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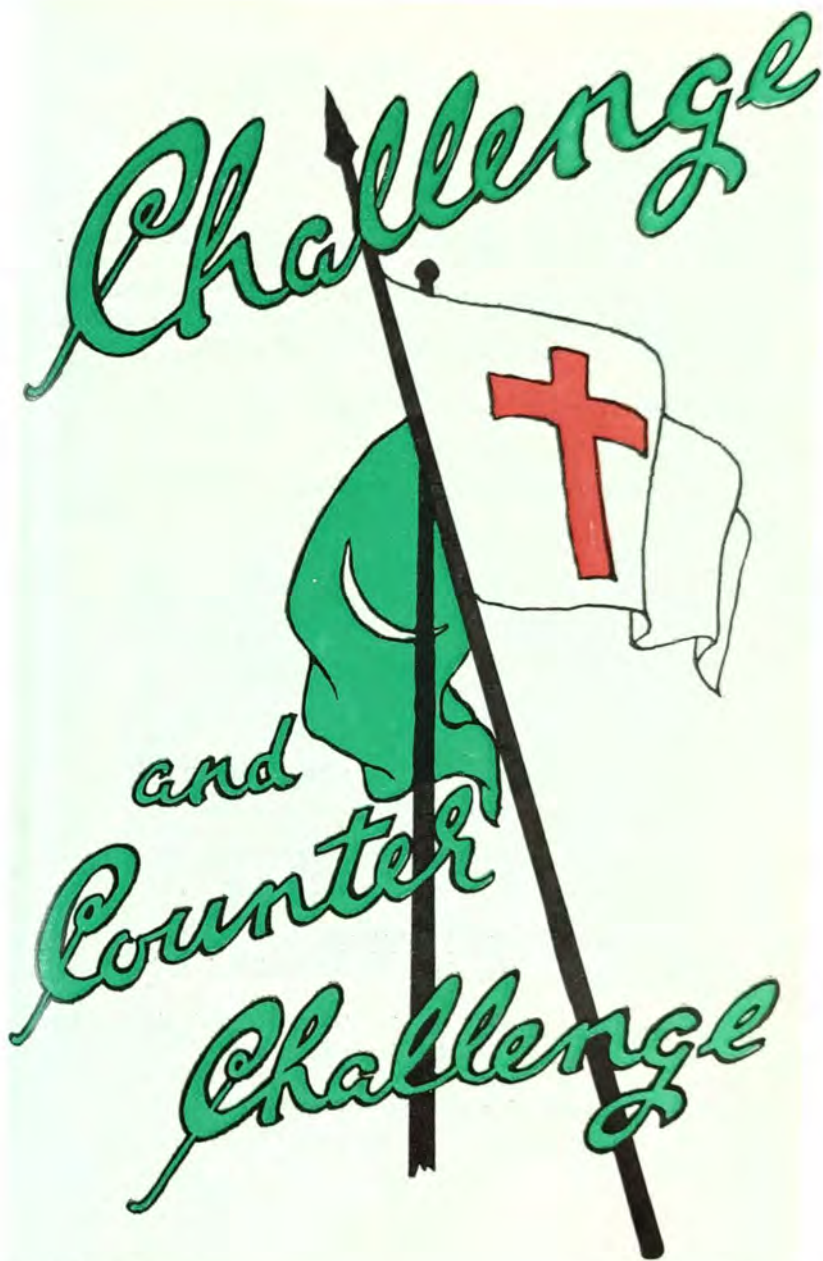
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Challenge
and
Counter Challenge

Vol. I No. 5.

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CHALLENGE AND COUNTER-CHALLENGE

A Bi-monthly Magazine for Young People desirous of learning more about the challenge of Islam, and of helping to counter it by the proclamation of the Gospel.

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62A, Tuddenham Road, Ipswich, Suffolk.

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“Lift Up Your Eyes and Look on the Fields”

“I don't see all those colours in the sky”, said a man to a Master-artist one day about his picture.

“No? But don't you wish you could?” was the reply.

Artists' eyes are trained to observe all the different shades of colourings which we pass over unnoticed. We can think, too, of other eyes which make ours seem almost blind in comparison—the hunter's, the sailor's, the detective's, all skilled in their varying professions to notice a hundred and one details which we could never see. Of course it takes time and practice and hard work to reach such a standard of seeing. And I think it was some such



implication that our Lord Jesus Christ meant when He said “Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest”. It is our job to have expert harvesters' eyes. We ought to know the condition of our “fields”, which ones are ready for cutting today; which should be carried tomorrow; and over which we must still exercise patience.

To improve our "harvesting" eyes is one of the objects of this magazine, so let us take a look at some of the fields about which we are going to read in this issue, and learn some facts which will help up to pray more intelligently.

SYRIA lies to the worth-west of Palestine. This name used to include Lebanon, but lately these two countries have become separate states. Syria is a republic and its capital is Damascus. It was the first country outside Arabia to which Islam spread after the death of Muhammed. The first Caliph (=successor) Abu Bekr sent an army against it in A.D. 632, and it was conquered two years later. Thirty years afterwards when a new family of caliphs rose to the supremacy they made Damascus their headquarters, from which city Islam ruled the world for nearly 100 years. Wouldn't it be grand if it could be the first Muslim country to become wholly Christian? Now we begin to see the advantage of trained eyes; this vision of Syria gives us quite a new incentive to pray for it. Let us concentrate on Margaret who lives in Damascus, and enable the Lord Jesus to gain a decisive victory in her heart.

NIGERIA. We are apt to think of Africa as peopled entirely by heathen. But it is not so, for the Muslims have been (and still are) most missionary-minded, and from 1100 A.D. onwards the traders and slave raiders penetrating across to the most western extremity of the continent have made many converts till today we find over 60 per cent. of the population of Northern Nigeria following the religion of Muhammed. But the chief point to remember when we think of Nigeria is that it is a British Crown Colony and Protectorate, therefore we are responsible in a special way for them as fellow-members of our Empire. They have a particular claim on our prayers, and we should continually be asking God that our Government may also realize that they can best promote the welfare of these people by giving the missionaries every help in presenting the Gospel Message.

CHINA. As our eyes look on this huge empire with its teeming millions of souls, it seems to present almost a hopeless problem—"the harvest so great . . . the labourers so few" what can we do about it? Well, I think a glance at history will help us here also. What was the beginning of Islamic influence in China? The son of a Persian ruler

fled to China from the onslaughts of the Muslim invaders of his country, and appealed to the Emperor for protection. The latter interceded for him with the Caliph, who then sent an envoy to the Chinese court. The thin end of the wedge, so quiet and peaceful, but the deadly leaven began its work, and today there are over 10 million Muslims in China. "An envoy"—here is our key. The Lord Jesus also has His envoys over there. Backed by our prayers, how much greater an influence can they not wield, even the dynamic power of God the Holy Spirit Himself? Let us pray, then, for these ambassadors with an ever-increasing realization that they are vested with the authority of the King of Kings and He must reign till all His enemies be made His footstool.

EGYPT. In a book on Islam telling of the rapid advance of the conquering Muslim forces we read "Christian Egypt fell in 640". Christian Egypt. Don't let us ever forget that fact, but rather claim its return to its Rightful Owner. Now Egypt is spoken of as the "head" of Islam as Arabia is its heart, because it has become the centre of Islamic learning, and thousands of students are trained and sent forth as missionaries from the University of El Azhar in Cairo. Ninety-three per cent. of the population are Muslims, and very accessible from a geographical point of view, because they are so closely packed into the comparatively small area of the Delta. But where are the workers? There are fewer missionaries in Egypt now than there were fifty years ago! Oh for more Davids to find the vulnerable spot in this giant's "head" and bring it down with a mighty crash!



“A Matter of Obedience”

Part II.

Margaret, you will remember, was taken out of school at the end of May. True, she had left her books behind her but day after day went by and she did not come back to fetch them. Two visits were paid to her home by some of those who were interested in her but still she did not come. The examinations were held, the term ended and Margaret had not returned. Was her Principal a little disappointed? Yes, very. But once again the comforting words came “LOVE that WILL NOT let her go”. Then one day, when the Principal was out, Margaret and her mother suddenly turned up and took her books and went away. There was no one present who knew the story, and girls often came to fetch their books if they had been away ill, so the books were given her without demur. The last hope had gone—there was nothing, now, to tie Margaret to the school or cause her to come back next year, nothing—except—“the LOVE that WOULD NOT let her go”.

But the fact that she and her mother had visited the school gave the Principal the opportunity to call and return their visit. Margaret’s teacher went with her. They did not see Margaret, but they saw her mother, who seemed delighted to see them and loudly proclaimed her intention of sending Margaret back next year. Then she piled their plates high with ice cream and—thinking it an opportune moment—made her request. “When Margaret goes back next year, of course you’ll let bygones be bygones and forget that little difference of opinion this year and all will be well is it not so?” The ice cream must have been too cold to melt their hard hearts! The Principal and the teacher still held to their former position—willingness to obey was the only way Margaret could get back into school.

The summer months went by all too quickly. The teachers re-gathered; the school re-opened; the pupils returned, many new ones amongst them, but Margaret did not come. Enquiries brought forth the facts—that Margaret had been seen wearing a *black* uniform (that of another school)—that she had definitely been *sent* to another school—that her people had said that the English school makes no distinction between its pupils, they treat all

alike. Margaret is an only child; they wanted her treated differently, they had sent her to a school that would do what they wanted. "O LOVE that will not let her go, what now?" "Ah!" Two days in another school was enough for Margaret! The atmosphere was different; the teachers were different. (Did she miss that LOVE that would not let her go?) She wanted her *own* school; she wanted her *own* Principal; she wanted her *own* teachers. Post haste she sent her mother back to intercede once more for her. She was ready to do anything to



The courtyard of Margaret's OWN School

get back. So it happened that two days after the Principal had sadly accepted the fact that Margaret had gone to another school and would not be coming back, her mother unexpectedly walked into the office! Her mother said nothing about the other school, so neither did the Principal. She simply said that Margaret was longing to come back and was prepared to obey—what would the fees be this year, and would she please register Margaret's name? Outwardly, the Principal received all this quite calmly, but inwardly, her heart was jumping for joy and as soon as the mother had left she ran to the teacher concerned and together they made a plan whereby Margaret, now *willing* to obey, after showing that willingness before her class

would be forgiven and need not actually do what she had been asked. Two days later Margaret herself appeared—in a blue uniform—smiles all over her face, so glad to be back at last. The smiles increased when she found that LOVE only asked her to be *willing* to obey and did not make her *do* what she had feared to do. The lesson learnt, Margaret has settled down happily again. She is definitely different. Her attitude to life is changed (could it ever be the same again?) The rule of no Scripture teaching for Moslem pupils still holds so she cannot be taught the Bible, but she has learnt that the very atmosphere of a school where God is honoured is LOVE—for GOD IS LOVE and His Love will NOT let her go. His Love is not yet satisfied. Margaret has come back. She has come a long way. But she is not yet where LOVE would have her be, so pray on that she may not only find an atmosphere of love but may find God Himself Who is love. Have you, *yourself*, found HIM yet?

IRIS C. NAISH
(*British Syrian Mission*).

The Muslim Chief's Conversion

One day not very long ago, in Nigeria, West Africa, a very important Muslim chief came to one of our Mission Stations and asked to see the white missionary in charge. When they met each other this is what the chief told the white missionary:—

The night before, the chief had had a dream, and as most of these people in Northern Nigeria are not able to read at all, this is often the way in which God speaks to them, as He did in Bible days long ago. In his dream, the chief saw a very long and narrow bush-path leading away into the distance, and on this bush-path there were several of his countrymen, pagan and Muslim, travelling to an unknown destination. There was nothing strange in this part of his dream, as he had often seen this happen, but what he saw made him afraid. As these people were walking along this path, he noticed that some of them slipped on the road and fell into what looked like a ditch on either side. As they disappeared he could hear them cry out for help, then he could see that they were falling into flames.

He became frightened at this, because he knew that he too, must also travel along this same road. What was he to do in order not to share the same fate as his travellers in the dream? He decided that he would take with him an object in each hand. In his right hand he held a fowl, such as is commonly used out here in sacrifice to the gods, and in his left hand he held a copy of the Qur'an. He thought to himself, "If pagan sacrifices will not help me, then Muslim prayers will".

So he proceeded on his journey very carefully, and balancing himself with the two objects mentioned above. However, as he was moving very slowly forward, he noticed a figure in white beckoning to him in the distance, in order to attract his attention. As he looked up towards this figure he heard Him (for it looked like the Christ) say, "What have you in your hands?" The chief answered, "I have a small offering for sacrifice, and the prayer-book of the Muslims to help me". Then he heard the Christ say, "Cast them away from thee, and stretch forth thine hands, and I will help thee, and save thee from eternal fires".

On hearing this, he readily cast them from him, stretched out his arms, and putting his hands in the Hands of the Christ, was taken safely to his destination and the end of the road.

This is the story related to the white missionary by the Muslim chief, and explained to the missionary that he now knew that Jesus Christ, and not Muhammed, was the only Saviour of men. Do you know that, too? If not, do trust Him now as you read these words, and He will save you, too.

WM. V. WILLIAMS
(*Sudan Interior Mission*).

The Bible

Second study ANGELS.

What a lovely revelation the Bible gives us of these wonderful beings! How spoilt the picture is when we come to the Muslim teaching!

Islam errs in details about their NATURE and their NAMES(here the Qur'an adds to what God has revealed) and their NOBILITY. Let us search our Bibles under these three headings.

1. THEIR NATURE. For this we turn to

- (a) *Hebrews 1.7.* "Who maketh his angels spirits and his ministers a flame of fire".
- (b) *Daniel 10.5,6* "A certain man . . . his body like the beryl and his face as the appearance of lightning and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass".
- (c) *Genesis 18.8.* "They did eat".
- (d) *Genesis 19.1.* "And there came two angels to Sodom at even . . . (verse 3) he did bake unleavened bread and they did eat".

We find how angels appear to mortals and how in the form of man they even eat with them. Muhammed denies that they eat or drink. Each human being, the Qur'an says, has an angel to intercede for him; and two recording angels, one to record his good deeds and the other his bad. So each Muslim after praying turns right and left to salute these recording angels. How different from the Christian's One Mediator (*1 Tim. 2.5*), whose Blood cleanses from ALL sin (*1 John 1.7*).

2. THEIR NAMES. Muhammed names four arch-angels: Gabriel, God's messenger; Michael; Israil, angel of death; and Israfil, who will, according to them, sound the trumpet on the last day. Thus he disobeys the warnings of *Deut. 4.2* and *12.32*, *Proverbs 30.6*, and *Rev. 22.18,19*.

The Bible gives first place to Michael; he alone is named as archangel. If we study the references we find his task is connected with Israel, and has much to do with resurrection:—

- (a) *Daniel 12.1,2.* "Michael . . . the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people . . . and

and Islam

many that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake”

(b) *1 Thess. 4.16.* “The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven . . . with the voice of the archangel . . . and the dead in Christ shall rise”.

(c) *Jude, verse 9.* Here Michael’s contest for the body of Moses suggests bodily resurrection at stake.

The Bible speaks of fallen angels (*2 Peter 2.4*) and in *Rev. 12.7* Michael leads God’s angel, against the enemy angels.

3. THEIR NOBILITY. The Bible shows they are linked with almost every step of the whole story of man’s salvation.

(a) *Genesis 3.24.* After Man’s Fall they guard the Tree of Life.

(b) *Deut. 33.2.* They are present at the giving of the Law.

(c) *Luke 1.26.* Gabriel announces the Saviour’s first coming.

(d) *Luke 2.13.* They herald the Saviour’s birth.

(e) *Luke 22.43.* They help Him in the Garden of Gethsemane.

(f) *Matt. 26.53.* And could have delivered Him altogether.

(g) *Matt. 28.5,6.* They announce His resurrection.

(h) *Acts 1.10.* They announce His second coming to earth.

(i) *Matt. 24.31.* They will reappear at His second coming, marshalled by Michael (cf. *1 Thess. 4.16* and *2 Thess. 17*).

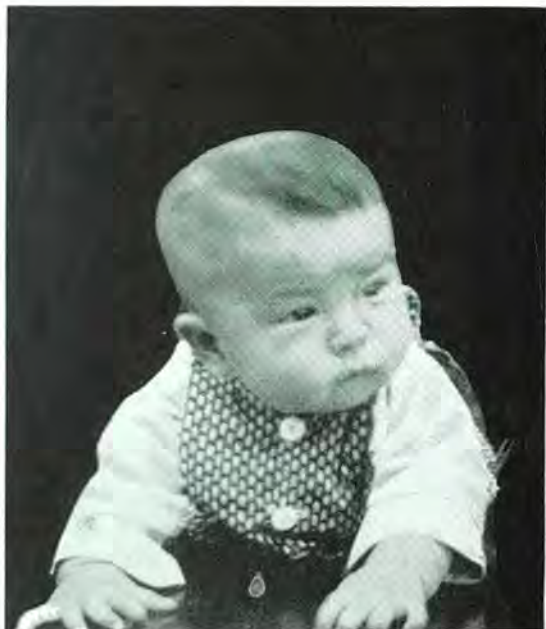
How great and wonderful they are, and yet how much greater and more wonderful the Lord Jesus Christ is, and so we close with “JESUS SO MUCH BETTER” (*Hebrews 1.4-6*), “being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said He at any time ‘Thou art my SON’ . . . and again when He bringeth in the first begotten into the world He said ‘Let all the angels of God worship Him’.” HALLELUJAH!

F. A. RAYNER, M.A., B.A.
(*Brockenhurst Secondary School*).

Our Baby

We've got the prettiest, sweetest, little baby sister you can imagine! Aysha and I (my name is Milian) were so pleased when we first saw her. Mother doesn't mind her being a girl—at least, not much—because we have two brothers, and it's not like being poor people who can't keep an extra "mouth" for nothing.

A foreign lady asked mother to stay with her and learn how foreigners manage to keep more babies alive than we do. When we went to see her she was so clean and pretty. Her eyes were the brightest black I ever saw; so often babies seem to have sore eyes when they are small. Her soft black hair had been brushed gently down. Oh, she looked like Fatima herself, I'm sure!



Chinese Baby

Her eyes and hair looked a clearer black than most babies, yet that funny foreign lady has brown hair, almost as if it had gone rusty, if you can imagine rusty hair! The other foreign lady who lives with our one, talks rather funnily and they make the queerest sounds when they are talking to each other. They say she hasn't learnt Chinese long. I never thought we *learnt* Chinese—we just talk it. We learn Arabic prayers, of course, and some of the boys learn English at school; they even say we shall all have to learn Russian soon now.

We thought this not-talking foreigner was the mother of ours; she has pale hair of a yellowish colour I never saw before. I thought perhaps foreigners' hair gradually faded into white instead of turning white a few hairs at a time like my mother's is doing. No, they say she is younger than our lady; her hair has always been pale-coloured! Aren't foreigners queer?

They wanted to tell us about their Prophet Jesus. We don't worship idols like the people of Han—nor do the followers of Jesus, so I suppose we are really all the same. Mother says we are *just* the same. They came to see us after mother came home again; of course we gave them tea, though we wouldn't eat or drink anything in their house in case it was polluted and not fit for a Muslim to swallow. They took our tea, which helps to prove that we are the same, only we have to be careful in case there is any difference, and we took mother's food to her in their house.

They have left some books; they say they are the Injeel (Gospel) so we think they must be all right to read. Some of the stories of the Prophet Jesus are beautiful, but they say we should say "Saving Lord" instead of just Prophet as the title of Jesus.

I don't know much about it, only my baby sister is a darling!



Deep into the Atlas Mountains

THE BERBERS.

Who are the Berbers? I made their acquaintance in Morocco, where I went expecting to find only the Arab. Until the present century had well launched itself, very little was known of Morocco generally. The people, both Arab and Berber, resented all intrusion from outside, and guarded their independence vigorously, and maintained their primitive way of life upon the very doorstep of the modern world. So the rather hazy knowledge of Morocco's inhabitants is not altogether surprising.

But attention is turning now in the missionary world to these long-neglected Berbers of the Atlas mountains. The most accepted theory concerning them is that they come of a white Mediterranean stock, related to the Celtic race. These, however, were joined by a people of Oriental Semitic origin, for side by side with the red-haired, light-eyed natives, are a wiry dark-eyed type reminding one of the pictures of the Assyrian of Old Testament days.

The Berbers are fundamentally different from the Arabs, who came into North Africa much later, about 700 A.D. A quotation from Mr. Walter Harris, F.R.G.S., will help to give an idea of these differences. This English gentleman had that innate sympathy which wins immediate access into the heart of these Berbers and he knew them as few Englishmen have had opportunity of doing. He says this: "While the Arab never possesses the European mental outlook, the Berber from the mountains has, to all intents and purposes, a European mind. His attitude to women, his sense of humour, his quickness of thought, his merry laugh, all render him an agreeable companion, and a firm and trustworthy friend. . . . So similar is his humour to our own, that it is difficult to realize that he comes from the great snow-capped peaks of the Atlas, and that in all probability he is talking to a European for the first time in his life".

And what of the Berber woman? Unlike the less fortunate Arab, she enjoys a liberty of living in the little cluster of pink clay dwellings tucked away in the folds of the Atlas. She may be seen walking the mountain paths unveiled and unmolested, with that easy grace of movement

not commonly seen among English women. She has a physical strength born of labour in the cornfields, and the lifting and carrying of heavy loads that her primitive cooking necessitates. At harvest time the women carry the corn from the field to the winnowing ground, sometimes a distance of two or three miles, singing in a question and answer form a little Berber air, invariably in a minor key. I once met a cortege of these walking stacks, and from



sheer curiosity persuaded a shifting of the load to my own back. With great delight they watched my complete inability to stand beneath the weight, or even to straighten myself one inch. The ready friendliness of these women to any real spirit of sympathy is a most endearing characteristic, but they are quick to detect and resent any attitude of patronage towards themselves, and while maintaining an outward courtesy will put up a reserve through which the missionary will make little headway. Mr. Walter Harris writes so truly of them: "The friendship which no system of the highest integrity can awaken will burst into existence at a kindly spoken word . . . deep behind the hard stern features, hidden in the secret places of the soul, is this intense desire for sympathy. It needs but a touch, but a



A Berber Woman

look, but a word to unlock the doors of the hearts of the people and it is well worth doing”.

The Berber has a genius for argument, and an aptitude for drawing similes from everyday life. While walking through a piece of ground where primitive winnowing was in progress, my houseboy remarked one day, “See there, it is so with truth and lies; lies will disperse as this chaff in the wind, and truth will eventually settle as this good grain”. To express a willingness to serve, or do a favour a vivid idiom is used “As with butter and honey”.

Although Muslim, the fact that when so disposed to do, the Berber will permit his old pagan superstition to supersede his adherence to Koranic tenets, offers a hope to the

missionary that, with right handling the Berbers may become more yielding soil to the seed of truth as it is in Jesus Christ, For many years now the Gospel has been preached in Arabic in the large cities of Morocco and in the market places of the plains. God is raising up those who are translating that Gospel into the Berber tongue, a difficult task since there are so many dialects. These men and women, so long ignored shall handle the Word of Life for themselves. It may well be in Morocco these Berbers who were last, will be first, and shall be missionaries in North Africa, if and when we are removed.

MURIEL SWAN

(*Light of Africa Mission*).

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“Pink-Knees” Visits Cairo

I wonder how many of you have been able to guess why I have dubbed myself “Pink-Knees”? Last year’s lovely hot summer may have given you the clue!

While we were waiting for our postings to the various Army units in the Middle East, most of the draft bought their khaki drill uniforms and rather self-consciously appeared in bush-jacket, shorts and knee-length woollen stockings. The bush-jacket is a cross between a shirt and a jacket, and is made of strong cotton material. Down as far as the waist it is just like a shirt but then it has the bottom half of a jacket with a large pocket on each side, and is worn outside the shorts. It is nice and cool to wear, fairly easy to wash and looks very smart.

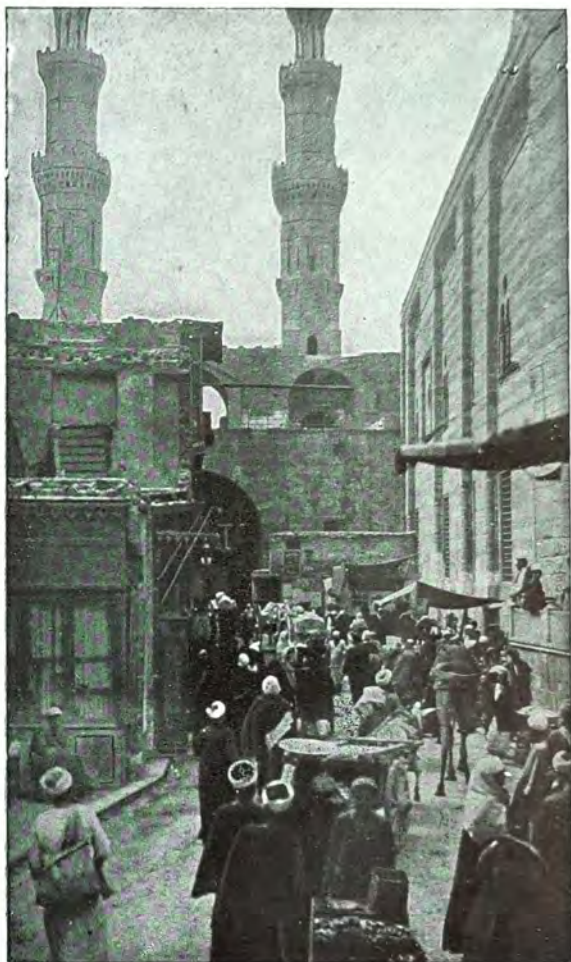
Apart from the newness of our clothes, nobody had to look at us twice to know that we had only recently arrived. Our knees were a sickly white colour in sharp contrast to the sunburned legs of the old soldiers, who did not fail to let us know of the years and years they had had to spend overseas! To be rash enough to voice an opinion before these pillars of the Empire was to invite the squashing retort of “Get your knees brown!” at which we were compelled to retire to the companionship of similarly pale-kneed arrivals. The first pair of long trousers may be a thrill in the life of

a young man and may herald in a period free from the fag of knee-washing, but it also marks the setting-in of that blanching of the skin whose effects are to be seen around the coasts and even in suburban gardens during the hot weather.

With this very "new-look" about us, it was something of an ordeal to go to Cairo. When two or three of us would decide to venture we usually had to wait for the bus just outside the camp, and to hang about was to invite hordes of small boys, hawking all manner of odds and ends, to flock around. These lads were full of hope as they tried to convince us of the wonderful bargains they were offering, though it was more often their persistence rather than the quality and cheapness of their goods that induced us, at last, to buy. It was but a short lived respite however, for while one boy was satisfied and allowed us a little peace, his innumerable friends seemed only to be encouraged at his success and clamoured round us the more.

At long last the bus would appear, and with a gasp and a splutter come to a standstill somewhere near the stop. Now here we had to be quick. Even though there were often three or four people standing on the steps, we had to get on and get in during the very brief pause while the bus was still. If there are rules against the boarding of moving vehicles in Egypt they are certainly not kept and nobody seems to worry. Once most of the passengers are on, the bus shoots away, and as, in the driver's opinion, there is no gear like top, we are jolted and rocked through the streets at a speed that seems anything but safe. To look where we are going is to be confronted with a scene enough to make the bravest quake, for all over the road are carts pulled by donkeys or mules mixed up with pedestrians, cabs, trucks and lorries; and here and there luxurious American cars that look anything but at home. This does not daunt the bus, however, which has been travelling in that sort of company for years, (by the rattling that accompanies most of them, too many years!) and somehow the driver, who really is a craftsman, brings his vehicle through into the centre of Cairo. There, in addition to the above mentioned turmoil which thickens as one approaches the centre, two sorts of trams come in to add variety.

Once in Cairo, we would do what shopping or sight-



A Cairo Street

seeing we had in mind and usually finished up in a hotel that had been taken over by the Army and turned into a club for junior officers. It was on one of these outings that I met another Second Lieutenant whom I had met in a training battalion back in England. Although he had been in a

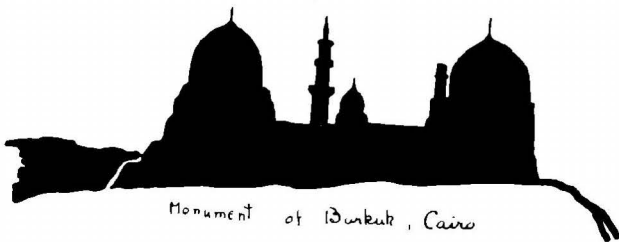
different company from mine, he used to come along to a Bible Study Class run by the second-in-command of my company which I also attended.

Ronald had been out there rather longer than I, and was living at the Junior Officers' Club right in the middle of Cairo. He had looked around for other Christians with whom to worship and had found a Forces' Canteen where a Bible Class and Prayer Meeting took place during the week, and on Sunday evenings a Gospel Service was held. Knowing that I was trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour, it was not long before he invited me to come round one evening with him. I went, though at first I did not much want to, for although the Lord Jesus had called me to Himself when I was thirteen, just at that time I was content to follow Him "afar off" and I was not trying to please Him in all I did.

The meeting was very enjoyable after all, and when it was over I was introduced to the ladies in charge of the canteen. We had a good long talk that evening, and from that meeting began a series of friendships that affected my whole period of service overseas and is still affecting my life today.

In future issues of the magazine I want to tell you about some of the trips and experiences that those friends and I had together that made our time in the Middle East so happy and blessed.

ALAN EAST
(All Nations Bible College).



Monument of Ibnul-Khatib, Cairo