

07

Algiers Mission Band



Journal No 4.

1907

Bliba



from the hill at whose foot  
our field lies.

Journal No 4

July ~~August~~, 1907.

July 8.

I have taken Helen, who is very tired, for a few days rest at the Glacière, the inn below the cedar forest where Annie & I halted on our last journey. Today we went down the hill to Houk Farroum, to try for a sight of Hakim & Fatima bent Mounie. Hakim was away at the Choukling, & we only just caught Fatima: she was starting with her husband's dinner - a two hours climb up to the highest point of the cedar ridge, into a large earthen pot of maketfa & tomatoes. I could hardly lift it from the ground - he was going to make a feast up there to some fellow workmen. "You will be very tired" I said. "God has appointed us to tiredness" was

2.

her answer, perfectly cheerful in tone & free from self-pity, we could only get a few words as she swung along the life wood barge, in great fear of being late — those few words & a little "Lamb. picture" which she tucked away in her bosom are all she will have of help from the human side for months to come. "Yes, I will look at it & remember — He died for us" she answered. Then she sat down suddenly in the middle of the footpath & gave us each a wooden spoon to take with to taste the Dinner — then her path left ours & she was gone

July 9

Our bee comforted me very much this morning concerning the doubtfulness that troubles me in our work. There





4

seems so infinitely much to be done, that nothing gets done thoroughly. If things were concentrated as they must be in educational or medical missions there would be less of this - as it is we seem only to touch souls & leave them.

And that was what the bee was doing, figuratively speaking. He was hovering among some blackberry sprays, just touching the flowers here & there in a tentative way: yet, all unconsciously, life, life, life was left behind at every contact, as the miracle-working pollen grains were transferred to the place where they could set the unseen strings working. We have only to see to it that we are surcharged,

5

Use the bees, with potential life. It is God + His sterility  
that will do the work; yet He needs His wandering Semitic  
bees!

Another thought lay behind our coming up to  
the Glacière - a hope that if it gets realized, should  
mean much for these dear mountain people - the long  
deferred hope of turning Blida from an outpost into  
a regular station.

Thereby hangs a tale that has ~~been~~ only during  
these last days been made known, for it is not long  
since all was finally settled. It is that there has  
been a timbering - we believe for good service + strength.



6

dom, of the lives of our two fellow workers, May  
Justace & Michael Olive. Her mother has seen  
him, & has given her full & restful sanction to  
their engagement, & the sight of the way that one  
after another of the difficulties, that seemed so grave,  
have melted away, makes us feel that it must be  
God's will, & for pushing on the frontiers of His reign

Our hope for them is that when their marriage takes  
place next winter, they will make their home in Bida.  
The next step will be to see whether a bit of land is to be  
found on the outskirts of the Chief's native quarter, where  
a tiny native house can be built, for they have both the  
same ideal of living down among the people. We saw

Monsieur Gory, the French pastor of Blida, on the way<sup>7</sup>  
up, + he promised to make enquiries. Villon is to  
meet us there on the way down, to follow up with us  
their result. An unexpected gift in the spring  
makes us feel that the way is preparing for an  
unfolding, for it will go far toward the heedful ground.

July 12

God is very wonderful! We started downwards in the  
early evening of Wednesday, + by 10. a. m. were off  
with M. Gory + Villon to see the only two possible places  
that the latter had been able to find on that special  
hillslope above the quarter of the "Ouled Sultan".  
"One is very dear - 6 francs a metre" he said - "the

⑥ still I am afraid you will think too out of the way - It is 3 or 4 minutes walk above the Sulad Sultanah, & there is no Carriage Road - otherwise it is a wonderful bargain?

The 3 or 4 minutes walk was the reverse of an obstacle. The Nicodemus - souls need that amount of 9 partners from the haunts of their kinsfolks & acquaintance - & we are not likely to be sought by "carriage folk".

We turned  $\frac{1}{2}$  a dozen yards out of the way to see where the first lot - that at 6 francs a metre - was placed, & the "no" was sealed instantly: it was in a hard & respectable street of native houses, & the price would not allow of so much as a garden for privacy. So we turned to

9  
follow with relief the inward drawing toward the land lying  
above.

... Yes, we were going up the very hill. Lane where  
we had hoped it might be - past the house of a certain  
"Sergeant Ali" which had been, ever since our earliest  
Bhida days, the place we had had in mind as our ideal  
for situation when the day for a native house should  
come... a few steps more, & a turning came, parallel  
to the Arab quarter below - the limit we had mentally  
set for distance from it... oh joy! the brace of little native  
lads who were serving as guides (for Mrs. Ford had  
not yet seen the place) wheeled round into this  
transverse path, & pointed to the first gate on the

10

right.

Behind the gate was a great field bordered with olive  
& filled with vines: half way up it a well: at the  
top a cottage with a vine scrambling over its latticed  
verandah, & a few rows of fruit trees, fig &  
honeysuckle. Was this really what God had been  
lecturing us as a surmise for us? If so it is in its  
measure the fairy-tale of Bar Naama over again  
in its possibilities of extension - & its price, with  
hardly to be believed. Visions come of one castle  
in the air after another dropping to earth &  
crystallizing into reality, if He grants us these  
1 1/2 hectares instead of the 1200 or 1600 square

metres that formed the limit of our hopes. (a hectare<sup>11</sup>  
+ a half is 15,000 square metres instead of 1500 - is not  
that like our God!) We left M. Goy + M. Villon with  
joyful hearts to open negotiations, + came back to Alger.

Alger was the poorer than when we left, for the  
"passing" of a soul that has been in its fullest measure  
poured out for the kingdom of heaven - a Swedish  
missionary, Dr. Nyström by name.

He was one of our earliest friends here. I can see  
him now in those first weeks long ago - a great  
gaunt Northerner, his hair nearly white already with toil,  
though not much over 40 - He used to go about with his



pockets full of sugar for the children - a child still himself in simplicity & humility. "He can speak 17 languages & read 25" his little wife told us one day. "but oh don't tell him I told you"!

It was to lay this great language-gift on the altar for God's kingdom that he left home & all the honour that was given him there, to be an obscure missionary in Palestine. Hence he had come to Algiers a little before we arrived: & the aim of his life was like the rest of him, a humbling of the high & the lowly: it was to get the Bible, then only to be obtained in the stately, classical Arabic, into a language that the Arab mothers could read to their children.

His very conscientiousness made it go extremely slowly - he would go round & round the native shops & cafes listening to the peoples talk among themselves, picking up & verifying the best colloquial expressions & it was only a few years ago that he finished his rough copy <sup>of the new Test. & Psalms.</sup> interlined & re-corrected till it was almost a hieroglyphic - I forget how long he spent in getting equivalents for the jewels of the heavenly foundation-stones: the weeks went into months I think.

Since then we have had a long fight with many difficulties over beginning to get it into print, even since the Bible Society undertook the experiment of bringing out St. Luke St. John & Acts - It was an experiment on their part because those off the field are slow to believe how little the ordinary Arab understands of the classical:

14

it is to him much what Latini would be to an ordinary Italian peasant today. Even since their consent has been obtained the delays over revisions & copyings have been endless, & it is only this Spring that St. Luke has been getting under weigh: in May the first sheets were ready for lithographing - & meanwhile D. Luystron with fast failing strength was struggling through his last revision of the rest of the N. Testament, sometimes so nearly collapsing with the effort that his wife would find him at his writing table almost unconscious.

The last time I saw him was when we got back from Rome. At his work still, a mere ghost to look at, his hand, twisted with rheumatism, barely able to form one painful letter.

after another. He  
was at the 7<sup>th</sup> of  
Revelation then, &  
one wondered if he  
would live to finish it.

He did. The last  
Answer was written  
in less than a week  
the end was there.  
he just saw the  
first part of sheet, of  
which this is a copy.

✠ انجيل لوقا ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠

١٥ وعاد يعلم في الجوامع متاعهم و الناس الكل  
مفكرينه \*

١٦ و جاء للناس في الكنيسة التي كان قد بنى فيها  
و دخل للجامع على حسب العادة متاعه في

١٧ نهار السبت و ناض باشر يفي \* اعطاه و اله الكتاب  
متاع اشعيا النبي كيو حل الكتاب حاب

المضرب الذي كان مكتوب فيه هذا الكلام \*  
١٨ روح الله راه كاسيند على فاهي مسح على باشر

نبتش المساكين بالخير بعثه باشر ناضد على  
الميتسرين بالسراج و على العميان بالبصر

١٩ و باشر نطق المظلومين \* و نبتش بوصول  
العام المفبول متاع ربه \* و من بعد هتبق

الكتاب و اعطاه للخديم و فعد و جميع الناس  
الذين كانوا حاضرين كانوا عينيه من شوفين

16

then two days later, after consciousness seemed to have faded on the human side, came the echo of his finished Apokalypse - "He is coming" - "Come". They were his last words: we believe that in the measure of the sowing in that prostrate weakness, will be the raising in power.

With you may over this going forth of this first gospel in the mother-forgiveness of the people: the difficulties & delays (not over yet) have been so many that it looks as if the hosts of darkness were dreading the light-flood that it will mean, & were in league to fight it back.

July 29

The next happening when we got back, was that Ali

47

definitely asked for baptism. He had had it in his mind ever since Kustapha was baptized last summer, & has been coming regularly for instruction with a view to it, so we felt that his request must be weighed.

The point of doubt is that his up-bringing as a slave has told badly on his independence of character: he has no initiative & no love of work, & is apt to fall heavily on our hands to be shoved along in the way of getting his living. Till this defect is mended we cannot feel free to baptize him, more for example's sake than that we blame him severely: his antecedents count for much, & he is physically far from strong.



So his baptism waits over, & we are praying to see how to throw him on his own responsibility, without putting on him an undue strain.

The same thing - a casting off from leaning on us rather than on God, is needed for Sherifa. Abd ul Salaam has made a fresh set on her with a view of inducing her to receive money from him - nominally through an offer of copying work from the *Andi*, at a high price. If, under any pretext, she touches his money, he could construe it into being the first instalment of the "sadaqua" i.e. purchase money in marriage. At the same time he has written us anonymously, with a view to getting us to drop for her work - i.e. the native embroidery & the Arabic lessons by which she can gain her living -

19

Shenifa on her side wants to prove to him that she is  
well able without his help, to support herself & her mother & boy, &  
is resorting to much pondering & planning to get another 2 or 3  
frames a week without earning it in the embroidery, which bores  
her dreadfully. We, for our part, feel she has enough to live on &  
must not attempt to rise to his bids. It is difficult to be stern  
with her over it, specially as her mother is ill, yet we have come  
to the place where we must be. She is very Jacob. Like in  
her natural character, poor Shenifa - strong spiritual  
instincts side by side with a subtlety & scheming that  
will have to be broken down before ever she can be a  
real power for God.

She as well as Ali need much prayer through this crisis: the two souls, so different, have often wanted it before, side by side - never more than now.

Aug. 4.

We have to learn to hold them + the others round by heaven these weeks, for we are up at our Naama, & the Villains taking charge below - Helen & Blanche have stayed on, first because we were expecting our American friends the Hartzell, with a view to further unfolding of the plan that God began working out in the Spring, then, since their visit was deferred, because Helen has been too ill & suffering for

the journey. We are shut up likewise to that blessed path  
 round by heaven for the coming into possession of the  
 field at Bthun - all should have been settled & signed  
 within a week of coming to terms - there has been  
 a long delay through the lack of one of the title-deeds &  
 as yet it is not forthcoming - without it of course no  
 legal sale can take place. We should have been  
 well surprised if there had not been any hitch: there  
 is seldom an onward step that can be taken on the  
 battlefields out here without a fight for it of some kind.

Aug 15

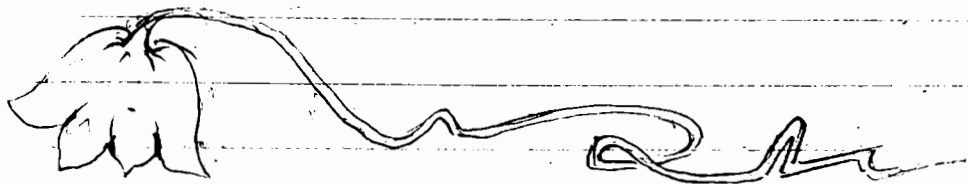
We have been watching, since we came up here, the

seedling of a wild cyclamen in the tangled bit of garden that lies behind the park that is gradually getting redeemed into order - such order as African sun & soil allow.

A few weeks ago, before we came to stay, it was a ladder coloured ball, that puzzled us till we identified it by its long twisted stem, for its leaves had dried away.



In the course of time it reared over & opened, pouring a pile of golden seeds on the ground -



Just now we visited it again, & thought that it had vanished - even the seeds were nowhere to be found. But blown under a tuft of withered grass there it was - the bottom of the empty cups gone, & only a fragile little crown left.



"So make us Lord to Thee" when  
'our sowing days are over, all bowed  
forth, & only a little crown in the  
dust at Thy feet!



Aug 21.

The Blida waiting time is over. Yesterday brought word from the "notaire" that the mining paper had arrived from France & that all would be ready for signing today. So we have had the joy of seeing the land made over "for the service of the warfare". & we come into possession on Sept. 1. All about it is so beautiful: the price, instead of 3 francs a metre which he had been told was the lowest obtainable, has worked out at 35 centimes! & the delimitations as they were read out show that our neighbours, north south east & west, are all native. - everything was straight & simple & unentangled, & comes

down from the Father of Lights into our hands, before we had had time to look for it.

Aug. 26.

We have had an answer to prayer over Ali. Our decision about his baptism was clouded by his finding himself in a great dilemma over his charcoal shop, which ended in his selling it & going partner with an Arab acquaintance in buying a donkey & stock to go into the interior selling vegetables, or rather exchanging them for corn. This meant getting entangled in Sunday trading & we told him there would be no blessing in it. We felt we could not intervene as we had taken the line of throwing him on his own responsibility,

I could only pray that it might not be the beginning of a downward path. In less than 3 weeks he is freed by its having proved a failure, the donkey is sold again, & he has gone off for vintage work, which will keep him afloat for a bit.

The cant overleaf is so like him & Belaid that I must put it in - only their faces have a bit of light about them that there have not.

Another prayer-answer is over the big lad. Michel Odey, having had his holiday, was to give himself specially to them this summer - his days among them are numbered: but he could not get hold of them. Knowing the country attractively

This is like  
Ali



& this like  
Belaiô.

480

of summer evenings we were not surprised. One or two at a time would come to their room, & two or three would hang round the door, protesting that it was too hot to come in. Now & then on evenings that he spent at home he had a stray visitor & that was all. At last, ten days ago, he said to God in despair "If Thou meanest me to go on, send some in tonight - if not I will give it up." That night four came = next Fine six. Then he gave out that the room would be open again every night - since then the attendances have been from ten to fourteen nightly. Si Mohammed is among them, & taking his stand again: best is best of all.

Sept 2.

And now August has come to an end, & the cooling days bring a joyful hope within reach. Annie Whistler & I expect to get off on Friday for some tenting with the Villons in the villages that we had to leave on the way between Ageni & Bourgo in June - & if the rains hold off we may be able to push on beyond Koussoumou Melouane up the valley that leads towards Jablat.

It is a great gladness, for it means a new step on - Tenting in the mountain villages has been a longing for years: our only attempt at it was down in the Oueves, at the end of our last desert journey in 1902, & that ended in a dead

30  
" block on the part of officialdom: it was one of the saddest bits of all these years. Now, with the "entente cordiale" behind us the Villons alongside, we feel that God has flung the door open, & that He will let it be the tiny beginning of the caravans of the future that are our dream for far south. It is like an elixir to get together again the camp outfit that has lain by so long. Will you, whom we asked to pray about that dream in the Spring, give thanks with us for this fresh budding of the answer.

Meanwhile Helen & Blanche have gone home for a few weeks & the Hartzells visit is still on the lounge only; so I cannot tell you, as I thought I could

have done in this journal, of the further unfolding of that which God began to work through the visit of the Americans in the Spring. You have only heard "parts of His ways" yet: that which has the far greater bearing on the future of the land is yet to come. For details we must wait to see, + you must wait to hear! If the waiting time is stored with prayer, it will bring its harvest.

J. L. Trotter.

Please, overleaf, write date of receiving this journal & date of forwarding, as we find they go round very slowly!

P.T.O.



10/24  
1.

List for forwarding.

- M<sup>rs</sup> Bregar. Aberfoyle - Streatham Common. London - S. W.
- Miss E. Trotter. 20 Broadbury R<sup>d</sup> - Kilburn. London - N. W.
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Back to Miss E. Trotter. 20 Broadbury R<sup>d</sup> - Kilburn, N. W.

Received -  
Sep: 19<sup>th</sup>  
21<sup>st</sup>  
28<sup>th</sup>  
" 22<sup>nd</sup>  
Oct 25<sup>-</sup>  
Oct. 28  
Oct. 31<sup>st</sup>  
Nov 4<sup>th</sup>  
" 7.  
  
Nov. 8.  
Nov 12<sup>th</sup>

sent on  
Sept: 21<sup>st</sup>.  
27<sup>th</sup>  
30<sup>th</sup>  
Oct 25<sup>th</sup>  
Oct 28.  
Oct. 30.  
Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>  
Nov 5<sup>th</sup>  
" 7.  
  
Nov. 11.  
Nov 19<sup>th</sup>

34

(Contd No-1.)

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