

# WORLD DOMINION

The World Dominion Movement advocates Informed Continuous Co-ordinated Evangelism to reach everyone at home and abroad. Its basis is belief in the Deity and Atoning Death of the Lord Jesus Christ, the World's Only Saviour, and in the Final Authority of Holy Scripture.

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# The Gateway to Morocco

JOSEPH J. COOKSEY

BY the Atlantic sea-gate of Casablanca—the white city—one enters Morocco with a feeling of surpassing strangeness. The gleaming groups of houses and mosques, which twenty years ago nestled along the seashore, and wherein wrought and worshipped twenty thousand Moors, have been encircled and dominated by a vast modern city. Casablanca is unique. It has no examples of splendid Moorish architecture like the Dar Jamai and the gate of Mansour at Meknes; no delicate decorative art like that in the Ananiya and Karouayu colleges and the Batha at Fez; nothing comparable with the sumptuous riches of Dar Si Said at Marrakesh and the Kasbah of the Oudayias at Rabat. Casablanca, however, is even more significant than these. It stands for a daring syncretism of French organizing and constructive genius with Moorish tradition and social conservatism. Magnificent public and commercial buildings, gay, tree-bordered boulevards along which roll streams of motor-cars; shops and stores of Parisian excellence filled with fine examples of French craftsmanship, form an essentially modern setting into which Moorish men and women merge and blend with astonishing naturalness.

Since March 30th, 1912, when Sultan Moulay Hafid signed at Tangier the convention which established the French Protectorate of Morocco, much has happened at Casablanca. The dangerous roadstead where formerly 222,198 tons of merchandise were annually unloaded into boats, has given place to a fine modern port where between two and three million tons are handled. The Moorish and Jewish population is now outnumbered only by Marrakesh, and the total of 160,000 inhabitants is rapidly increasing. At the time the Protectorate was established international treaties hindered both commercial and passenger railway development, but these difficulties have been overcome, and some fifteen hundred miles of lines are now being used. More

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striking still is the magnificent road system which covers the country, indicated in Casablanca by fleets of Pullman cars which carry the traveller comfortably and cheaply to all the important towns. Along 3,800 miles of roads, more than one-third of which has tarred surfaces, pass 24,500 commercial lorries, motor-coaches and motor-buses, together with some 9,000 private cars.

Not only the material advancement of the country, but also the intellectual conquest of the Moorish people by means of modern education and widespread primary instruction, is a concern of the Protectorate. An institute for the Higher Education of Natives is well attended. Secondary European education for both boys and girls is given in ten principal towns, and 6,766 scholars were enrolled last year. There are 162 French schools with 25,043 pupils, and 45 Jewish schools with 13,697 pupils are subsidized by the Government.

The Moslem population is served by schools which fail to meet the growing demand. Including the colleges of Moulay Idriss at Fez, and at Rabat where a secondary education is given, 14,585 Moslem pupils are enrolled, of whom 3,023 are girls.

Equally admirable is the work of the Ministry of Health which has provided large, well-equipped hospitals in the chief towns, gives free medical service to the poor, both native and European, and by its clinics and dispensaries seeks to control the epidemics and prevalent diseases of the country.

The observer has nothing but admiration for these solid evidences of progress, nor will he fail to appreciate the foresight of those who are building a modern and progressive Morocco.

Nevertheless, no thoughtful Christian can admit that a splendid material contribution is the only one which Europe can make to Morocco. He believes that it is necessary to make a spiritual contribution also, a contribution which shall surpass anything the people may now possess as completely as the present material advancement transcends all they themselves have in the past

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achieved. The work of Christian missionaries is not only directed to winning individual men and women to the love of God, but is a spiritual service to the whole people by giving them the Holy Scriptures in their mother-tongue, and by expounding to them the message of man's redemption through the Lord Jesus Christ. Such a ministry to the whole people should be directed along broad and comprehensive lines, and have regard to the number and distribution of the population.

Recent statistics give the total population of French Morocco as 5,204,245, of whom 172,500 are Europeans, 40,000 military, and 117,000 Jews. The registration of births and deaths (only recently introduced) formerly being optional for the native population, it is difficult to make an exact estimate. The population of Spanish Morocco—still more uncertain—is estimated at one million. Six-and-a-half millions for the whole country is a fairly accurate estimate.

It is worthy of note that the census of 1931 gave the total urban population of French Morocco as 849,666 persons composed of 108,507 French, 39,627 foreigners, 608,718 Moslems and 92,814 native Jews. The present missionary force of 104 missionaries, representing six missionary societies and twenty-seven unattached workers, occupies nineteen urban centres which have a population of about 735,969. It will be seen, therefore, that 4,468,276 of the population in French Morocco are outside the centres of missionary occupation and are found in numerous small towns, villages, rural centres and encampments which can only be reached by itineration. The urban population of the autonomous international settlement of Tangier and of Spanish Morocco is about 200,000 out of an estimated total population of one million. Tangier and Tetuan, with a combined population of about 83,000 persons, are the only centres occupied by missionaries, so that 117,000 town dwellers, and some 800,000 country people are un-reached with the Gospel save by itineration.

The impressive fact is that the number of people living outside the centres of missionary occupation is little

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short of five-and-a-quarter millions out of a total population of six-and-a-half millions. Itineration on a scale necessary to reach these is not being attempted. The difficulty of doing so is complicated by the composition of the present missionary force, three-fourths of whom are women, twenty-six men only being found in the total of one-hundred-and-four workers. The nature of the task marks it out as being chiefly the work of men, though women workers have nobly undertaken it when possible. The missionary situation in Morocco is a challenge to consecrated young men to give themselves to its evangelization.

For several years attention has been drawn to a form of evangelization of unusual interest which has been centred in Casablanca. Little has been written about it, and therefore few are aware of its importance and significance. It is an adaptation to Christian purposes of the methods of the preaching Moslem marabouts. It was the marabouts who, when the Byzantine armies in North Africa were crushed by the Arab conquerors in the eighth century, penetrated the mountain and desert fastnesses of the Christian Berbers and preached Islam in the public fairs and markets of the tribes. The *Zaouia* (religious school), the enclosed square for public prayer, and later, the building of the mosque for general worship, marked the progressive advance of Islam among the Berber people. Progress among these stubborn people, however, was slow. Some three centuries passed before complete success was achieved ; and not until the expulsion of the Moors from Spain in the fifteenth century did an impulse of religious zeal finally sweep away the vestiges of Christianity which had persisted among the tribes of the Atlas Mountains.

One may see the tribal fairs and markets of Morocco to-day just as the marabouts first saw them centuries ago. Rows of tents filled with merchandise and native manufactures, camels, horses, donkeys, bleating sheep, hungry dogs, native barbers, story-tellers, medicine vendors, and the thousand things that tribesmen will buy, all mixed up in bewildering confusion, and in the midst of it, standing

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on a box, a missionary singing in Moroccan Arabic, 'There is life for a look at the Crucified One,' followed by a talk about sin and redemption, in fluent, homely speech that grips the gathering crowd. Such sanctified courage and faith in God would have moved even a marabout to admiration. He, however, would surely have been stirred to incredulous laughter if he had been told that the preacher frequently cannot reach the fairs and markets for lack of missionary assistance and means to run the car.

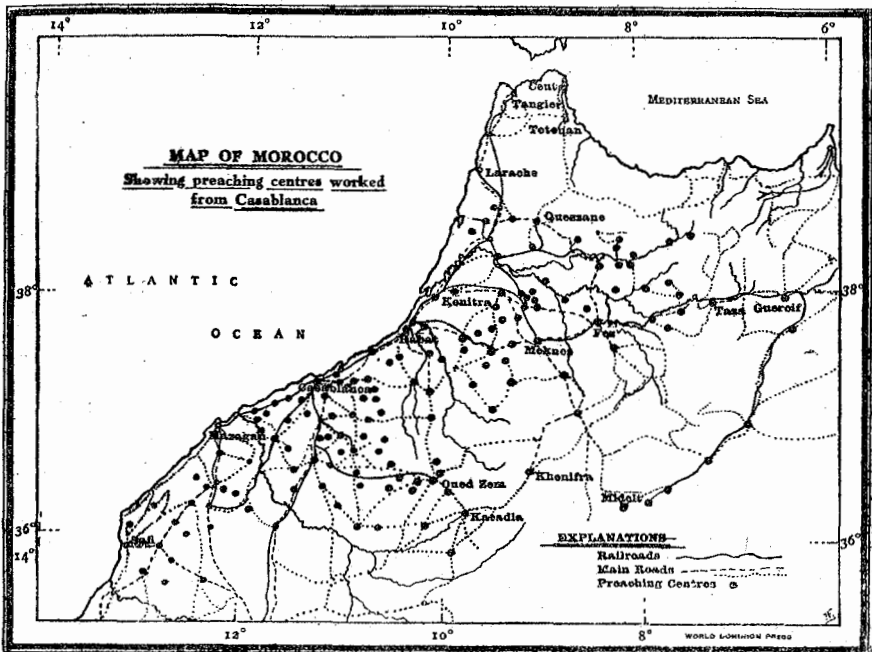
Public preaching in Moorish markets is best undertaken by co-operative missionary effort, and American and British workers have participated in this wide-flung itineration from Casablanca. During a period of ten years, more than three hundred markets have been visited for public preaching; the distance covered has been approximately one-hundred-thousand miles, and within the area traversed live about one-half the total population of the country. Uniformly good attention has been given to the Christian message, and over ten thousand copies of the Scriptures have been purchased as a result of the spiritual interest aroused. It is a tribute to the general good temper of the people that no untoward incident has ever marred the cordial relationship which exists between themselves and the evangelists. Many kindnesses, solicitous protection and charming hospitality have been received on many occasions from both French and Moorish officials, and have been gratefully appreciated.

The missionary value of this unique form of evangelism will be entirely missed if it is appraised simply as an interesting example of personal initiative and aptitude for public speech in the idiom of the Moorish people. Its significance will be perceived as it is seen to be related to the methods which Moslems themselves used so successfully in past centuries in North Africa, and to the present distribution of the Moorish population which lies so largely outside the large urban centres. What was begun as a daring missionary venture, and has been conserved and consolidated by faithful and courageous persistence, should now become a principle of missionary action, having in

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view a nation-wide witness to Christ by the preaching and diffusion of the Word of God.

What has been done over a wide area by two or three men, as their strength and time have permitted, should be systematically developed by an adequate force of young evangelists, gifted for public speaking, and equipped by specialized linguistic training on the field. A great thing could be done in Morocco. Have we the faith and courage to attempt it?



### Christianity's Asset

'If Islam's forces are indeed nature, the world and the flesh, then Islam has left us one weapon in taking away all the others—it has abandoned to us the *Sword of the Spirit—the Spirit of Jesus is the only asset of the Church.*'

These words of Temple Gairdner of Cairo expressed, according to his biographer, the motive and key-note of his lifework.