

Continuing "NORTH AFRICA."

The N.A.M. News Letter

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Photo by]

MISS S. M. DENISON, M.B.E.,

[E.J.L.

standing with a former helper, Mrs. H. Morgan, at the door of the Dispensary at Fez.

Miss S. M. Denison Honoured. In a recent issue of the NEWS LETTER special reference was made to Miss Denison's missionary "jubilee," the completion of 50 years in Morocco.

The recent Birthday Honours List reveals that Miss Denison's faithful service has received Royal recognition in the award of the M.B.E. decoration.

Our readers will join us, we are sure, both in hearty and affectionate congratulations to our sister, and in earnest prayer that a worker, or workers, may be raised up to carry on the Gospel Dispensary work in which she excelled. * * * * *

News has just reached us that Miss Denison has arrived in this country from Morocco. We rejoice in her safe return.

News from the Field

WE are devoting the whole of the present issue of the NEWS LETTER to the publishing of extracts from Missionaries' Annual Reports. These have not all been written at the same time, and extracts from the earlier reports, which began to reach us some months ago, have already appeared in previous issues of our periodical.

Where missionaries have already written very concisely, the task of selection and further abridgement for these Notes has been difficult; but it is trusted that a fair survey of the Field has been furnished, and that readers will be able to enter more sympathetically and prayerfully into the many and varied labours of our workers.

Tunisia

When **Miss Ada Clack** reached the Mission House at Nabeul ("Dar En-nâama"), after an interval of several years, the discoveries that awaited her must have been discouraging. Not only had mice and moths wrought great destruction, but the inevitable neglect of the war years—bringing rapid deterioration in such a country as North Africa—had been aggravated apparently by some measure of wanton damage.

It was cheering therefore to read, in a later letter, "GOD has wonderfully worked about repairs. A man who knew Mr. Morriss did the kitchen sink, the pipe of which was rotten. He has fixed a second-hand pipe, and also changed the tap. The cost—five pounds! The cleaning of the cistern cost three pounds. If the smells had continued in this heat, we might have had bigger doctor's bills! There are still locks, windows and roof to be repaired."

In a further letter our sister continues: "I am all alone here except for the old French couple who occupy the little cottage in the garden. Monsieur Deval is 90 years old, his wife 70! Pray that I may be used of GOD to them. As caretakers in our absence they have done well to keep things as they have here. I found the house in a deplorable state, and have had a hectic time cleaning it. I am glad to be kept very busy, though: it helps to take away some of the loneliness. The house is almost straight now, and begins to look like home. . . . **Miss Jones** will be a great help in tackling some of the minor repairs, and in cultivating the garden, which is in a very bad state. I do long for her return: I miss her sorely. . . ."

I am sure that we can enter sympathetically into our sister's loneliness. As **Mr. Warren** justly observes, "Moslem work is so uphill that congenial companionship is a real necessity." Certainly the Lord Jesus sent out His disciples *two by two*.

Miss Clack concludes: "It is already known that I am back again, and I have had several callers. The tiny girls I left behind have now grown quite tall—such nice girls! Others have been married, divorced and married again. Some have died. Many have been the sad tales I have listened to. I need all your prayers as once again I take up the threads for Him and seek to be His ambassador among these people."

Miss Ethel Brookes, whose furlough is, of course, long overdue, is very tired and not well; but she is uncomplaining, and quite willing to abide GOD'S time for her departure to distant America.

Miss Alma Kraulis, whose home is in Latvia, must be reading the news these days with anxious interest. It is a long, long time since she had tidings of her people. She, too, must be very tired; but never a word of complaint reaches us. Indeed, her greatest regret is that the work she is helping to do among the troops sometimes claims more of her time than she feels she ought to give, in view of the need of the natives all around her.

It is evident from one of **Miss Kraulis's** letters that there is (in the words of Mr. Warren's comment) "a general lassitude—war-weariness due to strain and under-nourishment, and lack of sufficient change and rest."

Friends at home will be swift to realise that the spiritual approach to a people who are still hungry, ill-clad, and utterly jaded is tremendously difficult. "Patient continuance" in missionary labours in North Africa these days calls for the uttermost devotion. May we in the Homeland be faithful in prayer, and may our workers out yonder enjoy, day by day, the blessed companionship of Him Whom **Lilias Trotter** called "The Master of the Impossible!"

Miss G. E. Petter, who returned with **Miss Clack** to Tunisia, has resumed her labours among the Italians. Concerning the work that has "Bethesda" as its headquarters she writes, "There is much to encourage, and still quite a lot to be done for our boys in the Services who appreciate a Christian home." **Miss Petter** will of course find her burdens lightened considerably when **Miss Gotelee** is able to join her. Meanwhile she is able to write with warm appreciation of the helpful ministry of **Jim Falzon**, and of the valuable service rendered by **Signor Bocca**, who is "a tower of strength."

A postcard dated June 5 has just been received from **Mr. Robert Brown**, who says: "General repatriation is taking place from July 1. They will of course go by contingents, and I cannot hope to be in the first one, but I confidently hope to be home by October."

Mr. Brown also expresses his longing to return to the field at the earliest possible moment after his marriage. Certainly Tunisia

has great need of him ; but upon his release from long internment in a concentration camp he is bound to need the rest and nourishment and thorough building-up that a reasonably lengthy stay in the Homeland alone can furnish.

Algeria

In a long and interesting report received from **Mr. A. Willson** (Djemâa Sahridj), our brother concludes : " The war has interfered very much with our work in one way or another. There have been many difficulties and obstacles to overcome, but, on looking back, it is with gratitude we are able to say, with Ezra : the good hand of our GOD has been upon us, and to His Name be the glory."

Here are some further extracts, difficult to select from so much that is of interest : " We have been cheered by two confessions of faith from our young men of Djemâa, though these were not made until they had left the neighbourhood. Still, in our opinion it is of little importance whether men turn to Christ our way or not : the fact that our labour is not in vain in the Lord is what really matters.

" At the outstations all has gone very well. . . . A man living in a region beyond Eaglefan has professed faith in Christ, and asked for baptism, together with his daughter. His sister also, who, among her other accomplishments, speaks English, has expressed a desire to become a Christian . . .

" We conducted services on several Sunday mornings at T., where a number of British and American soldiers were stationed. It cheered us to see our own people, and to be able to talk our own language.

" In medical work we have been very busy owing to an epidemic of sores which took a long time to heal. The patients mostly attended meetings whilst under treatment.

" At Djemâa the Sunday School and my wife's Friday class have been well attended. . . Most of our young men have gone away, either to the Army, or to some useful kind of work . . . but when they come home on leave they always make a point of coming to the meetings. We attach great importance to this."

From Oued Amizour **Miss Degenkolw** writes : " After the Allied troops landed in Algiers and Bougie, air raids began on Bougie, and we had a mass of refugees pouring into Oued Amizour. I had to give up my dining-room. My time was spent looking after mothers and babies and sowing the Good Seed wherever possible. Also I had the joy of welcoming many babies in French, Jewish and native homes, and of helping the mothers to sew clothes for all these babies out of old sheets and other pieces of material that I was able to provide.

" Later, when the troops were encamped all along the road, I had my house full of soldiers every afternoon. They were very pleased to come into a comfortable home, and have quiet talks and a cup of tea and some hymn singing. Some were very far from the Kingdom of God : a few were real believers. Those were very happy months . . .

" I am missing my boys' and girls' classes and the dispensary work. It is a great joy to me to see now and then one of my big girls, who comes to visit her parents. They send for me when she comes home, and we have a nice time together. Most of them remember what they have learned in the Bible Class. A few are real believers, but cannot live as such because they are married to Mohammedan men. May we be faithful in praying for these secret believers ! "

Tangier

The reports from Tangier are many and detailed, and it is extraordinarily difficult to condense them without forfeiting much of their interest. In the following extracts we can give little more than a sample of the items :

Miss Glen writes : " Again I can only thank GOD for all the way He has led me and so bountifully supplied our every need, keeping us at all times in His care.

" There were 28 girls at the beginning of the year on the register, and they have decreased a little in number since then. Now there are only 20. The falling-off is due to two causes : (1) There is another school opened for Moslem girls, where the Gospel is not proclaimed. Also, the children who attend have been promised a jaleb (outer garment), and that is a great inducement to go. (2) I cannot fully clothe the children, but merely give them a garment from time to time. Three children came in absolute rags, and I clothed them. They left immediately with their new clothes ! . . .

" From the spiritual side I can only say that the children have the Gospel preached to them. Some listen, some do not ; but I have noticed, especially in one who never seems to pay attention, that they hear more than is apparent. . . GOD is working in His own way, and His Word will not return unto Him void."

From **Miss Drury** comes the following : " Attendance of children very irregular, ranging from 30 to 40 a day. Mrs. Bocking has been teaching French, which has been a great attraction, and the children are progressing well. She has also been helping with the Gospel.

" During the year we have made 1,800 garments for the poor. Sometimes the older girls ask to take work home to keep them occupied. Among these are some who are now reading the Bible for themselves and seem interested ; but fear always appears to hold them back.

" Ordinary visiting among the Moors is still difficult. I have confined myself to visiting any child or woman who may be sick in my children's homes, where I am specially invited. I think their poverty makes some hesitate."

Miss Nellie Bowker must find her time very fully occupied as Nurse, as Housekeeper for the Hospital and as Missionary. She says : " Dr. Anderson's statistics will show that there has been a

steady increase in theatre operations for the last few years. 1943 tops the list and explains where much of my time has been spent. We have managed to obtain sufficient supplies to keep going.

"The men's ward has been busy, too. One little boy has just completed a year in hospital. He has been a heavy bi-daily dressing, and at one time we despaired of his recovery, but now he is fat and flourishing, and we hope soon to complete his cure."

After writing of Mr. Bocking's great help in the evangelistic work in the ward, and of Miss Craggs's faithfulness over many years, Miss Bowker speaks of her own efforts in spiritual work: "The patients listen very well, and if one could judge from appearances one would feel encouraged, but experience teaches otherwise. We need much prayer for the working of the Holy Spirit in our midst . . ."

"We continue our Bible reading on Tuesday evenings for the native Christian girls . . . and still share the Sunday School work with Miss Lincoln.

"I have not had sufficient energy for doing much visiting. This last year especially hospital work has had a way of overflowing a bit into off-duty time."

As the boat on which **Miss Dorcas Henman** was travelling to Tangier drew near to the town, the familiar scenes and the customary bustling and shouting led her to say to herself, "Just the same!" "But," she writes, "things are not just the same . . . the war has affected Tangier as well as almost every other town on the earth.

"Although blackout conditions have not to be contended with, extra work and strain have fallen on those who remained at their posts. Meetings, classes, visiting, school and hospital work have all been carried on, and we trust His promise, 'My Word shall not return unto Me void.'"

Miss Henman reminds us of the immense amount of planning for the post-war years that is going on just now in the Homeland, and then she asks: "Are we individually and collectively preparing our plans under GOD'S supreme guidance for after the war here? As missionaries will be leaving for their well-earned furloughs, are we going to have an increasing number of Mission Stations on our Prayer List designated unoccupied pro tem? If you do not belong to the Prayer Circle, then write to Headquarters, for much prayer is needed for this land. We can so pray and plan and work that by the Holy Spirit people's hearts may be occupied by Christ, not Mohammed; towns and villages occupied by Christians, not Mohammedans . . ."

"Young people, you can begin planning and preparing now . . . Do extra Bible study, learn French or Spanish. Older friends, prepare the ground by spending more time in prayer that more names may be added to the Prayer List where at present stations are just marked 'unoccupied.'

"My own deep impression is that a great door and effectual is opened unto us, and there are many adversaries. Who will enter this door and occupy till He comes?"

Also from the Tulloch Memorial Hospital **Miss Carty** writes: "Although it has not been possible for us away here at Tangier to do anything in the way of war nursing, yet I think we may feel we have played some small part by caring for the sick among the many refugees found here by reason of the war. We certainly have met a need with regard to the Gibraltarian population, who naturally

turn to the English Hospital for help when the need arises . . ."

"The Moorish work goes on apace. Many are the cases that could be cited of remarkable results after operative treatment that would at first sight appear hopeless.

"With regard to the spiritual side of the work, there still remains the same hardness that is ever felt in a Moslem field—just one here and there that seems the least bit interested or responsive. But the Gospel is heard continually by the patients, and we know that GOD'S word is a fire, a sword; and we have the precious text to which we may ever cling, that His Word shall not return . . . void."

Finally, so far as the Hospital Staff is concerned, **Miss Gladwyn** dispenser and anaesthetist, writes: "There have certainly been greater numbers than I have ever known before. . . We have had much the same problems over obtaining the medicines and dressings, but we have also rejoiced in the same experience of needs supplied.

"The empty spaces on the dispensary shelves have somewhat increased. The last cracked measuring glasses are still holding on gallantly, and the dispensary scales still stand upright with a little assistance. The slogan 'After the War' is always in our thoughts and often on our lips when we are making do with many things these days.

"After **Miss Rokeby-Robinson** left last August, I took over the Sunday School for English-speaking children, and this has been a service of great pleasure to me. I know that the privilege of teaching children is also a great responsibility, and I would value your prayers for these young lives. The number up to this month was 21—a mixed variety of English, Americans, Gibraltarians and two Hungarians. . . I have also continued throughout the year to attend the Sunday Spanish meetings, and by playing the hymns, I endeavour to assist the people to make a joyful noise, though not always tuneful. The attendances have been good . . ."

From Hope House **Mrs. L. Bocking** writes: "Visiting with a Spanish Christian woman has been a great help in practice as regards the language, and has also given me an insight into the homes of the Spaniards . . . Never before did I realise under what poor conditions many of these people live, possibly due in some measure to the influence of the Moors when they overran their country in the past. Intermarriage, too, has affected both their appearance and their manner of living. . ."

"Owing to the political situation . . . one has had to go very carefully in visiting both Europeans and Arabs."

After writing further of her Spanish language study and of the difference between the Moroccan Arabic and the Algerian colloquial, Mrs. Bocking continues: "I have helped in both schools, Miss Glen's and Miss Drury's. In the latter I commenced last autumn to teach the children French, as this is an added attraction at any school. The natives seem to be waking up to the value of education, and show a desire to learn languages which, of course, would be a great asset to them in such a place as Tangier.

" . . . It is something to be thankful for that here in Tangier we are at liberty to have Christian schools, a thing that is not possible in other parts of North Africa. Let us therefore make the most of our opportunity!"