

Continuing "NORTH AFRICA."

The N.A.M. News Letter

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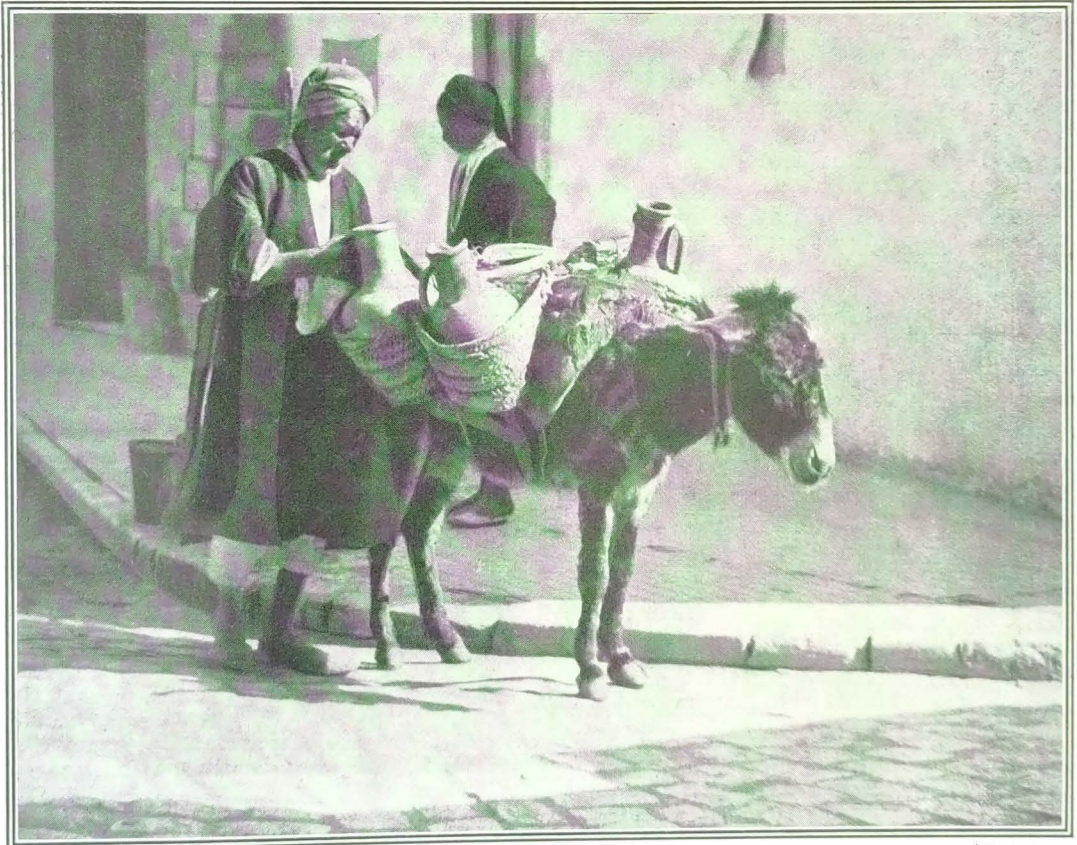


Photo by

A TUNISIAN WATER-CARRIER

[E. J. Long

The two Campaigns in Libya have furnished many a graphic story emphasising the vital importance of the water supply in this "dry and thirsty land". Even in the towns and villages of Tunisia many of the "shut-in" native women are dependent upon the itinerant water carrier for their daily ration of the precious liquid; for the domestic water-tap—such a commonplace with us—is found in very few native houses. Let us remember that the vital work of our missionary sisters is that of carrying, from house to house, the Living Water; they are the only "pipe line" of the Water of Life. Apart from their devoted ministry the "shut-in" women could never be reached with the Gospel Message.

Homecall of Miss K. S. Smith

IN June, 1887, when the Mission was but six years old, there were some 29 workers scattered over Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia—lands which, so far as Christian witness was concerned, had long been neglected. On the first day of that month the missionary staff at Djemâa Sahridj, Algeria—the first Mission Station—was strengthened by the arrival of Miss Kate Sabina Smith and Miss Janie Cox; and during the year a further four workers were sent out to different places, bringing the total up to 33, of whom Dr. T. Gillard Churcher, of Woking, Surrey, is now the sole survivor.

After several years of semi-retirement from active service Miss Smith was called Home on December 1st, 1941. She had been a patient for just one day at the English Hospital, Algiers, and was in her 88th year.

As a student at Doric Lodge, Bow—where, under Mrs. Grattan Guinness's supervision, she received valuable training for the foreign field—Miss Smith applied to the N.A.M. in October, 1886, at the age of 32, which was considered a little above the average for candidates. This, however, did not hinder the acquirement in due time of the Kabyle language. Her love for the native women and girls met with a warm and ready response; and not only the Mission, but the Kabyles in particular, have lost a devoted worker in the passing of Miss Smith. Though frail of body, her loving concern for the spiritual welfare of the Kabyles was manifest to the very end.

I. E. B.

The Passing of a Veteran

THE Homecall of Miss Kate Smith was marked by two features of singular interest, in which we may surely discern "the tender mercy of our God." There was something patriarchal not only in her age, but in the manner of her passing. It will be remembered that "when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost." Even so, dear Miss Smith, during her last three weeks on earth, was led—we doubt not under the Lord's special leading—to pen what has proved to be her valedictory message.

These gracious lines, which we reproduce in the next column, far from betraying great age and failing powers, suggest on the contrary a stout heart, a clear mind, a keen vision, and a sound judgment. We are sure that they will be read with interest and profit both by Miss Smith's many friends and by

those who had not the privilege of knowing her personally.

The second matter that calls for thankful comment is the *manner* of Miss Smith's passing. For details of this we are indebted to Mrs. Ross, of Algiers, whose letter we have just received. The sentences are brief, but eloquent: "Miss Smith had not been ill, neither had she suffered at all: she was just very weak and tired. She was taken to the British Hospital last Monday (December 1st), and passed away quite peacefully the same evening."

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints"; and for this missionary veteran of 87 years death had no sting.

A Farewell Message

It should be explained that the following "comments" were addressed by Miss Smith on November 9th, 1941, to Mr. T. Warren, N.A.M. Field Superintendent at Tangier, and were prompted by the reading of Mr. Warren's "Messages to Missionaries."—Ed.

"THE papers you have sent me have arrived, and I am deeply interested in them all. Encouraged by yourself, I send you my 'comments,' feeling that after 45 years of missionary work I really ought to tell others what GOD has taught me.

"1. **'Ye must be born again . . . of the Spirit.'** Personally, I had attended church, prayed, read my Bible, and taught it until I was 30; but it was only *then* that I could write in my Birthday Book 'My New Birthday, April 23rd, 1885.' Two of my sisters followed a few days later; and then all three became soul-winners. Is it possible that some are *Christianized*, but not '*born again*'? Jesus says 'Must.'

"2. **Love.** We can do nothing without this. Of course, it must be *God's* love shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. This love for the Mohammedans GOD gave us *before we arrived*. We looked upon them as our 'children'; and what true parent ever *gives up* his or her children?

"3. **Faith.** I believe GOD honours faith, even 'ignorant' faith. We had no idea of the enormous difficulties that lay before us, but we believed that our GOD had sent us to bring souls to Christ. And He did. Our first convert came two years after our arrival, just as we began to speak Kabyle.

"4. **Contact.** Do all you can to draw the natives to your house. Employ them. Invite them—even if not clean—to your table. Be their *friends*.

"Have regular classes. Many beggars came to us. Instead of giving to them immediately, we invited them to come on certain days for classes. Many came, and we helped those who were truly needy.

“Give prizes in your Boys’ and Girls’ Classes. Have good singing, if possible. We found a Home for Girls very helpful. The children lived in our house, and learned to read and write, as well as to spin, weave, sew, and so on.

“Having done all this, and much more, we had the heart-breaking feeling that we were not equal to the mighty task. Then followed a time of deep heart-searching and prayer. ‘He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire’ was fulfilled to us, and blessing followed.

“Let us be prepared for difficulties, for they will surely come, and continue. But if we suffer *with* Christ, and *for* Him, we are but following in the footsteps of the Master. Perhaps outlining some of our trials may help a brother or sister :

“Opposition on the part of the authorities began in the early days and continued during the greater part of our 45 years in the Mission field. Classes were dispersed by threats of fines. Police came to enquire into the nature of our work. Native lads broke the tiles of our house and strewed the path with thorns after a noisy meeting. *For ten years no woman would work for us.*

“The Mission House was unfinished ; court uncovered ; no veranda. We arrived straight from England on June 1st, 1887, with no knowledge of Kabyle and scarcely any of French ; and no knowledge of the religions that opposed us. Our gold watches were stolen. But far greater than any of these difficulties was the tremendous opposition of the enemy we had come to oust. We felt the evil spirits all around us. Sometimes a terrible cloud of oppression would overwhelm us. The climate, the isolation, the languages : all tried us. But—GOD was with us !

“**Triumphs of Missionary Work.** The Mission House was put in order, and a lovely garden of flowers, fruit and vegetables grew up around it. Large numbers came to our classes in spite of threats. The lads came and listened quietly whilst one of their number urged them to ‘come to Jesus.’

“The languages yielded to determined study. The clouds of depression proved but to be an effort of the Enemy to drive us away before blessing came. On one occasion five lads came on a dark winter evening to tell us they had decided to follow Christ. A plot to put us in prison was frustrated, and another to keep us on the mountains all night after an evangelising visit, also failed. Conversions cheered our hearts immensely. Some died in the faith : others lived and laboured for the Master they loved.

“One memorable day five girls stood up in class to confess their faith in Christ. Some younger ones rose to do the same, but were told they were too young to understand. However, they maintained that they *did* understand and *did* believe, and told their parents so.

“One dear young woman brought her father, mother, sister, daughter and some neighbours to Christ. Our Bible-woman, now almost blind, is full of the Word, and such a joy to us.

“At the outset of our missionary career we asked GOD to fulfil to us Psalm 91 : and He did !

“**A word—in love—to young Missionaries.** After many prayers, and tears, and much travelling in pain for a soul who finally separates from the solid block of Mohammedanism, it is hard, unspeakably hard, to hear the criticism : ‘He is not converted.’ What provokes this harsh judgment ? He has faults ! *Judge not until you have brought someone to Christ yourself.*”

In Lighter Vein

THAT a saving sense of humour is not forsaking our workers amidst the stress and strain of war is happily evident in the following extract from a letter recently received by Mr. Carnegie from Mr. A. G. Willson—now living at Djemâa Sahridj, the former station of Miss Kate Smith :

“Our medical work is badly hit owing to lack of drugs. Fortunately I have found out a number of substitutes. . . . One day I had been working for several hours making a whole batch of pills of several kinds : rhubarb, jalap, sulphur, and other ingredients. I had placed them in the sun to dry ; and, whilst my back was turned, our mule strolled by and ate them up ! You may imagine my consternation when I discovered what he had done. By the way, it was the old chap that shook you up so much when you went with me to see Bousaad. It did not seem to have the slightest effect, however ! He did not drop dead, as the Maltese expected Paul would ; so, except for the loss of my time and precious ingredients, no harm came of it.” [We learn that Mr. Carnegie still cherishes tender memories both of the “old chap” and the “shaking up !” —Ed.]

Congratulations !

FRIENDS of the N.A.M. will rejoice to learn that Dr. and Mrs. T. G. Churcher, for many years Missionaries in North Africa, celebrated their golden wedding on December 2nd, 1941.

Were space available, this would be a fitting occasion upon which to give a sketch of our

Dear friends' long association with the Mission: but this we can say—since their return to the Homeland Dr. and Mrs. Churcher have been such faithful and regular supporters of all N.A.M. gatherings in London (particularly the Prayer Meetings) that any Annual Meeting especially would have seemed incomplete without them.

We have been very grateful to Dr. Churcher of recent years for his contributions to the NEWS LETTER. He is a past-master in the writing or recounting of anecdotes.

In expressing to Dr. and Mrs. Churcher our warmest congratulations, we would add our earnest prayer that the sunset years may be the most blessed of all.

New Volume by *Rev. E. J. Poole-Connor*

IT is our pleasure to bring to our readers' attention a new work* by the Rev. E. J. Poole-Connor, Chairman of the Council of the North Africa Mission. Under the title of "Evangelical Unity" Mr. Poole-Connor has presented us with a volume upon a theme that has probably never been dealt with so fully, and that could not conceivably have been more ably handled.

"Our Lord," says Mr. Poole-Connor, "envisaged a Church that should be both vitally and visibly one"; and in the 200 pages of this admirable little work the writer examines first of all the disruptive forces that, disintegrating from within or battering from without, have assailed the Church of Christ down the ages, exposing her to the "scornful wonder" of those who beheld her "by schisms rent asunder, by heresies distressed."

Then—and this is the main purpose of the volume—factors that have operated potently and beneficently towards true unity are fully dealt with: The Evangelical Alliance; the '59, and subsequent, Revivals; "Keswick"; the "individual witness" of men like Hudson Taylor and godly women like Sister Eva, of Friedenshort. Several of the Independent Evangelical Churches are featured in masterly little sketches; a "Personal Narrative" gives us a unique insight into the writer's reaction to early and later spiritual influences; and finally, in a feast of good things, there is an able marshalling of New Testament teaching on the vital theme of "Christian Unity." Altogether a first-class volume, deserving the widest possible circulation, and upon which we confidently pray the Lord's richest blessing.

* EVANGELICAL UNITY. By E. J. Poole-Connor. 200 pp. Price 2/- (postage extra single copy 2/6). Obtainable from Messrs. W. Blackmore, 4, Treaty Road, Hounslow, Middlesex.

News from the Field.

SINCE our last NEWS LETTER was despatched two events of major importance have combined to make the state of affairs in our Mission field more complicated than ever. We refer, of course, to the exploits of the Eighth Army in Libya and to the entry of America into the world war. With powerful British forces in possession of Libya a vista of possibilities opens up; but as to what the actual issues may be it would be idle to speculate. Our one prayer is that GOD's gracious purpose may be realised without Tunisia, Algeria or Morocco becoming a further field of conflict.

News from the field, though scanty, is reassuring. **Miss Grace Sharpe**, colleague of Miss Dew, of Rabat, has completed her language studies, and reports: "We are able to carry on as usual, though not able to give you the details we would like. . . . We have not seen butter, cheese or milk for months, but we have plenty to eat of what there is, and in many ways we have our needs supplied in wonderful ways by our Heavenly Father."

Miss Lickman, who was not able, after all, to return to the Homeland for further medical treatment, is sufficiently recovered to resume her duties at Hope House. For this we are deeply thankful to God.

Miss Buxton and **Miss Reed**, of Settat, tell of crowded days of happy activity in the Lord's work. It is a joy to learn that their distressingly leaky roof is being extensively overhauled. (What a relief it is to be spared the "continual dropping" in a native house during the rainy season only past sufferers can appreciate!)

A cheery Christmas letter from **Mrs. Jas. A. Liley** (at present in the Homeland) gives welcome news from Tunis. **Mr. R. S. Miles** and **Mr. R. I. Brown** report that the work is "particularly encouraging. Work among the Arabs and Europeans is going ahead. Some have come forward for baptism; larger numbers are coming to hear the Gospel; there is an eagerness to study GOD'S WORD; and the children show keenness to attend School or Class."

Mr. P. Padilla, of Tangier, sends a long and interesting report, of which the following brief extracts by no means exhaust the items of heartening news: "Visits are being paid to the houses most days of the week; and contact is thus being maintained with those who through fear do not come to the meetings. There are signs that the Holy Spirit is working in the hearts of some of these. Several new friends are attending the meetings regularly, and are showing a real desire to know the Truth." Two sisters, and the sons of one of them, are among these new-comers; and they gladly gave five times the price asked for a Bible (20 francs). Our brother concludes: "Here in Tangier difficulties increase daily, but, thanks be to GOD, the work has not been hindered. The Lord has kept us, and supplied all our needs; so that once again we can say 'Eben-ezer'!"