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THE LOVE THAT WAS STRONGER



TOZEUR IN ALGERIA

(From a painting by Lillias Trotter)

THE LOVE THAT WAS STRONGER

LILIAS TROTTER OF ALGIERS

by

I. R. GOVAN STEWART

*"And I clave to Him as He turned His Face
From the land that was mine no longer;
The land I had loved in the ancient days
Ere I knew the love that was stronger."*

—From Hymns of Tersteegen and Others.

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PREFACE

Lilias Trotter was the most beautiful character some of us have known. She should not be forgotten. And the Arab world, with its militant unbelief, its degrading customs and deep heart hunger, still challenges the Christian Church.

At the request of the Algiers Mission Band this has been written to commemorate its Founder and to deepen interest in the work committed to it.

Miss Trotter's diaries—forty in number, her journals which were circulated amongst friends, her booklets and her books, have been a storehouse of literary and spiritual treasure, and much in this book is reproduced from them. Her part in any imaginary conversations is from her own writings, and so represents accurately her thoughts. I am indebted also to Miss Constance Padwick for her inspired articles about her friend, and to Miss Sibyl Egerton, her niece, for the delightful black and white drawings which head some of the chapters, copies of her Aunt's water colour sketches; and for the family letters which she kindly put at my disposal.

Lilias Trotter had one passion, and that was—Christ. And her desire would be that we might share it. For Him she suffered the loss of many things, and they seemed to her—in Paul's decisive words—"but dung" in the light of His glory and grace.

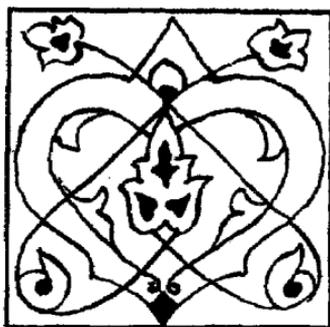
I. R. GOVAN STEWART

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Chapter One

A VICTORIAN UPBRINGING

KEEP your hair on, Tiger Lily," was Alec's brotherly remark, as Liliás stood with eyes flashing, and breast heaving with anger. "How dare you tease my kitten!" she cried, snatching it from him with one hand, and giving him a resounding box on the ear with the other, before she fled upstairs.

"What a tiger she is!" grumbled Alec, rubbing his ear. "That fairly stung!"

One can picture such a scene from the nickname Liliás' brothers gave her. But in spite of her temper, with her quick sense of humour, and warmheartedness, she was a favourite sister in the family of the Trotters, who lived at Devonshire Place House, London, W.1, in the days when Victoria, firmly seated on the throne of England, reigned over a prosperous Empire.

Liliás probably inherited her fighting spirit from her Scottish forebears on her father's side. Tradition has it that the name originated in the trotting back of one of the knights from Bannockburn with news of the victory. In later years they lived at Kettleshiels in Berwickshire—probably as daring Border-reivers as any—and in the quieter days of 1797 bought an estate at Dreghorn in Midlothian, where in 1814 Alexander Trotter, Liliás' father, was born.

Her mother, Isabella, was a daughter of Sir Thomas Strange

—Chief Justice of Halifax, Nova Scotia, in 1791, and later, Recorder of Madras—and of Lady Strange, who must have been quite a character, judging from her correspondence with her daughter. In fine copper-plate writing on delicate lace-patterned paper she writes on one occasion: “Your melancholy account of Buxton made us laugh to-day. How the place must have changed! In 1805 I passed the first four or five weeks of my emancipated girlish life there just out of school, and we saw no cripples, nor crutches, nor nuffin’, but lived in the hotels in the Crescent, where there were delightful parties of people. Dinner was at four in the afternoon, and three times a week we had dancing, with no silly inclusiveness, and no intimacies. The mornings were spent in riding and driving. It was a very bright spot in my youth, soon to be darkened by my father’s losses at play, which brought us down from every enjoyment that position and affluence could give, to intense anxiety and wretchedness, though outward appearances were preserved.”

So much for Liliás’ grandmother. Her mother, Isabella, was the second wife of Alexander Trotter, now living in London. The marriage was ideally happy. Isabella Strange proved a wise and loving mother to the six children of the first marriage, as well as to the three given to them in thirteen years of married life. Liliás, the eldest of these three, was born in 1853, and grew up in one of those homes where “to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God” was considered of first importance in life.

She was devoted to her father, who was not only an able business man but, we are told, “a charming character of love, generosity, and gentleness, combined with high qualities of intellect, and acquirements.” He encouraged his children in both scientific and artistic pursuits. Lessons were given at home by French and German governesses, and in the summer the family would travel on the Continent. A vivid pencil sketch of an old man sitting on a seat bowed over his stick, with a note on it by her mother—“Liliás’ first sketch,” and a quaint little letter to her sister—“Darling Minnie”—are relics of Liliás’ early days.

Liliás, as well as having an accurate and orderly mind, was

at heart an artist, with an artist's appreciation of colour and form. As she grew into the thoughtful teens, her love of beauty was so intense that her sister remembers her bursting into tears at her first sight of the glory of Switzerland's snow-covered mountains. She was now a tall slender girl, with a sensitive mouth and beautiful soft brown eyes, and a quality of selflessness which gave her a peculiar charm.

One of her mother's letters written from Cromer when on holiday gives a picture of their family life, as well as describing some interesting persons.

"I took the children for a delightful day among woods and ferns on Saturday in a donkey cart, Minnie (the youngest) sometimes driving, and Alex sometimes riding postillion. Coles and Taylor came too. We were absent from 11-7.30, and the carriages together only cost 12/-, and they go like lightening! We took our food with us, and you may suppose how they enjoyed it, bringing back quantities of ferns and blackberries. Last week Liliás and I had a very pleasant evening at old Lady Buxton's. She is a sister of Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, and is a most charming old lady. It was a *thé dinant*, twelve or fourteen people there. Her granddaughter married a grandson of Daniel Wilson, Bishop of Calcutta, and they are just now staying with her. There was a long, narrow table in the dining-room, capable of holding more than fourteen. Mr. and Mrs. Wilson sat at either end, he handing me in, and Lady Buxton sat in a centre seat. Mrs. Wilson had the tea at her end: and there were peaches, pears, melons, grapes, creams, jellies and flowers all up the table, and at Mr. Wilson's end, a large dish of eight or ten partridges, stewed beef steak, and roast fowls. Tea, wine, and claret cup were handed round *ad lib*. It was such an easy, pleasant, pretty repast, and one she frequently gives. The gentlemen did not, I think, sit after the ladies, but all rose together . . . I enclose Lady Buxton's note that you may see how kindly it is worded, though Liliás kicks at the designation 'sweet!' "

The death of Alexander Trotter in 1866, after two years of illness, brought a great sense of loss to the family, and a new seriousness to Liliás. She looked on the mystery of pain, and glimpsed the eternity to come. Into the silence and separate-

ness of that realm her dearly-loved father had passed with a bewildering finality, and in the intensity of her grief, she felt as if her heart was broken and that there was nothing left to live for. It may be at this time that the God of whom she had been taught all her days drew near and became, in spite of all that she could not understand, her own loving heavenly Father. From now on, when the family thought Liliás at play, she was often in her room instead, praying. She was becoming conscious of the pull of the Unseen, and of the Life eternal within.

The years pass, and Liliás and her mother are at Venice. I have in my hand a faded little note headed "The Grand Hotel, Venice, October 3, 1876", written from one visitor to another in the conventional approach of those days.

"Mrs. Alex. Trotter has the pleasure of sending Professor Ruskin her daughter's water-colours. Mrs. Trotter is quite prepared to hear that he does not approve of them—she has drawn from childhood, and has had very little teaching. But if Mrs. Trotter could have Professor Ruskin's opinion, it would be most valuable."

Mrs. Trotter was a lady of breeding, but John Ruskin was a very important person—an autocrat in the realm of art and philosophy in which he was then the accepted leader, and it was with some diffidence that she approached him in the interests of her beloved elder daughter.

This was followed by a second note. "Dear Sir, I am very grateful to you for your kindness in saying that I may bring my daughter to you to hear your criticism on her sketches, which will be most valuable to her."

So began Liliás' art lessons, and her friendship with the famous writer, then a man of fifty-five. This is his description of their meeting in his *Lectures on English Art* given to his Oxford students:

"When I was at Venice in 1876—it is about the only thing that makes me now content in having gone there—two English ladies, mother and daughter, were staying in the same hotel. One day the mother sent me a pretty little note asking if I would look at the young lady's drawings. On my somewhat

sulky permission, a few were sent, in which I saw there was extremely right-minded and careful work, almost totally without knowledge. I sent back a request that the young lady might be allowed to come out sketching with me. I took her over into the pretty cloister of the Abbey of San Gregorio, and set her for the first time in her life to draw a little piece of grey marble with the sun on it, rightly. She may have had one lesson after that—she may have had two; the three, if there were three, seem to me now to have been only one! She seemed to learn everything the instant she was shown it, and ever so much more than she was taught."

Such aptitude in art and, in addition, the fineness of her character, were a delight to Ruskin. He thought her, with her gift, to be one of the most beautiful things he had met, and frankly tells her so.

"Of all the dainty little bits of clay in the hands of the potter that were ever fashioned—I think you've the least grit in you! And you can't think what a delight it is to a poor old porcelain maker to get hold of such a bit. I can tell you I am looking forward to Tuesday [when she and her brother were coming for a visit]. Please, by the way, bring only rough dresses, for woods and boats deal roughly with them—and mind you don't miss the train."

This was the first of many visits to his home at Coniston in the Lake District. "Here I am [he writes one June day] ready for you both this minute, if you could only come! Oh dear, I'm afraid it's going to rain to-morrow, and now—it's exquisite. But rain or cloud, it will be still beautiful—the woods are in such glory, and laburnum and hawthorn just in prime—not a rose out yet—you will watch them all through their sweet lives. Love to Margaret. Her room's little but close to your turret, and she can skip across in the early morning. This ought to catch you to-morrow just to prepare you not to be disappointed if it rains."

Her sister Margaret describes another visit when for a fortnight he entertained three of them: "He was at that time writing *Praeterita*—his work being mostly done in the morning and read aloud to us in the evenings. After breakfast Lily was asked to read his letters to him, and then came her lesson

and ours. One time she admitted a dislike for the colour purple, which called forth stern reproof. Cupboards full of lovely minerals were opened, rock crystals and amethysts of every shade were spread forth, flowers were picked, water-colours of birds by William Hunt, mountain scenes by Turner, were all called into contribution by her master to persuade her of the greatness of the heresy. She never dared object to purple again."

Later he writes to her: "I pause to think how—anyhow—I can convince you of the marvellous gift that is in you . . . The not seeing or feeling the power in yourself is the most sure and precious sign of it; and that tractability is another. All second-rate people, however strong, are self-conscious and obstinate."

It was a fascinating friendship for Liliás, with her wide-awake mind, missing the companionship of her father and subject to the restrictions of Victorian times. His generous encouragement of her gifts, his whimsical humour and dogmatic brilliance, opened a new window on to life for her; while the strength and integrity of her character guarded against the subtle dangers of appreciation.

To him she was not only the perfect pupil, but one whose sympathetic and spiritual nature rested his questioning mind—"Saint Liliás" was his name for her. "I am so very glad that you were happy here, and that I was able to help you forward," he writes after a visit; "you are probably the only person likely to help *me* in my chief difficulties and lost ways, and so please think much of what I told you, and follow on your own path happily the light I cannot find."

But though he found no grit in her character, he found a strength of will that was finally to thwart his ideals for this brilliant pupil. There had come into Liliás' life a love greater than that of art, possessing her even more deeply than her inborn passion for colour and beauty.



Chapter Two

A SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

“**B**Roadlands” near Romsey, one of England’s stately homes, was chosen by Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip for their honeymoon in 1947. In 1874, it was the scene of one of the first Conventions in this country for the deepening of spiritual life, the forerunner of the Brighton and Keswick Conventions, and much else beside.

The Convention, the first of six to be held here, has been convened by Lord Mount-Temple, the Christian statesman of whom his sister remarked that he was the only man she knew who lived in the world but was yet unspoilt by it. He and Lady Mount-Temple, their gifts, wealth and influence all at God’s disposal, have opened their home for this truly catholic gathering of Christians from different nations and denominations.

The meetings are held sometimes in the Orangery, a building in the grounds in the form of a Greek Temple, with portico and columns, and creeper-covered walls; sometimes under the beech trees by the river, which borders the lawn in front of the house; or again in the great dining room, with its long windows and fine pictures.

As the company of about two hundred gather, some of whom live in the house, and some in the village, you will see Lilius Trotter and her mother there. Lord Mount-Temple opens the meeting with a prayer, and the consciousness of

the presence of God becomes absorbing. Liliás listens, with heart and mind awake to a quality of spiritual life that she has not met before.

One of the outstanding speakers at this first Convention is the American Quakeress, Mrs. Pearsall Smith, the author of *The Christian Secret of a Happy Life*—the “angel of the churches”, Lady Mount-Temple calls her. She is beautiful to look at, with clear-cut features, wavy golden hair and wide-set blue eyes, and her teaching on consecration and faith and the gift of the fulness of God’s Holy Spirit is from her own glad experience. “Consecration is the first thing—the entire surrender of the whole being to God to be placed under His control,” she says; “this may look hard to those who do not know Him, but to us who do, it is the happiest and most restful of lives. I’ve done it, dear friends, and I wish I could show to every one the unfathomable sweetness of the will of God. He loves—He loves us.”

A hush falls on the gathering, and then Antoinette Sterling rises to sing a message in her wonderful, full, deep tones.

Was it the impact of Mrs. Pearsall Smith’s personality that lit a flame in Liliás Trotter’s heart, or the scholarly expositions of Andrew Jukes, or the devotion of Theodore Monod? This message of consecration and God’s gift of His Spirit was new in those days, and came with divine insistence to many who were to be leaders in the missionary advance of the Church in the close of the nineteenth century.

One day a young girl, a visitor at the house, rose unexpectedly at a meeting and said very simply, “I feel that I ought to tell you that here at ‘Broadlands’ I have come to know that the Lord Jesus loves *me* and gave Himself for *me*. Hitherto I have lived for self and pleasure, but now I trust He will enable me to live for Him.”

Were these Liliás Trotter’s words? They may have been, for this is just what “Broadlands” and the Oxford Convention in October of the same year meant to her. She was twenty-one years of age; her eyes were opened to see the loveliness of the Son of God, and His right to control her redeemed life. She would say in the words which Theodore Monod wrote while there:

*“Higher than the highest heavens,
Deeper than the deepest sea,
Lord Thy love at last hath conquered;
Grant me now my soul’s petition—
None of self and all of Thee.”*

And so it was that when Ruskin wished her to devote herself to the service of art, he found that Another had laid His hand upon her life. “I see as clear as daylight,” she wrote, “I cannot give myself to painting in the way he means, and continue still to ‘seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness’.”

It was not an easy decision. When she visited Mr. Ruskin at Coniston he pleaded with her to re-consider it; he believed she would yet be one of the foremost artists of her day. Her love for it and her affection for him pulled at her heart. She wandered the woods with her mind in a turmoil of conflict; and she said afterwards that those days seemed like months. But the remembrance came of an Alms Plate in the church at Cromer—an old worn plate, devoid of ornament, but as it was passed round at Communion services how often the impulse had come to empty her purse into it; for on a medallion in the centre one could see, faintly graven, a Pierced Hand. She had given her life into that Hand, and she would not draw back.

“You can only obey God,” she said later to a friend who, facing the breaking of human ties to follow Christ, came to her for advice; for she now realized not only the pain of renunciation but the sweetness and peace of it—the bliss of a yielded heart.

And so she writes joyfully: “Let us give ourselves away to Him for His world—away down to the deepest depths of our being, time, influence—and home if He calls us to it; but our heart of hearts first. Separation has nothing austere or narrow about it when it is unto Him. To bear His Name with all that is wrapped up in it of fragrance and healing and power, to enter into His life and share His eternal purpose, is a calling for which it is well worth counting all things but loss.”

In the year that followed the Convention, London was visited by that breath-taking personality, Dwight L. Moody. England, designated "a nation of shop-keepers", was given a shop-keeper to be its prophet, a man who would have been a success in any business, but who became dynamic in the Hand of the Holy Spirit. The biting criticism of clergy and newspapers withered when it was seen that this "great human" was attracting all classes of men and women to his meetings, from the Prime Minister and the Lord Chancellor to the publican and the harlot.

Lilias and her sister Margaret first attended the meetings at the Royal Opera House in the West End, the second of the four great missions in London which covered a period of four months, from March to July, 1875. They were invited to join the choir and met for practices at the home of the Kinnairds, at 2 Pall Mall East, where Sankey was staying. Those were wonderful days when the winds of heaven swept the land, and men and women born of the Spirit entered into newness of life with a directness that was arresting. Later came work in the Counselling Room. Mr. Moody pressed every Christian to become a soul-winner, and to those chosen for the privileged work of speaking to inquirers he would say, "You must ply them with the Word of God, and wait patiently until you see that they have grasped the truth, and are resting on Christ, and Christ alone, for salvation. Don't be in a hurry. Think, oh! think what it means to win a soul for Christ, and do not grudge time spent on one person."

To feel the power of the truth preached by Moody with all the forcefulness and beseeching tenderness of his heart, and to watch the people bowed and broken in the presence of God, was a wonderful experience, and the love and joy of soul-winning gripped Lilias.

She began to help in the work of the Young Women's Christian Association, which was full of spiritual intensity in the days of its beginnings. Women from good homes were moved with divine compassion—something deeper and more far-reaching than mere human pity—for the less privileged girls and women of the land. Emma Robartes, from her sheltered home, and Lady Emily Kinnaird in a thronging

London life, laid the spiritual foundation of the movement in prayer and Bible study circles. Then came the building of hostels and homes for working girls, the first of such institutions to be opened in London—if not in the world—where a modest 10/6 a week was the charge for board and lodging. The social order they could not change, but they could and they did reach the individual, and create new social standards. Private homes were opened in the evenings to lonely women and girls who had come from the country to London's busy work-shops, and branches were formed for the French and German governesses employed by many families. The office of many a branch to-day holds a picture which expresses the spirit of the work. On the face of a precipitous mountain a lone lamb clings with raised head—one can almost hear its piteous cry. Flying towards it are birds of prey, but nearer still is the Good Shepherd. With one hand holding the rock, He leans over the cliff, and with the other pierced one grasps the lost lamb.

Lilias was asked to take a Bible Class at the Welbeck Street Institute. She was accustomed to teach in a Sunday School, but it was with a gasp of helplessness that she faced the rows of grown-ups that first Sunday; but God helped, and drew them together. Out of this grew meetings in her home, now in Montague Square, where women from business houses in Oxford Street and Regent Street felt something of the love of Christ, and were drawn to Him.

The Welbeck Street Hostel was small, and the need was great. Business girls ate their lunch walking the streets, for there were no restaurants, only expensive hotels. So the Committee opened a dining-room, the first popular restaurant of its kind in London. But it soon proved too small. From the back windows of the Hostel, Lilias, now its honorary secretary, used to look out over the glass roofs of some buildings used as a night club, longing and praying that they might have them. Suddenly came the news that they were falling vacant. The spirit of faith in her leaped to the challenge; the Master needed them! The committee, women of vision who considered nothing impossible—especially when backed by their men folk—prayed and worked their way through every

obstacle: the money obstacle, the reconstruction obstacle, the lack-of-worker obstacle, until in 1886 the premises at 44, Mortimer Street were bought, renovated, and opened "to the glory of God".

It was their vitality of spirit that gave strength to the work. Liliás and Miss Needham, Secretary of the Knightsbridge branch, called for prayer meetings—sometimes whole nights of prayer—when special missions were being planned, as at Birmingham, where the workers were speaking in twenty-four centres at one time; or when there was a dearth of conversions at the branches; or when some forward movement was indicated. Then they gathered in that back drawing-room to wait upon God and to challenge the powers of darkness that opposed His will.

And so Liliás' spiritual life deepened. Her heart soon reached out to the neediest, and out of the work amongst business girls grew work amongst girls whose business was sin. All her compassion went out to them—so many, victims of circumstances or folly. She walked the streets fearlessly to save them—a friend remembers her sitting up all night with a poor half-crazed girl who contemplated suicide; and she wore herself out planning and providing for them.

Her sister describes their nocturnal activities in a letter to a member of the family—this time it was a supper for bus men. "What do you think L. and I were about from half-past ten last night till three in the morning? It was a very wet night, but they came, about 180 in number. They had a splendid supper, quantities of singing, very short telling addresses. I do trust there may have been much blessing . . . I wished you had been there."

And John Ruskin, who was ill and missing her visits, writes :

"Am I not bad enough?

Am I not good enough?

Am I not whatever it is enough to be looked after a little when I'm ill, as well as those blessed Magdalenes?"

She still painted, and sent her sketches to her old master. But Mr. Ruskin thought her work deteriorating. He writes in 1886:—"The power in these drawings is greater than ever—the capacity infinite in the things that none can teach; but the

sense of colour is gradually getting debased under the conditions of your life—[here comes his protest against the social order of the day]—the vileness of all visible things in London, and the labour and sorrow of your usual occupation. The greys and browns in which you now habitually work are merely a part of the shadow of death which buries the nation deeper and deeper according to its folly. Technically you are losing yourself for want of study of the great colour masters."

She was well aware of it; but her art, though it may not have come to human perfection, was used in the service of the Kingdom in a way that must, in the hereafter, be to them both a cause for pure thanksgiving.

It was with pain mingled with pride that Mrs. Trotter watched her daughter turning her back on fame, marriage, and pleasure, to follow the steps of the Master. Many in their circle despised and ostracized her, for the days of women's emancipation from convention, and restrictions which curbed outward activity, were scarcely begun. Women of good families were not yet allowed to walk the streets by themselves. But Lilius had an enthusiasm that was fed rather than quenched by scorn, and that thrilled to "bearing His reproach".

"A Man of sorrows, of toil and of tears.

An outcast man and a lonely:

But He looked on me and through endless years

Him must I love, and Him only."

It may not be given to all to enter into such a closeness of fellowship, but it was to her. This was what she saw stretching before her: "A path lies within our reach making the ordinary Christian life look cold and colourless by contrast, a path leading even beyond that of consecration in its lower sense: for this latter may be very subjective in tone, may hold the way of obedience chiefly as a means of rest and victory. It is to many of us a distinctly fresh life when God's Spirit leads us to the objective side, lifting our gaze from the road beneath our feet to the form of Him who goes before, riveting it there by His radiant beauty.

*'And I clave to Him as He turned His face
From the land that was mine no longer;
The land I had loved in the ancient days
Ere I knew the love that was stronger.'*

"To have His presence as a mere accompaniment of our lives will not now satisfy us. We must go His way with Him; it is the only path worth treading when once our hearts have come under His irresistible sway. And going with Him does not simply mean a fresh stage of obedience; it means a yielding up of our spirits to catch His spirit—a yielding up of our hearts to glow with His triumphs and joys, and to ache with whatever pains Him, to enter eagerly into fellowship with any phase of His life that He may in His love ask us to share.

"And so the measure of sunshine and shadow in our days will be simply in the shining or the veiling of His face; nothing on earth will make up for the slightest dimming of that light; nothing will really matter that leaves it untouched."

The attraction of a life devoted to art, and the friendship of one of the greatest thinkers of the day, fade to insignificance beside this.



Chapter Three

ADVENTURING IN ALGIERS

THE glittering white city of Algiers lies facing the Mediterranean, encircled by hills of exquisite green, "a pearl amongst emeralds". Like all great cities it has its dark and noisome places, and behind the French boulevards that flank the water's edge lies the Casbah, the home of thousands of Arabs. The alleys, narrow and cobbled, with evil smelling gutters, run up the hillsides; the houses, with no windows in their outer walls, lean toward each other almost meeting overhead, and are buttressed for support in the event of earthquake.

Up one of these narrow lanes comes a tall figure—a European woman, walking fearless and free in a district where Arab women are only occasionally seen to slip silently by, swathed in their *haïks* (cloaks). As she comes nearer, you will see it is none other than "St. Liliast", Ruskin's star pupil; the leader of the Mortimer Street Y.W.C.A., and lover of fallen women.

Now what brings her here? English tourists are not generally found in the Casbah. Back at the hotel you meet Alice Kemp who has come to Algiers for her health.

"Miss Kemp, did you know that Liliast Trotter was here?"

"Yes, she is joining us at a prayer meeting in my room this afternoon."

"What is she doing here—sketching?"

"No: she and Katie Stuart and Blanche Haworth are working amongst the Arabs, and Helen Freeman is coming to join them before long."

"Really! What extraordinary things women do these days! What do her people think of it, and how did she ever tear herself away from Mortimer Street? The girls there adored her."

"Ask her yourself this afternoon."

And the opportunity comes.

"Lilias, what *are* you doing burying yourself out here?"

Lilias smiles at the slight exasperation in your tone. "Well, we heard Him say 'All power is given unto Me. Go ye therefore and preach', and here we are!"

"Yes, but you were preaching the Gospel in London. Why come here?"

A distant look comes into her brown eyes. "My last thought was to come here. I quite expected to spend my life in the Y.W.C.A., and was not interested in missionary work. But I was thrown a good deal with Adeline Braithwaite and Lelie Duff, and I felt that both of them had taken to heart the outer darkness in a way I had not. I do not remember that they said anything to me personally about it, but one felt it right through them: they were all aglow. I saw that they had a fellowship with Jesus that I knew nothing about. So I began to pray, 'Lord, give me the fellowship with Thee over the heathen that Thou hast given to these two'.

"It was not many weeks before it began to come—a strange yearning love over those who were 'in the land of the shadow of death'; a feeling that Jesus could speak to me about them—that a barrier between us had been broken right down. I had no thought of leaving England then, nor even of trying to stir others at home. But a little later, the words 'North Africa' began to awaken strange vibrations—I do not know how else to describe it; and if I came on them in print, they seemed to stand out in letters of light. Then a three days' Missionary Conference was arranged at Morley Halls—the beginnings of the missionary interest in the Y.W.C.A. On the third evening a Mr. Glenny was to speak on North Africa. He began his

address by saying that this was Thursday, and that on the Sunday before he was out on the Kabyle mountains where Christ was unknown. In that first sentence God's call sounded out for me; and before morning there remained no shadow of doubt that it was His plan. That was in May, '87, and before a year passed we landed here. And I would not be anywhere else but in this hardest of fields with an invincible Christ."

You are silent for a little; there is nothing more impressive than religious intensity and spiritual certainty, and Lilius has both. Then you ask—"But these Mohammedans worship God?"

"Not the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"But what is the difference?"

"The difference is as great as between night and day! Their God is a projection of a man's mind, and a 'fallen mind' at that. They do not know the holiness or love of our God, and so have no real understanding of sin. Enshrined in Mohammedanism, as in every false religion, is the fallacy that man can be saved by his own efforts, and so they keep fasts, observe stated times of prayer, eschew drink and gambling, simply for the sake of a heaven of sensual delights. They have little real morality. Their social system is cruel and degrading. The unbeliever is treated with contempt; the apostate is punished with death; and woman, 'made of a crooked rib', according to Mohammed, can never be straightened. The Prophet allowed four wives at once, and unlimited divorce, and the woes that follow are terrible—divided families, favouritism, heart-burning, jealousies, cruel injustice and despair. Every divorce means to a woman a loss of self-respect as well as the anguish of losing her children. Child wives, still in their teens, are often tossed from one husband to another, with intervals of disgrace at home, and evil women waiting to drag them into the depths of sin. Oh! the horrors of night-life in London are nothing to the horrors of this city."

"How terrible! Why does not the Government do something?"

"The Government dare not interfere with the religious life of the people, and all this is sanctioned by the Quran. The

Arab law is that a girl must be married, whether she will or not; but once married and free again, she has the right of refusal; but this right is merely a nominal matter, and the will of her masculine relations can over-ride it at any time by force or fraud. And a young Arab woman always belongs to a man of some sort—to her father first, then her husband. If he fails she is back under her father's control, or, failing him, her brother's; failing them, her uncles, and so on; and no appeals seem really to release her. It is part of the iron yoke of Islam that will not snap but by the touch of God's Hand."

"How is it that it has spread so?"

"It is the only religion that seems to have eclipsed and defeated Christianity," Liliás replies sadly. "Here in North Africa you will find the ruins of Christian churches right along the coast. It would seem as if Satan said to Mohammed, 'All the kingdoms of the world will I give you if you will fall down and worship me'; and to-day the false prophet holds sway in the Middle East, and in China and India; and here, we are in his stronghold. El Azhar University in Cairo has about a thousand students, and *pours* out Muslim missionaries."

"When did you begin to work here?"

"We arrived in March 1888, two years ago, and I shall never forget my first sight of Algiers. As we steamed into the bay in the evening light, the water below shimmered with phosphorescence; the crescent of the shore gleamed with lights, and the glorious southern sky was full of stars. Next morning we saw the creamy mass of the Arab town rising against the deep blue of the sky, and we said to each other—'Our Battlefield!' None of us would have been passed by a doctor for any missionary society; we did not know a soul in the place, or a sentence of Arabic, nor had we a clue as to how to begin work on such untouched ground. We only knew we *had* to come. If God needed weakness, He had it!"

"And how did you begin?"

"With the children: they make splendid *avant-couriers*. With sweets, and little bits of toys, and by offering simple remedies we gained entrance to the homes at last. Now we

have hundreds of houses open to us. This great city is full of women with no one but us to tell them of the One Who loves them, and the burden presses so heavily that one longs to be altogether and always at it from morning to evening."

"May I come visiting with you?"

And so the next day you call at Liliás' French flat, and set out together along rue Dupuch, across the bridge, up the hill until you skirt the top of the Arab town, and then down through the labyrinth of narrow streets.

"O Long One, come and see me!" calls a veiled woman to Liliás, and you pass through a heavy, nail-studded door into a square courtyard with pillars supporting a gallery above, and rooms opening off all round. "Each room contains a family," Liliás tells you; "the women mix freely, doing their cooking together in the court on the lower floor, or on the gallery up above, but if a man comes in, he clears his throat violently in the little vestibule between the outer and inner door, and in an instant all the women run helter skelter into their rooms, and the place is cleared of all except his own womenkind, who recognize the threat of their lord and master!"

"How curious. It reminds one of a rabbit warren."

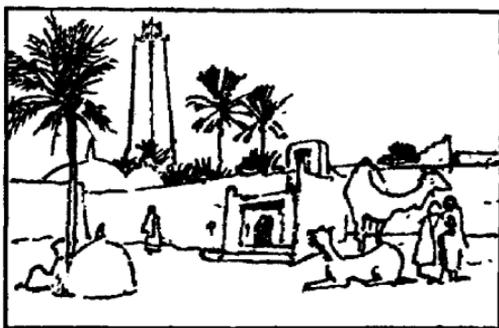
The next house is swarming with children, and they take you by the hand, and seat you on a cushion, while one of them, little Khadouja, puts her black curly head on Liliás' lap, and looks up at her with great dark eyes filled with wonder and delight, as she tells them of Jesus blessing the little children. Later you hear her repeating to the others how He took the children in His arms, and laid their heads on His shoulder.

Then a woman from the upper storey calls out—"Come and see my children." And you find one wee mite acutely ill, and another with an abscess on its head. "They think we can do anything," murmurs Liliás, "and we just pray not to make mistakes. Really, we should have had more than three months' training at Tottenham for this! Now there is the dearest little Kabyle child that we must go to. She has a terribly diseased foot which one or other of us goes every day to dress. It is touching to see how she waves everybody off, and takes off

the bandages and dressings herself, and replaces the fresh ones, though she is only four years old, and when it is done she throws her arms round our necks and kisses us! Poor child, we are afraid it is a hopeless case, but a doll and a warm frock have brought her little gleams of joy."

And one of the women who speaks French says to you as you leave—"No one ever—*ever* loved us like this!"

And so you return to your pleasant hotel, overlooking the blue sea, where the dust and smell of the slums never come, and the words sound in your ears:—"Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."



Chapter Four

CHALLENGING ISLAM

IN the tall house at Montague Square, quietness reigned until eight o'clock in the morning, when the chambermaid in pink print and white cap and apron came to one's rooms to draw the blinds, place a cup of tea at the bedside, and depart with a murmured "Your bath is ready, Miss."

Life was somewhat different in the little French flat at rue Dupuch, Liliás' new home in Algiers. She and her friends were up at break of day, practising the simplicity and frugality of Franciscans in their daily habits. There was toil, and often tears, but over them like a rainbow arched the love and joy of God, and deep in their hearts was the serene consciousness of doing "the will of the Father".

"Our day is something like this," Liliás writes home :

"Arabic, 9.30—11 a.m.

Déjeuner, 11.30 a.m.

Arabic, 12.30—2 p.m.

Tea, 2 p.m.

Visiting, 2.30—6 p.m.

Dinner, 6.30 p.m.

And another hour of Arabic between that and bed-time. At El Azhar University, they count twelve years for the Arab student to learn to master his own language. How many years it will take us, you may well ask! Six pages in our French-

Arabic dictionary are given to the one verb 'to walk'; each verb is conjugated in singular, dual and plural, as well as masculine and feminine, and each verb has up to ten forms of the infinitive. And with all its wealth of expression, there is no word in the language for 'holiness' as we understand it, and nothing in common parlance for 'humility'. Do not these dumb notes speak?

"As to the visiting, there is no end to it. It is lovely to watch how one door opens out of another, and though one knows that the first stage 'in favour with God *and man*' is only an early and a passing one, we can but take the gladness of it while it lasts.

"This evening we went to see the service in a mosque, a special service for the last week of Ramadan (the great annual fast when for a month neither food nor water must be touched from dawn to sunset). I wish I could give the feeling of it—the great mosque dimly lit by rows of tiny lamps, open on all sides to a court brilliant with starlight, with trees and splashing fountains; and the rows of these solemn white figures rising and falling simultaneously in their prostrations, like the waves of the sea. The front row, the strictest sect, joined in the recitations of the Imam, and then suddenly—the whole crowd went down on their faces, and after a pause of silence there began a kind of wail, repeated at intervals of a moment or two by the whole congregation, with their bodies rocking backward and forwards again to the ground—'Allah, Allah, Allah!' There was an indescribable moan in the intonation—the echo of it rings in my ears. No one can know in England what it is to see a mass of souls, Christless and hopeless."

The fanatical fervour of the people at times appalled them, as they faced the challenge of one of the strongest barriers ever set up between the human soul and God; for the social and religious life of Islam is so integrated that it forms, in the words of a French priest, "*le bloc inconvertissable*". If the "Woman" of the book of Revelation represents the idolatrous Roman church, the "Beast" may well be the Muslim power, the implacable enemy of Christ, finally to be destroyed by the brightness of His coming. Let those who



Lilius Trotter at 27 years of age



An Arab Boy

speak of Islam as a harmless—if not respectable—religion, go to live amongst it, and they will find, as these women did, moral filth, spells, sorceries and witchcrafts, and the very air impregnated with devilry. Miss Trotter describes a gathering of a sect—in reality devil worshippers—as “unspeakably dreadful”.

And yet, here, where Satan's seat appeared to be, the prey was to be taken from the mighty, for the crown of the Almighty. It was a fight of faith. Liliás' sensitive and loving spirit would have been broken by the cruelty and darkness around, but for the divine resources on which she learned to draw increasingly. As the palm tree of the desert sends its roots forty feet down to the buried waters and then stands erect in the shifting arid sands, bearing its fruit, the staff of life to the Bedouin, so their spiritual life already deep-rooted in God was driven deeper, and faith grew stronger.

“Yesterday I had a quiet day and went off to Pescade,” writes Liliás; “I had four lovely hours buried in some great tufts of a pampas grass of some kind near the top of one of the gullies that leads up from the shore to the hills.”

“Turn your soul's full vision on Jesus and look and look at Him, and a strange dimness will come over all that is apart from Him, and the divine *attrait* by which God's saints are made, even in this twentieth century, will lay hold of you,” she wrote again. Mrs. Helen Howarth Lemmel reading these words set them to music in the chorus which has been sung around the world—

*“Turn your eyes upon Jesus
Look full in His wonderful Face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim
In the light of His glory and grace.”*

But it was the disappointments of the work that tried them. “How we need to pray and believe for the women through their walls of difficulty,” she writes. “Yesterday we went again to see Mounai and Hanifa. They were softer than last time, but so puzzled. They had received everything at first like little children, knowing nothing of their own religion or

any other, and so, evidently, when they began to speak of Jesus, the whole battery of arguments and false statements was brought to bear on them. They would look at us, and then steal a glance at each other with an almost imperceptible shake of the head, and then look back at us again with dumb perplexity in their eyes. Imagine the chaos that it must be when you begin for the first time to use your brains on any abstract subject, with nothing to fall back upon but words that you have heard three or four times in broken language from a stranger, and no one to back you in your first attempt to take up an independent position, when you have never in your life stirred outside your house door, even, independently! That is the human side; on the other side there is God."

They held a women's meeting—the first attempt to gather them together. "We had a good day," she writes; "three of us started off in different directions to fetch our people, as hardly any of those we had invited knew the way. Yamina was my portion. She was ready when I got there, and was full of excitement and delight. She has grown into a dear little soul, as sharp as a needle, and so sweet and motherly with the baby, and thinking of everyone around her. Her old mad-temper, however, seems to have descended on this same babe! As soon as we were ready for a start, it set up a hideous yell which took a quarter of an hour or more to calm. Again we were ready, and again, as soon as it was bundled up in its mother's arms, the yelling began. An English mother would have carried it off, yells notwithstanding, but, of course, these women cannot bear anything that draws attention to them in the street.

"At last we got there, and we had, as I said, a good time—scattered talk at first while coffee and cakes lasted, but it grew deeper and quieter. The baby's brocaded yellow and white swathings were loosened a little, and it was quieted. Gradually the gathering became something like a meeting, and ended with prayer—whispered broken prayers from the women, and a repeated 'Amen, Amen' half under their breath made one feel that it was a reality to them. We have settled to have an 'at home' each Friday. We all felt that it was well

worth the expenditure of time and strength to get them together. It must be such a help to them to feel some kind of linking together, instead of standing as separate units."

Yamina was the first to be baptized, but the difficulty was that the women could not bear the thought of being touched by a strange man. "It is sin—it is impossible," they said to the missionaries. "Why cannot you baptize us?" But that did not seem to them the highest way. So they prayed on, and to their joy found that Belaid, Yamina's Christian husband, was willing for her to be baptized by Mr. Brading, a missionary with whom they were in fellowship. It was a sore point with Yamina, but at last she yielded, and the day was fixed.

"On Thursday we had a time of special pleading together with God that His power might be on this, the first native woman's baptism in the land, and that all might go quietly with nothing to jar on the stillness of His Presence; and His answer was very manifest. Everything went without a break or a difficulty, and little touches of His thought for us were to be felt all through. Just a quarter of an hour before, a quantity of chrysanthemums and papyrus came down from Mustapha, and the room looked solemn and beautiful when all was arranged. Belaid and Yamina and Kheira were the first to come, and then the other women—five of them—gathered and sat on the low native cushions round the room with their babies. We had prayers and then choruses, and Mr. Brading spoke to them, and then the moment came. I don't think we shall ever forget seeing her throw aside her veil and go fearlessly up the steps and down into the water. Belaid's face shone as she came out. 'I have prayed, O God, give her strength and courage,' he said, 'and He has answered.' He did answer, for I suppose none of us can understand what the ordeal was, physical, mental and moral, to a woman brought up in her surroundings.

"Oh these beginnings! The joy of them more than counterbalances the hardness of working in an unknown land like this."

The greatest test for the converts was the breaking of the annual fast of Ramadan—challenging the religious and social tyranny of Islam by the public confession of Jesus as Lord.

There was a feeling that no one could stand against it. If they did, they faced scorn, hatred, ostracism and persecution—sometimes death.

“Christmas Day, and the fast of Ramadan just started! A women’s coffee party was summoned for to-day, as a choice between the fast of Mohammed, and the feast of Jesus, as they call Christmas, but as usual there were many lapses. Zohra and Aissha were really ill, and would have come if they could, but the actual partakers were only Taitum, and her sister Fatima, and Atiqua. Shall we ever get more than three, says unbelief? Faith answers—yes.

“It was hard for them, for Hawawach had already made cutting remarks, and old Fatima and Zuleikha were there as onlookers, and the hymn was not in a very joyful key. The next day was, however, better—Belaid, Mohammed and Dahman were with us—no half-hearted spirit present, and they ate their meat with joyfulness and singleness of heart together at mid-day, and to show it was a real feast, Dahman asked for some jam to crown it, which they ate in spoonfuls—citron jam of Arab making. It was a great relief after yesterday’s mournful festivity.”

These souls had so much against them that it was to be expected that God would do something unusual without interfering with His own laws of human free-will, and this He seemed to do through dreams.

One New Year’s morning one of the boys attending the classes ran up with a shining face. Jesus had come to him in a dream, and showed him two doors—the door of Heaven and the door of Hell, and had asked him which he would like to enter. “I said ‘The door of Heaven’, and He said ‘I must wash you before you can enter that door’; and I said, ‘Lord, wash me’ and I woke up.” This was Mustapha’s story, as he knelt and gave his heart to the Lord.

“I asked Aissha, the muezzin’s wife, how long it was since the light had come,” Miss Trotter writes, “and the predominating point seemed to be a dream of a few weeks ago. She was standing among a crowd near the gates of Heaven wondering if she could get in, and the Lord Jesus came out, and took her hand under the wing of His *burnous* (cloak) and

led her in. 'Since then all has been full of joy,' she said, 'and His words have been as a field full of flowers.' I can well believe that this would be a great seal to her faith, for a lurking terror among Muslim converts is that they will belong to nobody at the last."

Our Lord's love for them brought Him to their side as they struggled toward the light; or, as they faced what was to a Muslim the great darkness of death, He became to those who had put out the hand of faith, the very light of life.

"The new Fatima is a touching soul. She is very, very ill, unable to lie down now, night or day. She sits when we go to see her with her arms resting on a stool, and her head upon them. But when we speak of Jesus, she rouses out of her semi-stupor. 'Yes, He has washed my heart like this' and she passes her hand over it . . . 'And He is here in this room . . . the others cannot see Him, but I see Him'; and her poor face lights up. 'He comes and speaks to me and I ask Him when He will come for me. He was standing over there in that corner by the window, last night. . . . No, they cannot see Him . . . I can see Him . . .' And the breath fails, and her head sinks down again."

The dreams were neither miraculous nor psychological phenomena but manifestations of God's love for the people.

The procuring of a house in 1893, in the midst of the Arab quarter in Algiers, was a wonderful answer to prayers, for this being before the *Entente Cordiale* they were subject to French suspicion and restrictions, as well as Muslim hatred.

"At last we have got down to the place we have so longed for among the people," she writes joyfully. "It was good to turn our backs on the long French streets, and plunge down among the crowds, first through a street thronged with Jews, then a little bit up again through the Arab quarter to a flight of steps that led to our door. We had a quiet night, in spite of the sounds of the *Aid* (feast) which was going on all around us, and an earthquake which brought us all three together at 1 a.m., and it was worth everything to wake up and find oneself here—to run out and be in the thick of the people. On Sunday, when I nodded to them from my window, one called out to another, 'The people who have harps!' I fetched

my little zither harp and they crept like cats along a parapet to a projection opposite my window where we could easily touch hands across the narrow street. There they sat, half a dozen women and girls against the sunset background, while we played and talked to them; then there was the sound of a man's voice in the street below, and they crept back without another word."

A friend who visited her there—the one to whom she had said years earlier "You can only obey God"—wrote: "I shall never forget my first impression of that narrow street where Miss Trotter dwelt; a dust-storm was blowing and we were nearly blinded by it as we entered the Rue du Croissant; dust, dirty papers and rubbish flying all around, it looked utterly squalid. When the great studded door opened—'the door of a thousand dents' as it came to be called, for it was so hammered at—we saw her standing there, tall and white, but with a glow of love and welcome, and all else was forgotten. The Arab house with its graceful white pillars and open court seemed a fitting place for her to work and pray in, so lit up was it with love and faith. She looked worn, but there was an intense vitality about her."

The children were a great joy to Liliās, especially the little girl waifs whom they adopted, with tempers and tongues so terrible, and yet so lovable and loving—so soon-repenting, when love shone on them. Little Aissha slept on a mat beside Liliās, and as she was being wrapped up in her red native *haik* (cloak) one night, she asked, "Do you know how much I love you?" and the brown arms were stretched out wide. "I love you as big as the whole house, the whole court, the whole roof, and the whole stairs—that is how I love you."

Then there was the "Brown Berry" with her mass of dark curls over her little face. "The Brown Berry's storms are rarer and shorter. She has not broken any doors or window-panes now for quite a long time—she had smashed seven we counted up, by dashing her head, or her fist through them! There is grace working in the wild little heart, we cannot doubt, and they all of them make such sunbeams about the house. Only one is never quite sure what will happen next till

their heads are down on their pillows at night, after sleepy hugs of little soft, warm arms."

But oh! the thousands and thousands of children in the land unloved, and often cruelly wronged—how her heart ached until it nearly broke with longing over them. Aissha was taken away from them and she wrote—"It would be a relief to see her grave, rather than know that her dear, bright little soul is getting more steeped in pollution every week that she is kept away from us; but He is the God of the living, and the living shall yet praise Him."

And it was so, for later comes this joyful entry in her diary—"A red-letter day! Fanny brought in our little Aissha, and oh, the joy of it! Her face is pure and bright, and her heart as full of fun and as full of love as ever; so wonderful when one knows the depths of surrounding sin that she has lived in. Such an answer from the Good Shepherd!"



Chapter Five

THE LURE OF THE DESERT

LILIAS Trotter left a fascinating legacy in her journals, beautiful to read in her own artistic writing, and exquisitely illustrated by water colour sketches of places and people, of plants and flowers—marvels of minute and accurate drawing which must have been a delight to her old teacher, John Ruskin, and to other friends amongst whom they were circulated.

They are full of the information of a trained observer and are a treasure-mine of spiritual teaching from her reading of the Word, and from the parables which she saw in nature, as she “thought God’s thoughts after Him”. Some of these are published in books of rare beauty, both spiritually and artistically—*Parables of the Cross and of the Christ Life*.

She was a born traveller, ready to “greet” the unknown “with a cheer”, and linked with this was the heart-longing of the evangelist to reach those yet unreached with the light and love of God. To live without European comforts among the people, to share their lives, and to reach the places where Christ had not been named, seemed to satisfy her. As someone has said, a map was to her a manual of intercession as well as a challenge, and to-day scattered over the map of Algeria and Tunisia are marked mission stations of which she was the founder.

Blida was one of the first places explored, a walled-in town,

thirty-five miles to the south, half French and half native, embedded in orange groves. She writes: "No one at home knows what oranges can be for beauty when they are just ripening, and the green and gold tints run into each other. We have just seen a cart of them go by drawn by eight horses. But it was to see the people that we came. The native quarter is a contrast to Algiers—little streets of one-storied houses, the door half-sunk sometimes below the level of the road—houses where no ray of the Light of Life has ever entered. The women here do not wear face veils, but arrange their *haiks* ingeniously like this [here follows an illustration] so as to let one eye only appear. And the variety of expression that they can concentrate into that one eye is astonishing!"

To the east of Algiers lay Kabylia, a tract of country inhabited by the Berbers, who had been driven into the mountains before the Arab invasions of the seventh and eleventh centuries. She and Miss Freeman visited Bougie, its chief town. "This Kabyle country is so beautiful; the line we went up to-day goes into the heart of it along a river bed, which lay like a silver net-work before us, the mountains rising on each side wreathed about with soft clouds, and the air fresh and sharp like England. It went to one's heart as no other country ever did, I think. The villages lie clustered thick on the hills; I have counted eighteen within a radius of two or three miles, mostly built on rocky crests, so as to lose none of the fertile slopes. And they lie in utter darkness through all the mountain country, range upon range, except for two North African Mission stations, and two other villages.

"We went such a drive this afternoon to the Cape where Raymond Lull spent the last few years of his life preaching and praying, and finally, at the age of eighty, shedding his blood for his Lord and for his Muslim brothers. It is one of the loveliest places I have ever seen, a gulf of shimmering light and colour with peacock blue water, giving iridescent reflections of the ochres and madders of the rocks above. We found the cave where he must have prayed those six hundred years ago. It is holy ground for all who are fighting the same battle still. There are words he left us: 'He who loves not, lives not. He who lives by The Life can never die'. If there had been

more of his utter self-surrender might not victory have come by now?"

But it is the South regions that fascinate her. There, the men are readers; and there, too, are the Brotherhoods—the mystic Seekers for Truth. Now she is poring over a map with the keenness of the born traveller, with Blanche Haworth looking over her shoulder. "We shall have to go by train to Constantine first," she says, "then down to Biskra, fifteen miles into the desert. After that we shall go on camel-back, and camp, and just live amongst the people. Won't it be wonderful, Blanche?"

"*March 13, 1891.* We left Constantine, and came across the great barren tableland that separates the sea from the desert. It got more and more desolate as the line crept upwards, and by and by, tents began to replace the huts of the Arabs; the only feature that broke the monotony was a couple of salt lakes, the haunt of flamingoes and other wild birds. At last the line curved down, twist after twist amongst the sandstone rocks, till we stopped here. Such a strange fair land of a new world it is; one looks and looks and feels as if one were in a dream. Beyond the very primitive inn, the sides of the gorge close in till there are not fifty yards between them, in towering masses of red crags, and then suddenly they open on a great forest of palm trees stretching along the river bed far into the valley beyond, backed by purple mountains. Over the brow of the nearest hill, one can see a queer little village. I must try for it to-morrow."

She sets off the next morning alone at about 8.30 a.m., across the stream on a couple of palm trunks lashed together, then up a winding path to the village, lying silent in sunlight; a quaint place, the houses built with thick walls of clay, and roofs and doors of palm wood.

"Suddenly, just as my heart went up to God for some opening, a woman's figure glided out of a door and stood under the shadow of the wall, spinning one of their tiny hand distaffs, and I went up to her. She asked what I wanted, and I answered that I love the Arabs, and had come to have a talk with her. A kindly pair of eyes peered at me from under her extraordinary headgear, and, without a moment's hesita-

tion, she led me in through twisting dark passages to a big barn-like room, and before I quite realized where I was, she began shovelling handfuls of dried dates into my bag, then vaulted over a low mud wall in the corner, added two eggs, and lastly fetched a saucer of milk and made me drink it. Such faces they have, these women, full of character and intelligence—forcible faces. Oh! they *would* make Christians! One by one a dozen women gathered in with exclamations of astonishment. I do not think they had ever seen a European at close quarters before. 'Look at the skin on her hands (gloved): look how smooth her hair is!' And they drew their fingers gently down the parting having already taken off my hat. (Their hair is plaited with enormous banks of wool on each side, dark red and dark blue.) Finally, as I stood up to go, and rose to my full height, one of them asked in open-eyed astonishment, 'Are you going to get any taller?'

"But in between, they would listen, a bit at a time, while I told them of Jesus—only a bit at a time, and then would come the chorus of 'Mohammed is the one who saves us, witness to Mohammed.' One woman specially was earnest over me as I have seldom seen a Christian earnest over a soul. 'Say "*La ilaha illa Allah wa Mohammed Rasoul Allah*"', she said beseechingly, laying both her hands on mine. 'Just say it once; we will never tell of you and it will get you to heaven. Oh, say it!' We were interrupted by a wolfish-looking dog who kept barking at me, but at last when 'shooed' sufficiently by the woman he ran in an acrobatic way up a palm tree that propped the wall, and disappeared on the roof. It was growing late in the morning and I had to get back, but I promised to go again."

This was their first visit to the South lands. Four years later she and Blanche Haworth are back again in Biskra planning to push past the most southerly French post, to the Oasis of El Djerid.

"*Biskra, January, 1895.* We are getting ready in good earnest for our start southward, all our equipment in native utensils—they are so much more sensible for the rough travelling: an iron plate which can be hung from the camel's pack-saddle, and which, placed on three stones for support, does for baking

bread or grilling meat. Everything in the way of stewing and boiling is done in a smaller copper pot, a larger one being used for drawing water. A wooden plate for making and kneading dough can also be slung from the camel's baggage. Then we have a couple of water skins, and what delights us most are the provision bags, made of the skins of sheep or goats, dyed in every kind of colour, no two alike, and tied up when full. These can be bumped about interminably without being damaged, and when you are at home, if you are really 'Native', you hang them on pegs round your kitchen, and they serve as store-cupboards! Knives and wooden spoons are provided, but not forks—those on your hands are considered good enough!

"Our first stage was a short one in a sort of carriage—very rickety, which dragged us and our goods at a tearing rate over the dry water-courses and intervening ground with the evening glow dying fast behind us. It was dark before we reached the Palms (you will find sometimes tens of thousands of palms at these oases, not just a few scraggy trees as we imagined in our childhood days). A group gathered with a lantern, and two or three children with flaming torches of dry palm branches showed us the way to our lodgings in the Sheikh's house. It was a low room piled three or four feet high with sheepskins stuffed nearly to bursting with crushed dates; furniture, of course, there was none, but we managed to squeeze our hammocks between the top rows of sheepskins, and betook ourselves to the *couscous* meal which was waiting for us. We tried vainly to unpack what we needed, for there was no place to put anything down.

"At last we tumbled in, not to sleep much—there were many disturbances. The dog tied in the court below barked untiringly, realizing that there were unusual people about; and the rats carried the bread we had put down for our breakfast from one end of the room to the other. But the words 'As thy days, so shall thy strength be' came with power, and proved true, for the sleep of the last two or three hours brought refreshment with it.

"At eight-thirty the men gathered in the café next door, about twenty of them, and they listened so earnestly! Two

or three followed us down the street as we went off, and the spokesman said 'Come again; we have not had enough of these words.' The camels that had been loaded meanwhile met us outside the village, and we started. I don't think I told what an achievement it is to mount and get off again. The camel is made to kneel down, which sets him growling; then you clamber over his hindquarters to a pile of rugs placed between the luggage; then with groans he gets up on his hind-legs which nearly tilts you over his ears; then he rises on his fore-legs with a jerk that nearly sends you backwards over his tail; a final heave, and you are up."

On they travelled for weeks, plodding across the desert, threading their way through mountain ravines; threatened by robbers and sandstorms, with food often reduced to a minimum, and their water supply uncertain; on they went, spending a day or two at each oasis, arguing with the men of the Brotherhoods and visiting the women in their homes, until they came within sight of their goal.

"We began to see the faint blue shadow on the hills marking where lay the palms of the first oasis of El Djerid (the Land of Palm Branches). Turning our backs on the mountains we plodded round the Shott (salt marsh) that lay between us and those far off villages. How one's heart went out in prayer that already the Spirit might brood over the chaos in the hearts over there, and prepare them for 'Let there be Light'."

Later she writes: "For the fortnight there we shall thank God always, I believe, right into eternity. From the first we felt the Spirit brooding over the place, and His Word had a strange power on the hearts. The men would gather round us in groups of six to twenty or more every hour of the day till sometimes, for the sake of a time with God, one felt one must send them away, and take refuge in a lovely palm forest that stretched away behind. They were eager for books. There are four thousand men in the town who can read, they say. The questions they ask show how thoughtfully they read; they knew our store was running short, and would ask so gently, 'Could you change this Gospel for another? I swallowed this one last night.' We stayed the utmost we could, and then felt we were to get off to Sherfa in the hopes that we might

find some Touaregs there, and get books into that untouched tribe.

"The next day was battling on in simple endurance through a blinding blizzard of sand; every trace of footprints had been swept clean away, and the track was invisible as we journeyed on. A knotted head of broom, now and then, proved that the men were keeping right.

"We camped early as the wind was getting stronger, and it seemed doubtful if we should ever get the tent up. 'The world is wind!' poor old Abdulla observed wearily as we struggled with it, all six of us together. At last we got it secured, and crept thankfully into its frail shelter. Towards evening the gusts lessened, and the stars came out of the brown sand-clouds, and next morning dawned clear and calm, showing round the western horizon range after range of snow-like sand hills, rose-tinted in the sunrise. We knew that buried among them were the villages for which we were making, villages where the true Light had never dawned. How the angels, how the Lord of the angels must watch when that light first reaches a new spot on this earth that God so loves. And Oh! the joy of being allowed to go with His message. How can people hold back from that joy while one corner remains unvisited by the Dayspring?"

They made contact with a Touareg, one of the strange race from the heart of the Sahara, where men on horseback go veiled, and the women rule the tribe, and into his hands they committed copies of the Word of Life for his people. "His eyes gave a silent gleam and he took them in his hand and hid them behind him. Then he stretched out a great strong brown hand and grasped ours, first one and then the other, and was gone. Our hearts had gone out to him and his land so strangely. Should we ever see him again?"

They picked up a hen for the pot, but the creature turned out to be so tame that no one had the heart to kill it. It rode in triumph with Blanche Haworth on her camel, and became quite devoted to her. "The white hen still comes along with us, and is such a character," writes Lilius. "She lays an egg faithfully every day, no matter how unpropitious the circumstances. I never saw such an intelligent hen. When she sees

anything new to her, as for instance, a white-washed room, or an artesian well, she walks about with her beak wide open, staring at it; and when she first saw a glass window, opening inwards shutterwise, herself reflected in it, after her usual open-mouthed stare, she craned her head round it to see if there was really another white hen on the other side! She is absurdly affectionate too, and never quite happy unless she is being stroked and petted. When Blanche was ill, she would crawl up towards her shoulder, and lay her long white neck on hers."

One more glimpse of these messengers to the desert as they turn north again. "We stopped for a midday meal at the Sheikh's where we went two years ago. He came to greet us with his face shining with welcome, and took us straight to his house. We were given the choice between the guest-chamber and an inner room opening out of it, with a huge heap of barley in one corner, and in another piles of leopard skins, saddles, embroidered belts, chased metal stirrups and odds and ends that looked as if they had come out of the Middle Ages! We chose the inner room as being more quiet, and made a place for our hammocks, and went back to the guest room, and almost before we knew where we were, we found ourselves in the thick of a reading with the men who had gathered, full of questions and eagerness to hear, and on and on we went till nearly nine o'clock, when they were turned out as our supper was served. We got a chance at a meal-time of speaking to one alone; we had seen by his face that he was on our side—on Christ's side rather—but had not said much. Now we asked him: 'Do you believe in Jesus to save you?' Quietly and firmly came the answer, 'I believe in Him.' 'Do you believe in Him only?' He looked straight at me. 'I believe in Him only; there cannot be two ways.' 'And do you dare to tell others?' 'I tell them little by little; they are hard; if someone would come and live here and teach them, they would listen.'

"Then a serving man came back, and between the various courses of peppery mixtures that go to make up an aristocratic Arab meal, we read him Romans, and told him how the Holy Ghost would come to him, and comfort and help him.

He is a true soul we feel sure, but a timid one. When will God call out a leader round whom such can rally?

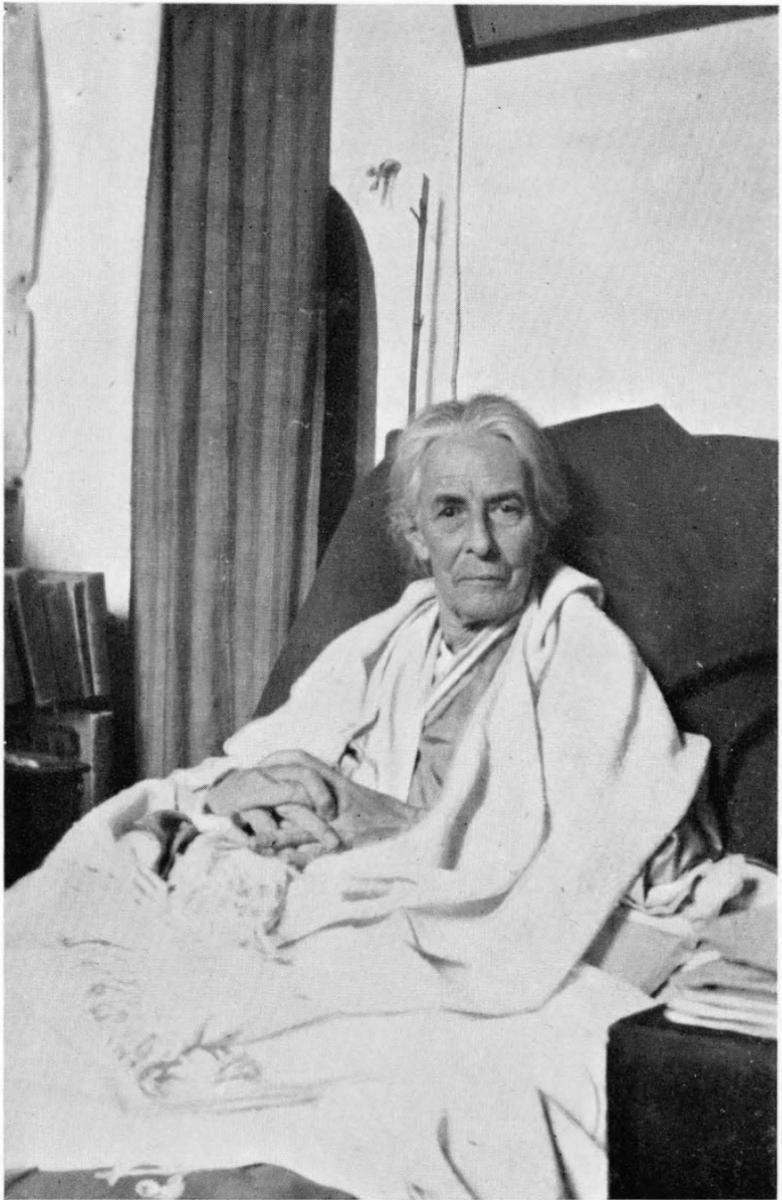
"We felt we got a bit lower this expedition than before, and oh, the joy of getting lower and nearer and nearer to the people. I think the time will come when we shall have no fixed plans, but just wander and stay and wander on, as the openings come and go."

"The joy of the time when Jesus will be King has been dawning," she wrote on returning home. "It used to seem a thing far away from us and our sharing, that ingathering of the nations unto Him, but now it has become so vivid, and the glory it will be to Him, so real. 'They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before Him'—that must include the Touaregs! and the glorious sudden harvest of all the seed sown everywhere. And Christ shall be 'the Prince of the kings of the earth', all governments and powers bowing to His purpose, instead of setting themselves in opposition. I think one needs to live under the ban of Government suspicion as we do, with all its limitings and thwartings on the human side, to realize the triumphant gladness of having the Lord for our King.

"And we shall live and reign with Him. I suppose that means that we shall have a share in directing His work and guiding it. Perhaps we shall be given the Touareg cities then to rule, if we do not get to them before, and that with resurrection bodies that will not flag under the heat of the Sahara!"



Muslim Womanhood



Lili Trotter at about 72 years of age



Chapter Six

OUT OF DEATH—LIFE

IT was a tired missionary who came to Rosethwaite, near Keswick, on furlough. Seven years on the Muslim battle-fields had left their mark. "I feel as if one wanted weeks for prayer. More and more one sees that there can be no 'mass moving', except through God. But at present, I don't seem to have sense for any concentration in prayer or anything else, and am just vegetating, and writing up this journal, and drawing the pictures from very promiscuous notes in tiny notebooks, written and drawn on camel-back, or in stray moments while supper was cooking, or the beasts were lading."

The weeks at home lengthened into months under doctor's orders, for nerves and heart were worn, by the strain of the battle, by the climate—during one Sirocco, she records a temperature of 116 degrees in the shade—and by the sense of oppression and evil under which they lived; worse than anything in the wicked heathen cities of India, a missionary told them, as he passed through Algiers.

Nothing but divine power could keep their love aglow, and in the midst of the round of visits that had first to be paid to her big circle of relatives, Lilia longed for "aleness"—for the creative hours with God which bring renewal. It was this living fellowship—this store of beauty and well-spring of joy that she found in the written word, and in the

Living Word—which fed the “unquenchable, mystical, fighting love of Lilies Trotter,” as Basil Matthews expressed it.

“*Crowthorne, September 3.* I don’t seem to have had much from God yet in my alone-time except a fresh sight of the loathsomeness of all that is of the flesh, and I suppose that is a good lesson, though a sorrowful one. We don’t get much news from Algiers. We fear that communication has been cut off, either going or coming, between us and the dear inland people. We had one more letter from Si Tahar in Tozeur, but since then we have heard nothing, though we have sent Bibles there, and to Touggourt, for Temasin and the Touaregs. They would surely have written if they had received them. It shuts one up to reaching them round by God.”

“*October 6.* Some quiet days at Morley Hall were my first bit of the communion of saints since coming home. I thought they would be for still further humbling and breaking down, but instead, there came such a lovely sense—not through anything that was said as far as I can remember—of what it meant to be ‘buried with Christ’—not only ‘dead’, but ‘buried’, put to silence in the grave; the ‘I can’t’, and the ‘I can’, put to silence side by side in the stillness of ‘a grave beside Him’ with God’s seal on the stone, and His watch set that nothing but the risen life of Jesus may come forth. ‘Give me a death in which there shall be no life, and a life in which there shall be no death’; that was the prayer of an Arab Saint—Abed-al-Kadar. I came upon it the other day. Is it not wonderful!

“All nature here is full of such intense quietness these Autumn days; a solemn stillness with the sense of the spring behind it; the dear living things are going into *their* graves, and one sees how the grave is a must-be. ‘Fall *into* the ground and die,’ the Word says, not ‘upon’ it. The road outside our lodging is strewn with acorns which will never come to anything because they are just lying *on* the ground, not *in* it. Nor are we to struggle into our grave, but to ‘fall into’ it.

*‘And where He died would I also die,
For dearer a grave beside Him
Than a kingly place among living men,
In the place which they denied Him.’ ”*

Back on their battlefield again they found that the power and patience of faith were needed to the utmost, for blow after blow fell on the work. It was as if the fresh tide of prayer that God had given while at home had only served to waken the powers of darkness against them. Two of the Christian women in Algiers, poor little brides of fifteen and seventeen, were cruelly done to death by slow-working poison. A girl convert who had walked faithfully with Christ for some years, at last fell under the power of a sorceress sent by the girl's brother to live in the house on purpose to turn her. Suddenly she would have nothing to do with the missionaries. "*She* knows all the thoughts to the bottom of my heart, and I have to do as *she* tells me," was all that she would say, with a look of darkness in the grey eyes that had once been bright with light. Evil drugs were used that seemed to turn the minds of the converts against those once loved and trusted, and sap the very springs of life.

"Things seem without a lift on the human side, but God keeps up our hope in Him for His sequel," writes the indomitable Liliás. "In face of the bleak sky and cold wind, four little snowdrop buds have sat for the last two or three days with their chins on the earth, and now, to-day, one of them has reared itself up, pure and fearless on its stalk, with all the promise of spring."

It came as a relief, and often brought a sense of triumph, when the converts were called Home. "Rouikia's brother-in-law has gone home in great peace," we read. "With his failing breath hardly able to articulate the words, he repeated over and over 'I love Jesus a thousand times—a thousand times.' Then as the end came, he said with a wonderful shining in his face, 'The gate of heaven is open; I enter in—Jesus.' it is better so. It used to make me sad when God saved them just to die. Now I can only rejoice that their training for the work of eternity is being carried on by God Himself in the quiet of His haven. Till a tide of the Holy Ghost comes down on this poor, wicked land, there seem such fearful odds against them."

Three passed on within a fortnight. "The 'Zamor boy' has been the first to reach the harbour. On Saturday morning he

said to his mother 'I shall die to-day; send for them. Tell them that Jesus has taken all my sins and there is nothing left. Tell them He is with me and with them. Tell them to come and see my grave.' 'No, death is not near you,' his mother answered, and gave him some green figs to eat, but while eating them he passed away. He looked so beautiful that his people told us they could not take their eyes off his face. 'Your death is a beautiful death,' they added. We went to-day, May and I, to see the little grave on the hot hillside above the town, with his mother to show us the place. Even there, in that Muslim burying ground, Christ will divide the spoil with the strong. Hallelujah!

"'Comforted concerning him seeing that he was dead'—I think one needs to have Muslim sheep to shepherd to know what that means."

When the writer was with Miss Trotter in 1919 the converts seemed but a handful after years of battle. But this is not the full measure of the work. Reading her diaries, one has the conviction that a crowd of spiritual children must await her in the life beyond—those who were taken away from the evil that was to come, and others—Nicodemus souls from the desert and the lonely mountain villages, who had neither the power nor the opportunity to witness.

The value of her work cannot be easily measured. Perhaps even more far-reaching than her evangelism was the influence of her writings. Working with the Nile Mission Press, she created a literature that has been scattered like living seed throughout the Muslim world.

One of their earliest friends in Algiers was Dr. Nystrom, a Swedish missionary, a great gaunt Northerner—his hair nearly white already with brainwork, though not much over forty, when they first knew him. "He can speak seventeen languages, and read twenty-five," his little wife told them one day, "but don't tell him I said it!"

This great language gift was laid on the altar for God's Kingdom, and the aim of his life was to get the Bible, then only to be obtained in the stately classical Arabic, into a language that the Arab mother could read to her child. He

would go round and round the native shops and cafés listening to the people talk among themselves, picking up and verifying the best colloquial expressions, and a week before his death he finished the long task. To Miss Trotter and others was given the revising of his manuscript, and the fight to get it into print. The first to be published was the Gospel of Luke, seven thousand of which were sold in two years; then followed St. John's.

"The work over St. John's Gospel goes slowly," she writes. "It is even more full of interest than the revision of St. Luke, and, from the very nature of the truth taught in it, needs still more careful weighing. The words for spiritual realities have to be grafted on to the colloquial, waiting for the sap of the new life to weld them in and flow through them."

Later we read, "The colloquial St. John has been out a year, and has almost run through its first edition already, and that means a real hunger wakening, I believe, and so much for the Spirit to work with. The next step is the revision of the Acts. It is beautiful that we should have it just as the need comes for showing the meaning of discipleship to those who have lately entered the Kingdom."

Then during a year of frustration, when ill-health made it impossible to take much active part in the work, she writes, "In all the outward withholdings of this year, God, as is His wont, has been 'opening a door where He closes a window.' The door is Arabic tracts. Two or three years ago, Miss van Sommer of the Nile Mission Press gave two thoughts that remained as seed thoughts, and are now coming to their springtime. One was that the Arab love of story-telling ought to be used to get a 'hearing'; and the other, that a hearing is much easier to get (given the capacity for reading) by paper and ink than by living voice. The printed page does not rouse the necessity for defending his position and showing fight before his comrades, which is the first instinct of a Muslim when his creed is dealt with in public; and from the absence of home life, and the impossibility for the man missionary to penetrate such homes as they have, there is hardly a chance of dealing with the man except in public. But quietly, within his four walls, he can read the Bible as often as he will,

without feeling any necessity laid upon him to contradict it. The outcome has been that the majority of the working hours of this winter and spring have gone to writing and translating and printing."

She had a gift for writing stories in parable form which greatly appealed to the Arab mind; and her leaflets for boys and men and those for women and girls, cleverly illustrated in eastern style, had a wide circulation. During the 1914-18 war years, she and Blanche Haworth spent six months in Cairo with the Nile Mission Press; and she was for ever encouraging her fellow-workers to write—"tractitis" this enthusiasm was dubbed!

Faith in an ultimate harvest was unquenchable. "We have to do with One Who inhabits eternity," she would say, "and if we refuse to stay our faith upon results that we can measure, and fasten it upon God, He will keep wonderful surprises wrapped away in what looks now only waste and loss. In the setting up of Christ's Kingdom, the waste places may see a nation born in a day."

At one of the mission houses, she was watching a boy sent to trim the mimosa hedge with its golden balls, and to plant the cuttings elsewhere. He was looking very mournfully at the trench he had dug for the cuttings.

"It is useless to plant anything," he said. "The earth is dead."

"No, it is not dead," she replied; "it is only dry."

"But I tell you it is dead; in summer the earth is always dead," and he picked up a rock-like clod of earth looking dead enough.

"It is the very same earth that it is in winter," she replied. "All that it wants is water."

Of all the soils in the world, the Muslim soil seemed the most barren, and friends and foes would repeat the words, "It is useless to plant anything; the earth is dead."

But to both, and to the hosts of darkness that would fling that taunt at the messenger of the Cross, Lilius Trotter would aver and affirm—"No, it is not dead; it is only dry!"



Chapter Seven

TRAVELLER AND MYSTIC

LILIAS Trotter's life in North Africa might be summed up in Dr. Zwemer's words: "To be content to persevere in Gospel witness for more than a generation, when visible results are so small, is a heroism of the highest order, a heroism not of this world."

God gave her that spirit of sheer patient faith, and also a spirit of deep content and of joy in His fellowship, in her work, and in His beautiful world. It would be impossible to chronicle the events of those forty years, full of activity, and of increasing influence in the realm of missionary enterprise. This chapter will give some glimpses of them, and of the secret springs of her life.

She was a great traveller as well as an evangelist, and knew Algeria as few did. In summer, to escape the fierce Algerian heat, she travelled to Switzerland, or home to England. Her wide-awake mind loved new places, new people and new beauty. Latterly, in the interests of the work, she travelled more than she might have chosen.

The freshness and purity of the lonely mountain resorts to which she found her way in Switzerland were balm to her weariness, after the fetid streets of Algiers. "We have come to the very heart of the mountains, six thousand feet up with all it means of snowy air, and little blue gentians, and utter

stillness," she writes, "I will open rivers in bare heights' was His word as we got up and up into the high valley, the land of primula and gentian, up, above and away, where all is at its barest above the level of the trees. It was all glistening with little streams set in brown moss and huge golden marsh marigolds. To-day's first lesson was the mountain's path. I followed one only a few yards farther this morning, and such an outburst of beauty came; you can never tell to what glories any humble path may lead if you follow far enough."

In 1900 she was in Cornwall. "Oh the joy of being here again! Cornwall has the most wonderful *attrait* of any place I know on earth—except perhaps the desert. And there is a likeness in their unlikeness. Oh the huge illimitableness of everything! one's whole being can expand. And then the bliss of a fortnight alone crowns it all. I nearly cried for joy when I got out among the heather on the cliff. I found an old Cornish cross of rough granite this morning out on the edge of the path across a cornfield. It was so full of meaning standing there, set up, I suppose, unknown ages ago, by one of the Irish missionary saints to claim the land for Christ. And still our 'corn of wheat' waits for His harvest."

But though on holiday, she is ready for any manner of service, and there comes an invitation from "the dear Methodies" to take their meetings, and she is greatly burdened for one class leader, who has a contract for driving for the big Telegraph Station some two miles off, but who "makes his brothers to offend" by taking pleasure parties for drives on Sunday afternoons. "But I know that the burden and pressure about it means that there is a battle going on in the unseen world over him," she notes. "I don't feel one can speak to him till one *knows* one has hold of God's power."

Later: "At last the chance has come for a straight talk with the class-leader. But apparently to no purpose as to any immediate decision. But God has got the thing in hand."

Two months after, when back in Algiers, she receives a card advertising his trips, with the words printed at the end—"No Sunday driving except in cases of necessity." Hallelujah!

The gipsy in her thrilled to a tent and camping equipment,

and here she is in 1907 itinerating on the mountains behind Blida.

"Annie Whistler and I are up and off by 6 a.m., on our mules, up to the ridge where we could see backward over the seaward side, and landward to chain beyond chain of mountain crests, ten or eleven of them, and in between each, riverbeds with villages unnumbered. We told Si Ali on starting that we wanted, instead of keeping to the road along the ridge, to keep along the face of the hillside, where we had found on the map there should be two unvisited villages. Si Ali said—No, he had never been that way, and could not tell whether there would be any road. When we came to the cross roads, he squared round and said—What are you going to do? He threw the responsibility on us, and we threw it on God to find a feasible path; and at last he consented, though, we could see, with some misgivings, to take the path which is apt to be swept away by the winter torrents, leaving barely a footbreadth along the face of the rock—sometimes not that. But having made our boast in the Lord before him and his mate, we knew it would be all right, and so it was.

"We had our *déjeuner* perched up above the first village, Bou Artis; but alas! it was too far down the valley to be reached, and it would have taken too long to get to the little flat roofs and back. Just above us lay their burying ground in a sacred wood of old olive trees. Will they hear before more find their way there?

"A few more turns in and out of the spurs, and the second village came in sight, and this time on our level. We stopped at the outlying hamlet of Yamdoun. A young fellow of twenty-five or so, who came out to greet us, brought us to his house. His wife was such a lovely young thing, and in a dim, half-comprehending way, she and the other women listened to the new story. 'Nobody has ever told us—we do not understand very much—nobody ever comes down here.' That was their apology for not taking in more. Is not the apology due from another side?"

The following year, by invitation of Baroness Küreks of the Swedish Y.W.C.A. she and Miss Haworth visited Sweden, and then Denmark. "Such a different world this is from the quiet,

undemonstrative Sweden; here in Denmark, all is alert, wide-awake, keen. We are lodged in a large house of four flats, filled from top to bottom with its hive of workers belonging to the Danish Women's Missionary Society (K.N.A.).

"Our chief *rapport* lies with the top flat, where there are sixteen girl students in training. We have Bible readings with them in the mornings, and little missionary gatherings in the evenings, and we feel that among them and their leaders there is a spiritual atmosphere of the truest type, and yet practical, natural, merry, and sunny with love and fellowship. We watch God drawing one and another towards the fields He has given us, and those in charge of them only rejoicing."

From there they went to Germany, and paid an unforgettable visit to Friedenshort. "Baroness Küreks was full of thoughts as to whether we could get to see a great friend of hers in Eastern Germany. We knew her by name having heard of her three years ago, at Keswick. God used the silver clasps she tore off her Bible there, and sent up to the table, to raise a tide of giving to His cause. She is at the head of one of these great German *Anstalts*, and Baroness Küreks longs that the needs of Muslim women should have a pleading there.

"Then in Berlin came a pressing invitation from Sister herself, and by a chain of little guidings, we came across her in the one half hour she had in the city; our hearts were knit instantly, and we settled to wait till she came back, and return with her.

"She is unlike anyone I have ever met, a medieval saint, stepped out into fullest light and freedom, with the special type of inward illumination that seems a heritage in all ages of the German 'Friends of God'.

"Outwardly, the place we have landed in is the ugliest and bleakest I have ever seen—a great mining district, on a spur of the Carpathians, with the winds of all the Russias blowing across it, and the thermometer at 27 degrees of frost. Inwardly, it is all aglow, just on fire with a spirit of sacrifice that does not even know itself to be sacrifice, it is so natural.

"We are lodged in rooms off the Central Hall, and before daylight the chorales begin there softly, like the singing of

birds in the dawn. And all day long there is a ripple of gladness everywhere, though the necessaries of life are reduced to their minimum, and that minimum in its turn made to cover the fresh calls that come incessantly. There are 150 sisters, and the household numbers 300 souls, including orphans, students, infirm villagers, crèche babies, servant girls in training, and tramps in the night shelter, to say nothing of outposts, prison work, and I know not what else beside. Even the children have drunk in the passion for giving. Dear baby tots came in last night in a string, singing a hymn, and bringing armfuls of their very best toys for the Arab children. The whole place is an inspiration."

Her work with the Nile Mission Press took her on different occasions to Cairo. "The C.M.S. church within a stone's throw, where Canon Gairdner has charge, has been the greatest joy and uplift of our time here, for its work is pre-eminently among Muslims. The little crypt-like church is full; to hear the burst of praise in 'Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ; Thou art the Everlasting Son of the Father' in the midst of the strongest Muslim centre in the world, is worth coming here for."

Another visit to Switzerland brings this outburst of joy in her diary: "I have never seen Switzerland look so gloriously happy as it does this year.

*'Then shall thy smile discover many things—
Why laugh the hearts of children at their play,
Why skip the lambs, and why the skylark sings.'*

"The peaks of the Mischabel were just shouting for joy this morning in radiant snow after a day's storm, and the last filaments of cloud were dancing round their crests. Oh, it is a glorious place—so radiantly glorious morning after morning, that it makes one feel that in spite of all we have cost Him and do cost Him, Christ is anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows."

Our next glimpse is of Lilius Trotter at prayer. Traffic with Heaven was the mainspring of life. Over her bed hung a large map of Algeria and Tunisia bearing the words in her own delicate writing—"Take heed to the ministry which thou

hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it." Many a lonely vigil was kept under that map, when the tides of prayer and longing broke into her rest, and her lamp was alight long before dawn. Her diary is a manual of prayer. *The Basis of True Prayer* she realized to be *Fellowship*. "It has come these days with new light and power that the first thing we have to see to as we draw near to God day by day is that our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. If we listen in the stillness till our hearts begin to vibrate to what He is thinking and feeling about the matter in question, whether it concerns ourselves or others, we can, from that moment, begin praying downwards from the Throne, instead of praying upwards from ourselves. 'For this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us, and if we know that He hear us, we know that we have the petitions that we desire of Him'."

When turned out of the South lands, her love and longing found outlet in prayer. " '*Prayer is the sluice-gate between my soul and the infinite.*' I came across these words of Tennyson's the other day, and they came back again and again to-day with a special sense of their reality; the asking in the name of Jesus for this and that village and town of those dear unreached and unreachable mountains and deserts, does set the sluice-gate open to them. The powerlessness to go, gives an intensity to the joy of prayer. One can stand in spirit among the dear mud-houses of Tolga, and the domed roofs of the Souf, and the horseshoe arches of Tozeur, and the tiled huts buried in prickly pear hedges in the hills, and *bring down* the working of the Holy Ghost 'by faith in the Name' perhaps more effectively than if one were bodily there. One can shut the door, as it were, and stand alone with God, as one cannot on the spot with the thronging outward distractions of the visible."

She learnt much about the *Patience of Prayer*. "One gets glimpses in the Bible of what delayed answer to prayer may mean—Moses, for instance. The answer to his prayer to enter the promised land was kept back for centuries, till he stood there with Jesus Himself. And Elijah's prayer to die was refused because the glory of the fiery chariot was waiting for

him. Even if the answer is carried on out of the bounds of this life altogether, it is not thereby lost. The powers of the world to come are more than we can know of as yet." And she quotes Priscilla Leonard's verses :

*"On the far reef the breakers recoil in shattered foam,
Yet still the sea behind them urges its forces home.
Its chant of triumph surges through all the thunderous din;
The wave may break in failure, but the tide is sure to win.*

*O mighty sea, thy message in changing spray is cast,
Within God's plan of progress it matters not at last
How wide the shores of evil, how strong the reefs of sin—
The wave may be defeated, but the tide is sure to win."*

The Battle of Prayer was a reality to them. "The old Exodus story has come up into a fresh glow of life to-day in setting forth the steps of emancipation for the slaves under the yoke of Islam. I have never seen before that it falls under three sections—the breaking of the oppressor's power; the passing under the shelter of the Blood; and the glorious liberation of the passage of the Red Sea. It is in that challenging and breaking down of Pharaoh's authority to keep the chosen people, where, I believe, we have failed. 'First bind the strong man' is an ignored counsel. We have gone straightway to the attempt of spoiling his house, and it is but little spoil that we have carried away from its whole length and breadth, with the 'strong man' of the powers of darkness resisting every step, and pursuing every fugitive. It is with these principalities and powers that we have to deal, stretching out the rod of faith higher and higher, as Moses did.

"'First bind the strong man.' The lesson is repeated in the book of Esther. She did not begin by trying to get Haman's 'mischief' reversed. In the strength of utter weakness, after three days' fast, she touched the top of the outstretched sceptre, and received power against the enemy himself, and when he was bound, her people were loosed.

"That is the divine order of victory—'Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.'

“Oh! that He will teach us to use these ‘keys of the kingdom of heaven’ while time remains. So shall the powers of darkness be bound, and the powers of light be loosed.”

The Word of God was meat and drink to Lilius Trotter, intellectually as well as spiritually; it satisfied her, though she read widely in contemporary literature too. With wonderful clearness she saw to the heart of divine truth, and how it applied to daily life. And yet she valued it most as the medium which revealed her Lord. The pages of her Bible most worn were those of the books of Leviticus and the Song of Solomon—both full of pictures of the One she loved.

“I have been thinking how not only all that is most beautiful in manhood and womanhood meet in ‘the man Christ Jesus’, but also the ideals of youth and age. ‘His locks are bushy and black as a raven’ is the symbolism of the Song of Songs; and yet in the visions of Daniel and St. John, He is ‘the Ancient of days, His head and His hair as white as snow.’ There is nothing in life that does not find in Him its uncrowned King.”

Concerning God’s salvation from sin, and the preciousness of His cleansing, she writes: “I have been thinking these last days about Ezekiel 36; 25 and 26. It is not only cleansing that God gives, but a new heart, and a new Spirit. Is it not for want of going on to seek this fresh gift that so many who have claimed God’s cleansing seem to stand still? There is a hardness about them; a want of sensitiveness to God, and sensitiveness to sin; they are stereotyped at certain points, and there are angles which others are apt to knock. It is not only a cleansed heart that we want, but a heart of flesh.”

“I was wondering this morning what that verse means ‘The Lord thy God shall put out these nations before thee by little and little,’ Deut. 7; 22; and how one could reconcile that with God’s full salvation. And then it came to me how their salvation from their enemies was meant to be a full salvation up to the limit of the conquered border. No foes were to be allowed to lurk as pricks in their side in the stretches of land already possessed; but the enlarging of those borders was to be ‘little and little’. And so all growth must be on the border-

line of experience—one thing after another coming within the expanding circle of light having to be dealt with and renounced. And the rapidity of our growth will be just the measure of the rapidity with which we deal with every doubtful thing.”

On a New Year's day she writes in her diary: “ ‘Whatsoever shall endure the fire ye shall make it go through the fire, that it may be clean.’ ‘That the trial of your faith . . . though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.’ ”

“That was God's New Year word to me to-day—‘*that it may be clean*’. So it has been from the beginning. Noah's faith had to be cleansed from all leaning to past experience; Abraham's from all leaning on Sarah to help him; the nobleman of Capernaum from all hurrying to prove; and the Syrophenician woman from any encouragement on God's part. The fire through which they had to go brought it out as *clean* faith.”

Again, concerning the power of united prayer she finds this in the Word: “The marvellous promise of Matt. 18; 18 has been so much to me these last days—the power given into the hands of the Church for moving the unseen, binding the forces of hell, and loosing the forces of heaven, even when it is represented by the smallest corporate capacity of ‘two’.

“But the condition in the context on both sides, is perfect love. That is the spiritual atmosphere where faith such as this can be generated. The teaching of Ex. 37; 7-9 brings out the same thought. The cherubim represent the corporate life of the Church again. They are ‘beaten out of one piece’, one with each other through the Mercy seat. Their faces are toward one another—love meeting love. The outstretched wings touch above—faith meeting faith. Covering the Mercy seat, they are spread out as wide as the promises of God. And this New Testament verse is a commentary on it all—‘That ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to *comprehend with all saints* what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of God.’ ”

And now to close this chapter a quotation quite characteristic of her:

*“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
And the love of God,
And the fellowship of the Holy Ghost
Be with you.’*

We take the words as a soothing ending to a quiet service.
In their true light, they are a battle-cry.”



Chapter Eight

THIRTY YEARS RETROSPECT

MISS TROTTER sits in her den at rue du Croissant talking to her friend Alice Kemp. They had first met—one of the things that God had prepared for them—as guests at the same pension on the day of arrival in Algiers in 1888, and had been linked together ever since. Thirty-two years had passed of waiting to set foot in the land again, but all the time Alice Kemp had been pouring out her prayers and her help, and now released from home ties, she has arrived with her niece Lady Haldane, on a visit.

How much there is to talk about! Laughingly they recall the early days—the seeming impossibility of getting into the houses—the struggle with the language—the letters from friends at home, mystified by their missionary ways!

“Those first months we felt as if we were knocking our heads against a stone wall,” remarks Liliás. “Do you remember the Sunday classes for the Arab shoe blacks, and how after infinite toil we managed to speak for about five minutes each?”

“Yes, and what imps they were,” Alice exclaims. “I remember one gave his name as ‘Son of a Dog’ wickedly hoping that you would not understand and that he would see it going down on the register as such.”

“Yes, and do you know that twenty-five years later we came across him and found that he remembered the lessons

and hymns we taught then? They were the first seeds of the new life in his heart, and during a long illness they blossomed into a glad reality, and he went Home triumphantly. Quite a number of the family too, were touched. It is true that the last word is always with the Good Shepherd."

"Do you commemorate the anniversary of your coming?" asks Miss Kemp.

Lilias laughs, "It is nearly always commemorated for us. March usually comes in like a lion with some special attack of the Enemy. And yet as if to show that the initiative is with God, there is generally some fresh outlook into the beyond, or some fresh advance before the month ends. It was the eighteenth anniversary to the very day, though we were all unaware of it, that we moved into Dar Naama, our beautiful 'House of Grace'."

"What a wonderful gift that house has been!"

"Yes, the time came when we felt we must have a 'blow-hole', and that it was not good for the younger workers who were coming out, to be cooped up in the evil atmosphere of rue du Croissant all the time. So we prayed; and one day Blanche Haworth and I were walking on the hills behind Algiers, and we came across a big rambling house built on the hill, looking down a rift in the hills to the distant sea, and we found it was for sale, at some ridiculously low figure. It was Blanche's gift to the Band, and the work that she put into the cleaning, and whitewashing, and furnishing and preparing of it, was prodigious. It has really become the Headquarters, and with its never-ending rooms and galleries, and courts—they tell me there are fifty-nine—its possibilities are endless. How Blanche loved to entertain there!"

"You must miss her greatly."

"Yes," replied Lilias sadly, "we miss her. It was on the anniversary that closed our thirty years of night toil in this land that she passed over to the shore where the Master was waiting for her. The last piece of work she did was to make up the Financial Report for 1918. By the time the proofs came back from the printers, she lay unconscious. . . . There is a wonderful sense of expansion about one's love for those who are gone, as if it has escaped earthly fettering. And their love

for us will have grown in the same way, only in fuller measure, with something pure and fathomless, and boundless and inexhaustible, because in God."

Alice looks at the beautiful, strong face of her friend, with its lines of sorrow and of joy, and eyes that have looked into the depth of sin, as well as into the heart of God. "How great and calm and joyous she seems to have grown," she thinks to herself; "and there is a stillness about her that speaks of such rest in God. And yet she hasn't lost her sense of humour nor her love of beauty :

*'Grief to have known, and yet to be
Clear-eyed to all felicity'*

just describes her."

Lilias is turning over her diaries, the careful record of the past years. "Do you remember the story of 1903?" she is saying, "I think the Enemy imagined he was going to turn us out of the land! It really was the darkest year in our history. I shall never forget the awfulness of discovering that two of our dear women were living in fearful sin. We found it difficult to believe that such sin and such deception could exist. It seemed to make a mock of faith. At the same time the Muslim authorities bought the house opposite within an arm's length of us, and opened it as a kind of women's club, with music and dancing and prizes, bringing the war to our very gates. All day long our comings and goings and doings and sayings were watched, and the women's classes were deserted.

"Then there was opposition from the Jews to the classes for their boys and girls. The attendance went down from fifty to five, and at the class for bigger girls there were none at all, for the very good reason that they stationed a Rabbi to keep watch over our door from the top of the stairs. The Jesuits started a new campaign against us, and we were watched by the French authorities as if we were spies. Our letters were opened, and if ever we set foot in a train, our destination was telegraphed on ahead. And oh! the waves of depression as well as oppression that swept down on us. It was like a Sirocco blast all round, withering and suffocating. We could only fight it off hour by hour through the power of the Blood.

I believe all that tremendous resistance was because the Enemy knew his power was to be broken in this land. I remember someone saying—It does not matter on which side for the moment lies the victory or the defeat. What matters is on which side lie the inexhaustible resources. And they are with us—Hallelujah!”

“What a terrible time it must have been. When did the tide turn?”

“Before the year ended. It began with the resignation of the Governor, a strong Jesuit; and then with the visit of Edward VII to France there came a complete reversal in the attitude of the authorities, and we began to feel we could breathe freely again. I came across this in an old Journal the other day—an order for our banishment from the country. Listen to it: *‘La Chambre, confiante dans l’énergie du Gouvernement, lui demande de faire cesser immédiatement les agressements des missionnaires étrangers en Algérie, et passe à l’ordre du jour . . . M. du Maley demande du Gouvernement s’il accepte l’ordre du jour Saint Germaine . . . L’ordre du jour Saint Germaine est adopté.’*

“And this is all that has ever been heard of it! And we proved too, in those days, that if the Devil has new resources, God has more. Two French workers joined us and stood by us manfully. We got a room in the native quarter for the boys, and started carpentry and other classes. And though it grieved us that the work seemed so desultory owing to the drifting nature of the men, so different from the work among village lads who can be watched over and cared for, we have found that there is no drifting out of His care. It is beautiful to watch His slow, patient working. We heard from a missionary recently of four young men brought in in Morocco, and they all spoke of having been in this house when they were boys.”

Just then a little voice is heard outside the door—“O Lalla Lili, O Lalla Lili!” and a brown hand is pushed through the bars of the window which looks on to the gallery.

Lilias laughs, “That is little Moussa, one of them; he is supposed to live with his mother and sister, but this house exceeds his in attraction, and he spends most of his days and

many of his nights here. He has such a talent for drawing, and is quite bewitching. He wants a new design now, I expect." And, as she hands one out to him, the hand is grasped and kissed.

"You should hear his prayers—'Help me to paint well to-day; I did not paint well yesterday.' And the other day his sister was praying that they might have a baby brother who should not be 'advised by Satan', and this seemed to strike a chord in Moussa's heart, and he broke out—'O God, yes, send us a brother who shall not be advised by Satan. I am advised by Satan very often; I am very wicked. Send us one who shall be good!'"

"The children have been one of your joys," Alice remarks.

"They have," replies Liliás; "we have had some darlings. Here are two lovely stories Millicent Roche sent me from Blida to-day. One Easter Sunday they had been praying that an atmosphere of Easter joy might reign in the house, and evidently the prayer was heard, for a sensitive little soul exclaimed as she came in—'What has happened? Has Jesus come?'"

"The other was when she was giving them a lesson on the draught of fishes, describing the long, weary night, and how tired the disciples were, so that when the Lord told Peter to let down the net, he thought there was not much use in doing it. One little girl's remark was—'I suppose he did not know Jesus'; a remark we may well lay to heart when depression settles down on us."

"Tell me about Blida."

"It was our first little out-station. We visited it, and prayed over it for ten years, before we managed to get a *piéd-à-terre* there in 1901, in rented rooms from where we could reach out to the mountain villages around. Then in 1907 we found the cottage above the native town. It just seemed to come down from the Father of lights into our hands, everything straight and unentangled, and it was so like Him to give fifteen thousand square metres instead of fifteen hundred, which we thought would be the utmost we could afford."

"When did the Mission come into being?" is Alice's next question.

"It was just after the dark days of 1903 that it began to grow. It is not fighting just to stand still and be banged at, and so during those days when the work was almost at a standstill we began to pray for five workers, and as soon as the block passed, God began to give them. In February 1906 within a month, five volunteered. There was Annie Whistler who was with us for some years before joining Sister Eva at Friedenshort, and Sascha Perkin, Mlle Gayral, and Mlle Roland and Mabel Grautoff. How swiftly and easily God can call them when His time comes!

*'The thing I ask when God doth bid me pray,
Begins by that same act to come my way.'*

"Nineteen-hundred-and-seven was a wonderful year. A letter reached us one day from America, announcing that some 600 delegates of the World's Sunday School Convention were on their way to Rome, would be landing at Algiers, and would like to give one hour to seeing something of the work. Our first feeling was one of utter dismay; what *could* we show them in an hour! And again, what had we to show Americans with their big ideas and keen business minds—no hospitals, no schools, little organization, and no results to speak of for twenty years' fight in Algiers. Then came a clue in the old saying—'Difficulty is the very atmosphere of miracle.' We brought the problem to God, and bit by bit, as we prayed, the outline of a programme evolved. We decided to show them in all honesty, not what we *had* done, but what had *not* been done, and believe in God to use the very weakness of it all.

"So we sent a circular to be distributed on the ships, telling straight out the difficulties of the work, and inviting them up to rue du Croissant in groups of fifty and sixty at a time.

"The day arrived, and they came crowding in. 'We only have an hour,' said Mr. Warren; but they long outstayed their time. Round the court were maps with their woefully thin firing line of stations, and the still sadder record given by tiny red flags of places visited once, and left again to their darkness; and photographs of the pathetic Christless faces of inland tribes, and suchlike things. A few from the tiny native Brotherhood were there to meet the men, and in the Arab

room up above were some of the Christian women and children to meet the women. At the ten minutes Rally at the close, a panorama was unrolled of 150,000 souls—the proportion of Arabs in Algeria to every Arabic-speaking missionary, and the challenge was given—‘Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?’—and they were gone.

“And the outcome? On board those boats, such deep concern was aroused that by the time they reached Naples the ladies of the party had raised enough to support two women workers for three years, and the men enough for three men workers for three years. And then you remember how we felt pressed in spirit to follow them to Rome for the last two days of the Convention. We wrote to Bishop Hartzell asking if we might come, and then packed, and were all ready, when, just an hour before the last boat that would take us in time was due to leave, the wire arrived saying ‘Come!’ And God gave such an outpouring of blessing and a vision of the need which they have never forgotten.”

“Did they not make you a life member of the Association?” Alice asks. “And you were at the Zurich Convention in 1913?”

“Yes; they quite spoiled me. And the loving and caring that has come from the States ever since has been wonderful. It was then, in 1907, that the Band was constituted. A committee was formed in America, and two new workers joined us as an outcome of that visit to Rome.

“We had another recoil of the wave in 1908 when that terrible epidemic of typhus swept the land, and one after another of the workers was laid low, and we lost some of our precious recruits. But all the time, the tide has been steadily coming in. Just after that Mr. Smeeton arrived; he had left his position in a bank a year or so before he was due to retire, to come to our help, with all that that has meant of organized prayer, as well as his beautiful work amongst the blind. Then we opened the Hostel for Short Service workers—educated girls who come on a self-supporting basis for a term of service. And a breath of the Spirit swept down on the work, and we saw men and women born into the Kingdom with a brightness and a clearness that was something

new. I remember as many as thirty at the service one Good Friday afternoon—such a small meeting it would seem to English eyes, but those who live in Muslim lands learn to see a beauty in small things. We are more used to microscopes than telescopes.”

“How did you fare in the 1914–18 war years?”

“At first it seemed as if the storm that was crashing everywhere would sweep away all our dreams of advance. Our two young Frenchmen were called up, and everything was under the ban of martial law, and the hope of a hostel for student boys went back again into the distance.

“But there was something challenging about those war years. Everyman’s liberty was curtailed, bound down and ignored, until the liberty of the nation was secured. Nothing counted save that the war was carried through to victory, no matter how full of sorrow the sacrifice, nor how stupendous the cost. If spiritual warfare were carried on with the same ‘abandon’, the day of His Kingdom would have come long e’er this.

“Last year it was like a breath of fresh air to see the hemming-in of the war years disappearing. And to-day there are doors opening on every side in a way that seems almost like a dream compared to the block of the long years past. How we need to pray that we may keep adjusted to every new opportunity.”



Chapter Nine

DAR NAAMA

THOSE who knew Miss Trotter in the early days, picture her in the setting of the rue du Croissant house, or tenting in the villages, or with her beloved Sufis in the desert. We who were on the field later see her at Dar Naama, the lovely old Arab House on the hillside behind Algiers. "House of Grace" it had indeed become to many a one, a centre of life and light.

Let us take a turn through the house. Along this passage you will find Miss Trotter's room. It is a long, low room, with black-beamed ceiling, and whitewashed walls, and from the windows which overlook the garden, one can see the great stone-pine at the foot, where the nightingales sing. Purple bougainvillea climbs the outside walls, and pushes through the open casement windows, and the room is filled with flowers. "You have twelve pots and vases to-day," announces her secretary, and Miss Trotter murmurs apologetically "So I have!" and then enumerates them in her diary for the joy they bring.

Over the bed is the map of her battlefield, and around the walls are native hangings, Arabic texts—the curious leather work pressed into their hands by the first Touareg, and a picture of a woman's wistful face from the M'zab country. This is the heart of the house, a place of prayer, and of love, and of laughter.

Miss Freeman comes in to share a joke from *Punch*; then her young secretary—apologetically: "Miss Trotter, I cannot make out this word in the letter you dictated for Mr. Upson." Then again there is a laugh, for it is an Arabic phrase that had slipped in unawares.

From the Arab court down below comes a visitor, Si Amar, a much-loved convert from the South lands. He squats on the floor.

"What has God been showing to you while you were ill?" she asks sympathetically.

"He showed me that Satan and I were sitting there together, and that it was no use sending for the doctor but I must give myself afresh to Him. And He showed me that in all the land among the Arabs there is no one to tell them but Abdel Ouahed, and Si Sultane, and that I must go."

And she notes in that wonderful diary of hers: "I remember Commissioner Booth-Clibborn telling us that he had found that if we step out on any new path of experience, the Devil will bring three tests one after another, and then if we go through he will leave us for a season, just as he did with the Master. Well, Si Amar has had his first and second tests, and this illness looks like his third, and I believe he has won through."

The next visitor is little Georges, aged three, son of Mons. Pierre, a Swiss worker; and he has brought an offering of two golden pink blossoms from a flowering shrub in the garden. "I have brought you two flowers from my garden," he announces in his little treble tones, "there are two of them—one has a stick—they are from *my garden*"—with an expression of dignity and importance; and she notes in her diary:

"They must be as amused up in heaven when we make so much of our so-called consecration of things that have never been ours to give. And yet these two little blossoms are infinitely precious because of the love in his dear shining eyes."

As well as being the heart of the house, her room is the hub of the Mission. Here she dwells with the King for His work. It is a place of intercession and of vision. Her habit is

to spend the early hours of the morning, from 2-4 a.m., in prayer, and she has the ear of the King. Then comes the writing of weekly letters to the workers at the out-station.

Her correspondence is immense, for she is now known as a missionary leader, and yet with it all there are dear loving letters to her family and her friends. She writes to her sister in 1916:

"It seems a long time since I wrote to you. I thought I would not write quite so often because you will write back, you darling, and I know what your swarms of letters are, let alone war time, and what war time itself means of strain, I can never know, not being a mother. . . . That dear Arthur of yours, how I think of him day and night as the months go on. What experience of a lifetime must be crowded into them for him."

To a young worker spending her first birthday in the land comes this note: "One of my chief ploys in going down to Algiers yesterday was to find for you in the shop near the Cathedral one of the little enamelled boxes that I know you love. But there was only time to run up to my roof room at rue du Croissant and fetch you this pot that I have had there for many a year, and that I think you will like. It comes with a big birthday hug, and all wishes and prayers that it may be the very best year of your life. You didn't think last birthday that the next would find you in Africa with your gifts and your training laid down at Christ's feet! May all His outpoured blessing be on the offering and the offerer!"

She was a wonderful leader. Her devotion to Christ drew others after Him. "If it is through dark hell-fought hours that He can have His deepest draughts of joy from us, so be it with a Hallelujah" her diary reads—and such enthusiasm is contagious.

Training for leadership had gone on through the years. In her work in London she had seen the wonder and glory of conversion and knew that the greatest thing in the world is to bring men and women to the knowledge of Christ; under the stress of the early years in North Africa anything that might have been unreal or superficial in their spiritual life was searched out. She knew what it was to go "down into

death" again and again: "It is worth while all the humbling and heart-searching and the breaking up of depths after depths, if it means getting nearer the place where the living water will be set free." *Parables of the Cross and of the Christ Life* were first worked out in her own experience.

Even her loving and sympathetic disposition needed disciplining. She writes of finding that she was giving herself away in too much sympathy to those around, that is, too much sympathy with the "natural man" in them. "It weakens their fibre, as well as one's own, and becomes an *other* consciousness, as to what they are feeling or wishing, as subtle and strong as *self* consciousness can be in its own line. And the measure in which it is allowed must mark the measure of the loss of *God* consciousness, and the fearless freedom that springs from it."

A few weeks later there came a liberating. "To-day His loosing has come from that bit of bondage—the susceptibility on the human side which has hindered the simplicity of obedience to the Holy Ghost, and one goes back the old way again of nailing it to His Cross. It has opened out to one a whole new era that has to be subdued unto Himself—the region of natural temperament that lies at the back of the self-life in man, which needs to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. Transformed does not mean annihilated, but transfigured by a new indwelling. He can take that very susceptibility that has been a snare, and make it a means of contact with Himself, a sensitiveness to the Holy Ghost."

God dealt finely with her and she responded, until her life glowed with spiritual beauty.

"Hallelujah," she writes from a place they were visiting; "opposition has begun to rise here as might be expected. It is always a sign of a further stage when God divides the light from the darkness; so we are glad." There was supreme patience, resilience in apparent defeat, and ever a sense of the eternal continuity of the work. Someone speaking of the Muslims as a doomed race drew from her the reply—"A doomed race! That does not sound very like the God of Hope, or the God of Love! A doomed creed is nearer the mark; the husk that imprisons the seed is doomed, that is all!"

Her gifts of mind equalled her gifts of spirit. She mastered Arabic in more than one of its forms, and was equally conversant with French, and her habit of recording in her diary with delightful detail and humour the events or lessons of the day, developed memory, powers of observation and a command of beautiful English.

At times, her other-worldliness could be trying. Her house-keeper would say wistfully, "Miss Trotter might as well be eating camel as roast beef for all the difference it makes to her!" And her secretary would exclaim as she started out to visit some of her relations in the Hotel St. George—"But Miss Trotter dear, you can't go in that hat! How long have you had it?"

"About fifteen years," Miss Trotter would murmur disinterestedly. "What is wrong with it?"

She was outstandingly a mystic; yet had great powers of organization, and, when it came to the work, gave meticulous attention to detail, which she would say was demanded by "the majesty of an indwelling Christ." Concerning this she writes in her Journal—"The glory of God in the infinitely small has been something new of late, and very blessed. The latest glimpse of it came in a magazine yesterday. Sir Robert Ball says the microscope reveals animals so wonderfully minute, that if a thousand of them were ranked abreast they could easily swing through the eye of the finest cambric needle, without being thrown out of order. Yet each of these minute creatures is a highly organized number of particles, capable of moving about, of finding and devouring food, and of behaving in all respects as becomes an animal as distinguished from a fragment of unorganized matter.

"Is that not equal in marvel to the other end of the scale of creation where we 'lift up our eyes on high and behold who hath created these things?' 'He meteth out the heavens with the span and comprehendeth the dust of the earth in a measure'—the great and the small, again alike to Him. How childish it must seem to them up in heaven when we measure the importance of a thing by its size.

"Fulfilling His Word, the meeting of His wishes, that is all that matters. He can find His glory in the day of small things

out here, as well as in the great spiritual movements of other lands."

Like a true leader, she valued co-operation and co-ordination, and down the years organized conferences for missionaries of North Africa. The first of these was in 1891, when Mr. Glenny of the North Africa Mission was the speaker, and eighteen missionaries gathered. But—"what are they among so many?" she asks wistfully.

At an early conference in Dar Naama, Mr. Charles Inwood was the guest speaker. "Mr. Inwood is much struck with the house and all its possibilities," she writes, "especially with the thought of it being used for short-service workers, those who for one reason and another cannot commit themselves altogether to the mission field. He closed the meeting that began the Conference yesterday by a beautiful giving away of the whole place into God's Hands. It was so spontaneous, and so real; and very real has been the taking possession in His Name by prayer and praise from top to bottom, and from end to end, and every room has been hallowed by praise and prayer and love."

The photograph taken on the last afternoon of the Conference shows forty present, the majority being entertained at Dar Naama, but out of that group most were missionaries in Kabylia; Miss Trotter and her little Band were the only Arabic-speaking ones. "The Arabs of Algiers have only one missionary to 200,000," she writes. "He that hath ears to hear let him hear."

A record of a later Conference shows the impact these had on the whole field.

"The farthest-off guests are beginning to gather from Cherrhelle on the West to Bizerta on the East, representing the whole of the north coast from Morocco to Tunis—such a thin fighting line. Blanche Haworth's invitation to rally here was followed by these questions that we had drawn up for consideration together:

1. Are the converts growing towards the standard that we should wish? See Christ's definition of discipleship. Luke 14: 25-35.
2. Is the aim of our ministry to them measured by the

pattern given in St. Paul's Epistles—in caring (Gal. 4:19); in sacrifice (2 Cor. 6; 4-10); in intercession (Eph. 1; 15-23)?

3. Are we fulfilling in our own souls the conditions for blessing that God has laid down? (Mal. 3; 10.) If so, the promise of the next verse will be set free."

"Beautiful days" was her summing up of the Conference, a welding together from the first of all the different elements such as they had never known before, and a spontaneous confession of failure as the meetings went on. In the Central Court where they were held, in the open Court below, fragrant with orange blossoms, where the long tables were spread for meals, in the fir wood where the discussion groups gathered—in all, the touch of His presence brought life.

On other occasions Bishop Moule was with them, and Sister Eva of Friedenshort, and that great missionary statesman, Dr. Mott. Dr. Zwemer with his passion for Christ and for the Muslim world was always a source of inspiration. On the anniversary of Raymond Lull's martyrdom, Miss Trotter linked the two in thought. "The passion of love and sacrifice whereby Lull gained his knightly guerdon all those centuries ago, has its echo even now. To-day there is a wonderful resurrection of that life, for it was the inspiration of his work and his death that was Dr. Zwemer's call; and there we see a second Raymond Lull, with his versatility and love for souls."

One of the joys of Dar Naama was the beautifully tiled orange court, and beyond that, a native court with rows of little rooms on each side. It was lovely to see how, all unsought, the house lent itself more and more each summer as a camping place for the better-class Arab families, who came on their own and looked after themselves. Sometimes it was a children's camp. She describes one: "The Arab court is full of sunny gladness, and the shrill treble 'you-you-you-you' which marks all Arab rejoicing, resounds when the children are let out to play or called in to eat. They come from the orchard in procession with heads wreathed, like so many small Bacchuses. Fatima's head-dress of violet and white flowers was a mass of winding tendrils round her fragile face. Yesterday the children went to say good-bye; 'O trees, remain

in peace; O grass, remain in peace; remain in peace, O flowers.' Dear little souls, one's heart is sad that the city and its sins lies before them again."

Now it is an Arab wedding. "These have been two busy days turning upside down the lower storey of this dear house, which, happily, adapts itself to things as widely apart as a missionary conference and a native wedding. I must say the latter is the more picturesque episode. Our great endeavour is to keep it thoroughly native, and thoroughly Christian. Only those who know how every strand of Muslim life is interwoven with its religion and its superstitions will realize the difficulty. Everything centred in the wedding service of the early afternoon. Bride and bridegroom came in full native costume from opposite doors into the central court, and sat side by side in the front seats. (That was an innovation which *did* bring down wrath from the girl's relatives, we heard afterwards.) The women friends and the men friends were behind them on each side of the curtain. Then came prayers and collects in Arabic and French, and then the moment when Monsieur Cook joined their right hands, and laid his on them, the first personal touch that linked them. We hear that when they got into their rooms in the evening, they sang together once more their wedding hymn, 'Peace, Peace, Peace'."

She who had knocked in vain at many a gloomy door in the Casbah, now opened wide to them the door of her House of Grace and they came in to its sunshine and love and laughter. "There is a spirit of real love all about—either I get asked out to supper at one end of the house or the other—or a plate of stew is brought—or a hunk of water melon in its wonderful crimson and green—or a sugar cake or two—or my bathtowels get carried off for a private wash and come back fragrant with a scented jessamine wreath folded in—all little precious tokens."

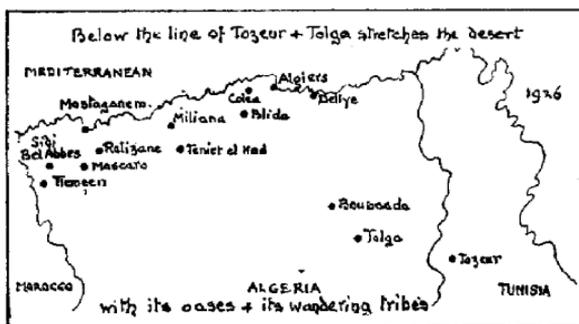
"A big brood under our wings this Christmas," she records, "ten grown-ups, and eight children as house guests, all carefully distributed to keep the needful barriers of native etiquette, and the outposters are now arriving for the New Year house-party. Such a comparing of notes and new ideas

goes on. The Christmas fêtes at the different stations have all had the same sense of brightness and gladness over the growing number of boys especially."

Then with her eyes ever upon the horizons:

"Our special burden at present is for the South lands; we feel that they hold the best material for Christ, and we found that simultaneously the same call sounded right along our line of stations. There are three highways of penetration that link the coast with the principal groups of the oases, and we have a pair eager to go down each of these. Two from Relizane on the West want to itinerate to Ziguig, to which there is now rail communication. No woman or girl in that district has ever heard of Christ's salvation, and May Ridley and Mlle Gayral will have the joy of bearing them their first ray of light. Mabel Grautoff and Grace Russell from Miliana the central station are keen to reach south to Ghardaia, in the heart of a group of oases inhabited by the Beni M'zab tribe, a stiff race, and therefore a good aim for Miliana which has known many a stiff fight. Here again *colporteurs* have penetrated a few times, but no woman missionary has ever got into touch with the women of this tribe.

"The eastern of the three lines falls to Algiers, and already, Alma Krebs and Violet Wood are at Tozeur, over the borders of Tunisia. We long to see a string of little outposts from East to West linking the wonderful oases of the Souf sand dunes. There are more visions, and ever more waiting to become footholds."



Chapter Ten

RETRIEVAL AND ADVANCE

THE year 1920 brought a launching out in faith. The previous autumn, Miss Trotter had gone to Tipaza for three weeks' quiet. Amongst the sandhills and oleander bushes of that beautiful little fishing village on the shores of the Mediterranean stand the ruins of early Christian churches, golden brown against the turquoise sea. It was a good place to hear God's voice, for the ruins seemed to challenge His power to retrieve His lost heritage. And a vision came to her in the quiet, of the two million Arabic-speaking boys and men in Algeria, with only four European men with any language qualifications to reach them. She began to pray for twenty men workers, ten for the Algiers Mission Band, and ten for other Missions. And as the others returned from furlough to the October Rally, His word came to them collectively, "Launch out into the deep."

So they commenced the new year committed to a path of definite and deliberate faith in God for workers and the means to support them, for up till then the members of the Band were either self-supporting, or had support guaranteed. "This means a very close walk with Him—the spirit of understanding and of the fear of the Lord over every detail," Miss Trotter records, "and in this lies its blessedness."

Within weeks came faith's confirmation—an offer of service from England, from Mr. and Mrs. Buckenham; in

January, Mons. and Mme Cook joined them, to be followed shortly by Mr. and Mrs. Theobald, then later by Mr. and Mrs. J. G. S. Thomson, and others.

At the same time, Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Govan from Scotland arrived on a visit, bringing deep prayer help, and many illuminating bits of talk on the life of faith and the spiritual training of workers, from their long experience. An outcome of their visit was the starting of a weekly Day of Prayer. The drawing room at Dar Naama was set aside as a quiet room from nine in the morning to three o'clock in the afternoon—the hours when our Lord hung on the Cross that Islam dishonours. All were free to come and go as they felt best along with their duties; and the morning of prayer was kept on the out-stations as well. The work seemed to leap forward, for continuous, united, determined prayer in the Name is the key to victory. The story of the widow's cruse of oil pictures how their needs were supplied. The grace that dealt with her did not lift her up into any place of assured supply; the barrel and the cruse were not filled up—a handful of meal and a little oil were all that stood between her and starvation; but these were miraculously kept from running out. One September they were tested to the very last day for the closing of the annual accounts. The last mail was in, and brought nothing; but another batch of English letters arrived, only to be accounted for, as Miss Trotter said, by being brought by the angels! And here was a cheque for £130—the largest gift ever received.

It is the month of May 1921, and Miss Trotter, after a rough and tumble journey for Tozeur, has arrived at Tebessa to spend the night with Albina Cox and Katie Smith. Who should be there to greet her but Alice Kemp, who had arrived from England while she was in the south! And the long four hundred miles train journey back to Algiers is filled with talk about those beloved lands.

"If any one thing is clearly commanded in the prayer direction, it is the prayer for labourers for the harvest," Liliias is saying, "and if ever there was a place in this land where a harvest may be looked for, it is the desert town of

Tozeur. There is such a persistent welling up of spiritual light and heat that you feel it must have its beginnings away back in the Roman days, when, they say, there was a Christian community here. Do you know that their foreheads are tattooed with a double cross, and at the circumcision feast the boys are marked on their *gandouras* with a saffron cross on breast and back?

"Think of it, Alice, on the thirty-third anniversary of our landing, I had the heavenly gift of waking up in our own house there! And with such a lovely sense of welcome from the people! One can see how a change is taking place in the atmosphere of these desert towns through the comings and goings of the last years, each visit helping silently to bring in the thaw, and the disappearance between-whiles helping to calm the spirit of opposition.

"We are really getting the house into order. It was an old *Fondouk* (native inn), and is just a collection of dilapidated rooms, but Mr. Leadbetter gave us all possible details for making it habitable, and we had the name of the best native mason in the place, and we were soon in the thick of the alterations, closing up a door here—'making it to die' as the native says—and opening a window there; putting in ceilings of board, and making sure that they 'kiss'. Alma used to say that the court was like a 'movie'—first a procession of donkeys with sand, then a crowd of men and big lads to read, then a string of workmen with materials of all sorts, and then more men to read. Our mason is an intelligent man and it was amusing to hear him preface his introduction of a new workman by the statement: 'This is a poor good woman; she has not very much money, so you must put in sound work, and not charge too much.'

"But after the novelty wore off, and the weather got hotter and the scorpions began to come out, they reached the stage where they needed seeing after all the time. You would go into a room in the middle of the afternoon, and find the head workman—'Pharaoh' as Alma calls him from his regal bearing and Egyptian profile—with his sinewy legs folded up in an incomprehensible way on the sitting room mantelpiece, fast asleep. Then all their friends had to come in to admire

their work, and when I remonstrated about the waste of time, they would say apologetically to those same friends: 'You will forgive her; she is a very good woman!'

"However, the work is really going ahead. And I just marvelled how Blanche, five years ago, when we went down to camp in the old house, and were practically turned out of the town, felt, with that faith of hers which always rose to emergencies, that the house should be furnished for four workers; and she sent down linen and blankets from Dar Naama, and all kinds of things which we found ready for use this year.

"One feels that all is ready to bud and blossom down there. We are learning at long last that we have to do with Him that inhabiteth eternity, and that we can afford to tarry His leisure."

Those last years for I.L.T., as her workers called her, were full of the joys of retrieval. "I used to think that relief was the nearest thing that we can imagine in all the unimaginable joys of the life to come," she writes, "but there is another, and a better thing, and that is retrieval. The triumph in Christ that it brings is a foretaste of the day that is coming."

The toil and prayers and tears of years were bringing their harvest, for God will do many things if we will give Him time. Tolga in the desert, where they had found such acceptance with the men of the Brotherhoods and such an opening of doors in 1902, before being summarily turned out by the French commandant and forbidden to return—Tolga lay open to them again.

"*March 30, 1923.* We are within the mud walls of beloved Tolga, dearer than ever before for the hope deferred of all these years. The memory of the fortnight we spent here in 1900 and the three or four weeks in 1902 seems strangely fresh. How well I remember a letter which reached us from France the very morning we were getting ready heart-brokenly, to leave: '*Il y a un avenir*'—'Surely there is a sequel' (Prov. 23; v. 18, American R.V.). And here is the sequel. Everywhere in the streets there are hands stretched out in welcome, gaunt hands of old men who were in their prime then, strong brown hands of middle-aged men who

were but lads when we saw them last. A tall stately Taleb (teacher) greeted me—'I remember you when I was a little fellow; I came to you and you taught me hymns and you gave me a sugar plum. I am glad you are coming to live with us!'"

The following year she writes: "It is a very wonderful gift of God that this New Year's day finds us not only in Tolga, but in our own hired house. The people have received us and made us one with them in a touching way; never a day but they send us in presents—a jug of milk, a half loaf, a pigeon, a golden trailing bunch of dates—and they ask nothing in return but that we should go and see them and talk to them. And for this, Alma Krebs is perfect. She sits down on the sand floor and coos to the infants, calling them all the pet names that are current, 'O my little mother' for instance, to a girl baby a few weeks old, to the great delight of the seniors; and then by elusive ways the talk gets round to the realities of this world and of the other world out of sight."

The entry to Bou Saada in May 1925 was another miracle of answered prayer with long-stored interest. Twenty-five years before, Blanche Haworth and a missionary of the North Africa Mission went to explore the place. They worked away getting entrance after a quiet fashion for a few days, and then they found that the Governor was coming to meet the native chiefs of the country around, and a huge *douar* of magnificent striped tents sprang up on the plain, planted, as is their fashion, half moon wise, with the doors opening on the outer edge that no one may be within view of his neighbours. The opportunity was too tempting for prudence, and one afternoon, while the gala was in full swing elsewhere, the two missionaries went the round of the *douar*, leaving books with the servant in charge of each tent, for its master. And though they took themselves off next day, the place was already too hot to hold them, and they were followed by police surveillance through every stage of their journey back to Algiers.

Now in all peace, they were allowed to rent a house, the first six months' rent coming from Mr. Cecil Collinson in England; and I.L.T. would quote:

*"God will finish what He has begun;
If you will keep the incense burning there
His glory you will see sometime—somewhere."*

The last of the winter storms passed over the garden of Dar Naama, as Miss Trotter stood at her window, leaving the plum trees and the mimosa in the sunshine diademed with rain drops. "Your sorrow shall be turned into joy as surely as we have been transmuted out of the storm," those glittering diamonds seemed to say. And it was so. The lights and shadows of the years were those, not of sunset, but of the dawn that shall usher in eternal joy.

Her last visit to England was in 1924. But first had come an invitation to join the Conference of Arabic-speaking missionaries at Jerusalem, arranged by Dr. Mott, in April of that year; and the desire of a lifetime—to tread in the footsteps of the Master—was granted to her. "Into Port Said this morning," she notes, "after a passage so calm that one had to look at the sea to be sure that we were moving. We had a sight of Miss Ericsson and her school, now grown to 160 Muslim girls, and then through a sunset land for an hour or so, across the canal by a quaint clumsy ferry, and into a train on the other side marked—wonder of wonders—'JERUSALEM'."

What a wonderful gift of God it was to meet with those from the battle line from the North Africa shore away to Persia. The fearless faith of Bishop Linton of Persia brought fresh inspiration, and other new linkings were with the Bevan Jones of India, and the Eric Bishops of Jerusalem, and Bishop Gwynne of the Sudan. There was also the joy of meeting old friends, such as Mrs. Zwemer, and Canon Gairdner, a blessed company of faithful people united together through hope for the salvation of the Mohammedan world. She quotes from Dr. Mott and others:

"Heart purity is the renunciation of everything that does not lead to God. If we kept to this, our inner life would advance by leaps and bounds, and the place that we work in would be shaken."

"God is the spirit of self-sacrifice expressed in time in Jesus Christ."

"I do not know which is the greatest wonder—whether that God takes a man without advantages and uses him to confound the wise, or the other miracle, that He can take a man who has education, and bring him low enough to use him."

Of the Holy Land itself she writes: "It meant infinitely more than I ever thought it could. One just longed to sit down and read the whole Bible through from Joshua onwards, with the intense visualizing of every bit of it; and then came the hallowing sense of the Lord's footsteps when we got to Sychar, and looked down into the well that is as deep as ever—so deep that only a tiny quivering circle can be seen far down. And then across the plain of Esdraelon where maybe the world's last great battles will be fought out; and then away into Galilee that He loved with its villages and its simple folk, all in its spring beauty of flowers, and budding fig trees. . . . We went round and down to the shore at Capernaum where one of the few unmistakable sites stands evident in the ruins of the synagogue, and spent the night in Tiberias, and saw them bringing in their nets in the early morning, and so back, with the imprint on one's heart of hearts of the utter loveliness and worshipfulness of the human life that was once lived there."

"This morning brought the last 'standing within thy gates, O Jerusalem'; the last, most likely, till we stand there together with Christ. One of the gifts of these two weeks has been a strange new sense of fellowship with God in the love of it, and in the longing for the consummation of its story that is yet to come."

A week in Egypt followed with the Upsons, and Mr. Swan of the Nile Mission Press, and all kinds of plannings went on for future seed for sowing; and then Cairo with its thronging pulsing life was left behind, and they passed the mud villages of the Delta, and on through its stretches of corn in every shade of green and gold, remembering that here His child feet must have learned to walk, and the sands and palms and the great river must have been the first sight for Him of the world that had sprung into creation "by Him", and "for Him". To her it seemed the richest, fullest month of her whole life.

Her first visit in England was to relatives at Oxford. Her niece, Miss Sibyl Egerton, writes: "As a child, it was thrilling to watch Aunt Lily making little Arab houses for us in cardboard, cutting out the figures of Arabs and camels and colouring them for us. I remember how her beautiful brown eyes glowed, when she spoke of the things she loved; and what a sensitive humorous mouth she had!"

It was a beautiful thing to her to find that her people worshipped in St. Aldate's Church, for there she had met with her Lord at a Communion Service, at the first Oxford Convention, in 1874, and had not been back since. The words with which the service opened, on the morning she was present, were strangely descriptive of the fifty years which had passed for her. "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me . . . unto the uttermost parts of the earth."

One who met her for the first time at Oxford said: "I can never forget the impression she made on me—those wonderful eyes! I never saw a face before on which was so plainly engraven a whole life's history—such a beautiful worn face."

A pressing invitation had come from American friends to be present at the Glasgow Sunday School Convention. This was followed by a Faith Mission Conference at St. Andrews, riveting afresh the linking with the Govans; and then came Keswick Convention, with its far-stretching outlook. Those who heard her and companied with her in those days will not forget the revelation of a crucified and crowned life, utterly selfless, and utterly at rest, in spite of the pressure of never-ending meetings and callers.

"It has been beautiful to see the country through all its stages of summer glory," she writes in August, "from the primroses to the heather, from the spikes of beech buds to their first drifting golden leaves. This week has been a race round of goodbyes, and now I have come to anchor for last re-packings, and a sort of 'at home' all day to people new and old, the oldest being a pair of grey-haired women who used to be, somewhere between forty and fifty years ago, young business girls, who stood by us loyally in Morley Hall Y.W.C.A. days."

And as she crossed the Mediterranean once more she notes, "It is a solemn thing to come to the end of these wonderful five months that seem like five years for all that they have held. Oh! that God will forgive their 'might-have-beens', and fertilize their 'may-bes'. This afternoon Europe has gone back into a creamy white line, where the Marseilles coast of barren limestone dips into the blue grey of the sea, and we face Africa once more."



Chapter Eleven

'TRIUMPH'

*"Two glad services are ours,
Both the Master loves to bless;
First we serve with all our powers,
Then with all our helplessness."*

THESE lines of Charles Fox have rung in my head this last fortnight, and they link on with the wonderful words, 'weak in Him'. For the world's salvation was not wrought out by the three years in which He went about doing good, but in the three hours of darkness in which He hung stripped and nailed, in uttermost exhaustion of spirit, soul, and body, till His heart broke. So little wonder if for us the price of power is weakness."

So wrote Miss Trotter from her long, low room in Dar Naama, for since her return from England she had been confined to bed—the heart so worn out that there seemed no physical reason for her remaining alive at all. And she remarks humorously: "If only people knew how comfortable it was to be bed-ridden, I think they would all wish to take to it"—revealing the fight it had been to keep going, and also the tactfulness of Lella Brading who nursed her.

"Old age is a delightful resting place, and death a delicious prospect for the future," Mrs. Pearsall Smith had written; and neither held any terror for I.L.T. Her thoughts soared onward to the Beyond, no strange realm, but rather the

longed-for goal. "It is a wonderful thing to wake up day after day to the realization that the unseen world lies so close at hand. There is about it the same sense of a mystery and marvel just out of sight, that we used to have as children, when we played behind the great raised beach of grey pebbles at Weybourne near Cromer. Nothing was visible but that upheaved line, shutting off all but the faint murmur and splash of the beyond. And the fascination of it comes back in its deep meaning now."

The weakness and suffering she felt to be partly training for the life beyond, and partly the price to be paid, in fellowship with Christ, for the redemption of the land. From that quiet room, she continued to guide the work with vision and understanding and unabating love. One can picture her propped up with pillows, a large map spread over the bed, with Mr. Upson, Mr. Theobald or some other fellow-worker beside her, planning advance into yet unreached territory.

What joy every new venture brought—the opening up of the proud old walled town of Tlemcen in the year 1925; and by "just one of us women, not a learned man able to cope with the situation, thus marking it as all of God"; or the adventurous journey of Madame Pagès and Miss Walton to the Oued Souf—the last 180 miles on camel back—which she had first visited in 1894, and again, thirty years later, in 1924; before the round of visits to Jerusalem on the east, and to Scotland on the north, with which she wound up her travelling days. Then how she prayed and planned for a Home to meet the pitiful need and distress of divorced women—some of them mere girls; and what expectation she had for a hostel for short-service men workers!

Her diaries have blank spaces indicating increasing weakness, yet they abound in the word "joy"—the joy of answered prayers; joy in the courage and vision of the young workers; joy in fellowship with friends new and old who came and went to that House of Grace, such as Miss May and Miss Newton from the States, Mrs. J. A. Walker, Secretary of the American Committee, Rev. Francis Brading, and his wife Reba—the first to come to their help in the early days, now taking up the home end of the work in London. Other visitors

were Miss Padwick, Mr. Upson, and Elsie Anna Wood from the Nile Mission Press, her dear Alice Kemp, and members of her own family, all coming—in the language of the book of Revelation—to “worship” with her, knowing that God loved her.

Easter Eve, 1926, closed the year since coming to bed to stay, and she writes: “I think it has been quite the happiest year of my life!” And then, her heart going out in worship to the Christ of Easter: “A new thought has come to-day. Jesus must have gone to Paradise from the Cross, for He promised the thief that He would meet him there. But it would seem that once more the love of His heart drew Him down from its rest to that mysterious ministry to ‘the spirits in prison’. Again, on Easter morning He seems to have delayed going to the Father in the first hour of His triumph that He might be able to meet Mary and convince her that He was ‘risen indeed’. Surely to the end, and to the uttermost, it was ‘others’ all the time.”

During those last three years, a flow of Arabic booklets came from her pen, and it was then that she compiled what some think to be the finest of her writings—*The Way of the Sevenfold Secret*, the seven I AM’S of Christ, a book for the Sufis or Muslim mystics. The thought of writing for mystics began to take shape when attending lectures by George Swan of the Egypt General Mission at the School of Oriental Studies in Cairo.

“I feel more and more that we ought to make a special study of these fraternities of mystics who have had age-long sway in the south and the mountain regions of the land,” she wrote at that time. “The line of approach that we use for Muslims of the ordinary class, slips off these souls without gripping them, whereas, read them a few words from, say St. John’s Gospel, and there is a response at once. Of all the millions of Islam, they are far and away the truest seekers after God.”

On a later visit to Cairo, she tried to dig into every vein of possible ore on the subject of the Sufi, and then, on the return journey to Algiers, found a very mine of wealth of information in the person of Professor Margoliouth. “He has

given us a complete list of the books that will help us most in Arabic, French and English; also every definition one asked for of words in the technical phraseology which, for the most part, have no equivalent in ordinary Arabic. This last of God's rich gifts comes as a fresh impulse in getting to work with the outline of 'the secret of secrets'. There is a sense of pressure and of 'message', that I never remember having since the days of the first Parable book, half a lifetime ago. So I hope it may show Jesus to some of these dear souls in their misty intricate groping after Life and Light and Love. It is odd, when I pray over it, how the last chapter of St. John comes up in vision, with the casting of the net into the sea, and like a promise comes the word—"great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three, brought to land'."

At last the book was completed. "I have just finished the final chapter in the rough, and certainly if sowing in weakness is needed for God's being able to use it in power, He has His chance, for my head has been so stupid that I could often only manage a sentence or two at a time, and then just had to lie back and pray about it. I expect that is what He wants. I feel that if a work of God begins amongst these Brotherhood men with all their intimate knowledge of Islam on the one side, and their apartness from it in spiritual outlook on the other, they may be the apostles for bringing it to Christ. Over and over again in times of deadness, it has been the preaching and teaching of mystics that has brought revival."

Within two years, three editions of the book appeared in Arabic, one in Persian, and three in English. Who knows what "the catch" has been?

With the help of her secretary, Belle Patrick, a second book, *Between the Desert and the Sea*, with beautiful illustrations in her own delicate colouring, was prepared for the press. And she writes: "The being through with this bit of the work that the Father hath given me to do, seems to bring the sight of the first sparkle of the lights on the coast line."

Her clear-sightedness in the things eternal increased as she drew nearer to that coast line. On her last Whit Sunday she comments: "'Having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this.' In His new office

as the Priest upon His throne, Christ must have been sharing in those ten days of waiting in the upper room till the Heavenly Dove Who had indwelt His human life could be liberated to His Church as Fire. Then came the wonderful moment when the 120 were ready, and the Spirit also could say, 'A body hast Thou prepared Me . . . Lo, I come.'

It is the month of May 1928, and her Bible joy as she moves onward and inward to the Sanctuary is in the study of the carvings of Solomon's temple, prefiguring the fulness of the life to come. "The brim of the sea for the priests to wash in was carved lily work, a handbreath in thickness. The lilies stand for purity and fragrance, and the budding of the future 'lily work' when we shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, is being wrought out now, wrought out from the hour that the first act of faith in the mighty cleansing of the Precious Blood ushers in the life of constant cleansing. That work is completed on our side in purifying our souls by obeying the truth through the Spirit, as fresh light from the Word reveals fresh stretches of our need. This is 'the washing of water by the Word', as point after point in the way of obedience flashes from it."

And the final entry of her Bible study thoughts in the uncertain writing of a sick woman: "'Open flowers'—they are the last but one in the series of the temple carvings. Patience, fearlessness, purity and fruitfulness, and the passion for service—we have seen them all symbolized. 'Open flowers' surely tell of the joy that is to run through all. No need for their 'corn and wine and oil' here; no thorns—absolute purity of colour. 'Thy face the heart of every flower that grows'—you can read Him in them—the merry heart of the celandines, and the pure, simple happiness of the primrose, and the shout of the daffodil's golden trumpet. We speak of the God of love, and of the God of peace, but so seldom of the God of joy."

"God the gladness of my joy"—that was her last tribute to the loveliness of her Saviour.

Some weeks of suffering followed, but her mind was clear, and her spirit steadfast. As the end drew near, she looked out of the window—"A chariot and six horses!" she exclaimed.

"You are seeing beautiful things," Helen Freeman said to her. She looked up with joy—"Yes, many, *many* beautiful things." Those were her last words.

In her early days she had written: "There lies before us a beautiful possible life, one that shall have a passion for giving, that shall be poured forth for God, and spent out for man; that shall be consecrated for 'the hardest work and the darkest sinners'."

Through the power of "the love that was stronger" that beautiful possible life had surely been hers. And from her writings comes this appeal for the Muslim world for which she thirsted, as did her Master:

"A praying man had a map of the world—his sphere of labour—on his wall, surmounted by those two words—

'I THIRST.'

That man knew his Lord's Heart.

"If there is one part of the map that tells of that unslaked thirst of Jesus, it is the far stretching lands of Islam. And there is an Old Testament story that tells in figure of the only way within our reach whereby that thirst may be met.

"'And David was then in the hold, and the Philistines were then in Bethlehem. And David longed and said, "O that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem that is by the gate." And the three brake through the host of the Philistines and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate, and brought it to David.'

"The story has its counterpart now. On the Moslem field there is nothing yet to shew, in the outward triumph of Christ's cause. As on that day long ago, all the visible might is on the side of the adversary. In that very fact lies a unique chance of giving our uncrowned King the same service as was rendered by those three. It is the hour when we may have the joy of breaking through the crux of the opposition of hell, at 'the gate of His enemies', and bringing Him back the living water of souls won out of the midst of that battle."