in. They are much taken up with political questions, to which recent happenings have given a very real meaning. In talking with some, one realises that their

whole attention is fixed on these matters, and this is certainly not helpful towards spiritual approach.

"The work in our Book-room has been much hindered by the lack of religious books. We hope, however, to be restocked by October. We have had to repeat all orders for books already given, the delay in delivery being very great owing to the lack of sea transport. The work in the book shop continues, however, thanks to some Bibles and a few other religious books and some secular ones which have reached us from the Agency Hachette. This has brought us in contact with a growing number of people and given splendid opportunities for talks. We have kept the shop open at least for afternoons, so as to retain the contacts we have made, and to avoid having our premises requisitioned. We feel that this little part of our work has been very useful."

Mademoiselle Butticaz has been with **Miss Perkin at Dar Naama (Head-quarters)** through the summer. Various missionaries on their way to England or on holiday have stayed there for a while, and soldier guests have continued to come from time to time. Miss Perkin writes of one who "Has the Arabs tremendously on his heart. He is trying to get French and Arabic, and both he and his wife have a desire to come and help us." In the same letter Miss Perkin says, "We had an unusually large meeting on Sunday, when Mr. Samuel, Dutch Colporteur Evangelist spoke, and also an American soldier. We see so few Americans now, and they are all the more welcome."

Fifine's husband, Lakdar, may come any day from France. It is not certain yet what he will do; and whether he will come out of the Army or not.

A letter just received from Mrs. Stalley says, "**Miss Wood** has written from **Tlemcen** that Y. (a Christian girl) is to be married and asks prayer. The man is, sad to say, a Moslem, but God can overrule. Andrew (a baptised Christian) was in difficulty. I am afraid he had been somewhat influenced by the political agitators, and so had lost his work. He needs our prayers."

HOME NOTES

Dear Friends,

Along with the loving gifts we so often receive there usually comes a kindly enquiry after our members on the Field, and sometimes a message for one or more of them. It is generally impossible in these days of extra work and scarcity of help to reply at any length. We trust, however, that you will regard this as a personal message to each one of you, and as such to be borne prayerfully before the Throne of Grace as was done by Hezekiah with another letter long ago.

How fares it with our friends out there on the Field? Materially, while the cost of living has risen "fantastically," as one of them put it, we thank God that needs have been met. On the other hand, what are they feeling and thinking just now? Here is one quotation from a French colleague: "We are just longing to see all the members of A.M.B. coming back. We feel so much alone. Here, no news and no Rally (the yearly gathering on the Field is impossible at the moment because of conditions in the country). There is, however, so much to be done that we are wearying to see reinforcements arrive. The revival of Islam which we have witnessed during the past winter, and which has caused much unrest in many regions, shows the need for God to send forth consecrated labourers, ready for every sacrifice, that His Work may go on."

"Wearying to see reinforcements." Let us take it to heart and besiege the Throne of Grace with our petitions.

We had hoped to see our dear friends Mr. and Mrs. Buckenham home this summer for a well-deserved rest. But the looked-for helpers, who they hoped would keep the Mission station open, at least for the many Service men to whom they still minister, were not forthcoming. They did not feel free to close the door on such a great need and so wonderful an opportunity. So trusting in God to sustain them, they have bravely decided to carry on for some months more yet. Let us not fail to stand by them in the Spirit and to uphold them by prayer.

These two glimpses reflect the spirit of all the thirteen workers now on the Field. A fighting faith that will not falter, but longing for the day when others shall be coming alongside to share the conflict and the toil, and then the reward.

The word we hear so much to-day is "demobilisation." The word of the hour for all in the Lord's Work is 're-mobilisation.' At the moment it may be difficult for us to see where our resources are to be found for this, but that Christ is absolute Master of the situation, we can be certain. How we like to fall back on that word in the record of one of the miracles: "He Himself knew what He would do." It is possible, however, that He is waiting for us to be so flexible in our thinking and planning, and ready to do the unexpected or even the unprecedented, before He touches the problem and brings the solution. He will sometimes ask of His "Phillips" "Whence shall we buy bread?" and demand of His disciples "Give ye them to eat!" in order to bring out of them an expression of resourcefulness and faith with which He can work. We need to plan and think with regard to the great problem of the future, and while to human eyes our ways and means are as inadequate and poor as "five barley loaves and two small fishes," it will be the faith that dares to bring them to Him to do therewith the impossible, that will end in wonder and joy in seeing it accomplished.

I would like here to give a warm invitation to all friends who possibly can, to join us at our **London Rally on October 18th next at the Alliance Hall, Westminster, at 3 p.m.**, when reports will be given, with a special message from the Field through Miss Farmer. We are to have the privilege also of a message from the Rev. F. Hart, of Lansdowne Hall, Norwood. In the evening we hope to arrange **a session for prayer, at 6 p.m.**, when specific needs will be presented. Please book the date and time.

Yours in Fellowship,

HAROLD W. STALLEY

(Secretary).