

ARAB BOYS AND GIRLS. SPECIAL NUMBER.

A Thirsty Land



Algiers Mission Band

Algiers Mission Band.

FOUNDED IN 1888 BY I. LILIAS TROTTER.

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Editor of "A Thirsty Land" :— MISS M. H. ROCHE. 1908

Location of Workers. Summer, 1937.

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✓ 1907. Miss RIDLEY.		TOLGA.
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1935. M. and Mme. MILLON.	SETIF.	GHARDAIA (Beni M'zab). Spring.
BLIDA.	1914. Miss A. M. FARMER.	1907. Miss M. D. GRAUTOFF.
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1909. Miss A. McILROY.	Miss S. HANSEN (Now in Denmark on sick leave).	1929. Miss. P. M. RUSSELL. "
1919. Mlle. BUTTICAZ.	Evangelist Colporteur : Senor MUNIOZ (of the Nile Mission Press). Headquarters at Relizane.	



No. 41.

SUMMER, 1937

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POST FREE

Gideon's Prayers.

JUDGES 6. 36-40.

(An Address given at our Annual Meeting last year.)

Gideon was a man faced by a task and a conflict—to fight the Midianites, to “save Israel.” He was burdened by a responsibility which he felt to be too much for him ; and yet it was a responsibility which he knew God had laid upon him. (See Judges 6. 14.) So he prayed.

His first appeal was to the Divine commission. “If Thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, *as Thou hast said.*”

This is still the way for missionaries, for a missionary society, for its helpers, to pray : to rest back on God's Word, and to claim its fulfilment ; to recognise that the responsibility is His ; to count on Him to fulfil the purpose for which He has chosen and commissioned us.

But Gideon, though he knew full well what God had said, still had in his heart an element of misgiving. For he also knew himself and his own insufficiency for the task. A questioning arose in his heart :

can it be that God will save Israel by *my* hand ? So he prayed for fresh assurance. He desired to know with renewed certainty that God would do what he had said, and use even him to save Israel. He asked for a confirming sign that God was with him to deliver. What then is the pledge of God's purpose for which he made request ? Nothing less than this—a wet fleece on dry ground. “And it was so.” His prayer was answered. He knew afresh that God had sent him.

How then can God's workers to-day gain fresh assurance and inspiration for the task to which God has called them ? In the midst of a heathen or Moslem land, spiritually if not naturally dry and barren, with no Christian friends at hand, with no helpful fellowship, what is the missionary's proof that God is with him ? Simply this, that day by day, in the morning or evening, as he waits upon God, his fleece becomes

wet. Spiritual dew falls upon his soul. He knows afresh that the God Who has sent him is with him. Further, such daily spiritual refreshment and renewal from the Presence of the Lord are a necessary equipment for the service to which God has called us. Otherwise the heat and burden of the day become too much for us. We lose our freshness. We shrivel and crack. But when we are daily renewed in God and by the Spirit's dew—what then? When things press upon us, out comes water—grace sufficient and overflowing.

Gideon's prayer was answered. But he prayed yet again. Why? What was the significance of his further request? Was he still not convinced? Was he still beset by misgiving? Did he the second time simply ask a harder thing, that the absorbent wool should be dry and the hard parched ground wet? Or did he ask a new thing? Can it be that the centre of his concern shifted, that he forgot himself and became wholly concerned about the task—to save Israel? Did he lift up his eyes and look all round, and say: "*If God is going to save Israel, all the ground must be wet, not merely my fleece?*" Then, did he come back to himself with a new thought?—"*God is going to save Israel by my hand. I am to be the instrument. It is I who must face the cost. And what is it going to involve? Battle? Yes, and more.*" Can it be that before he put down his fleece the second time he had counted all the cost?—"*Perhaps death?—Yes, I am prepared to sacrifice even life itself. What matters is that Israel be saved, that all the ground be wet. Yes, I am willing to give that Israel may get, to die that others may live.*" Can it be that in the supreme daring of prayer he even bargained with God? "*Let not Thine anger be hot against me. . . . Let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew. Let me alone suffer loss: and let all Israel be saved!*"

It is not possible to affirm that these were

Gideon's thoughts. We cannot be certain. But it is possible to find in Scripture examples and justification of such thoughts. Moses did thus pray that sinful Israel might be saved. "This people have sinned . . . if Thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book" (Exod. 32. 31 and 32). The apostle Paul wrote: "I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren" (Rom. 9. 3).

What is more, the spiritual ideas we have sought to discern in Gideon's prayers find their fullest expression in the person of our Lord Himself. Surely Gideon's fleece may speak to us of Him—the Lamb of God? Among sinful men He was like the wet fleece upon the dry ground. He was anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows. When the Baptist saw the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him (St. John 1. 33), he knew that this was He by whom God would save His people. Nor did Christ shrink from the cost. He knew from the first what it would involve—that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things . . . and be killed: and He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem. He saved others: Himself He would not save. On the Cross He was willing for our sakes to be "forsaken" by His Father. His fleece only became dry that all the world might be wet with the dew of God's blessing. We owe all our spiritual enrichment to His one sacrifice.

This, too, is the Master Who left us an example that we should follow His steps. His spirit of willing sacrifice is the one spirit in which to face the needy world that still surrounds us. Often have we asked for ourselves fresh renewals: and He has given us His dew. But are we willing to lift up our eyes and look on dry Moslem fields? Are we prepared to face the greater need of "a thirsty land"? Are we ready to pray deeper prayer, more Christlike, more unselfish, more sacrificial?

Are we willing to give, yes even to lay down our lives, that others may receive God's gift of eternal life?

Miss Trotter wrote: "What a revelation would come over the world, the world of starving souls abroad . . . if God's people ventured on making themselves poor as Jesus did for the need around." He, though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich. If not Gideon, then Paul and still more Paul's Lord call us not only to pray for the salvation of others, but also to give ourselves, that our prayer may be answered.

"Then with a rush the intolerable craving
Shivers throughout me like a trumpet
call,—

Oh to save these! to perish for their
saving,

Die for their life, be offered for them
all!"

ALAN STIBBS.

Editorial.

This number of the magazine is mainly concerned with the boys and girls of Algeria, and we believe that all our readers, young friends and older ones too, will enjoy meeting them and hearing of the need and possibilities of work among them.

Wherever our workers go, *there* are the children! Opening doors, showing the way, appearing on the threshold of the mission house, following the colporteurs or gazing in at the window of the depot! Eager and friendly, keen to see pictures and any new thing, are the boys and girls of Algeria. Born under the grim shadow of Islam, these children are too soon bound by its fetters of sin and sorrow and the time of golden opportunity passes swiftly. May fresh interest and prayer be aroused for these of whom our Lord said, "It is not the will of your Father Which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish."

Eastertide saw the opening of a new chapter in the history of Christ's Church in Algeria. It is a forward step which bears upon it the evidences of the Holy Spirit's work and leading. This number of *A Thirsty Land*, dedicated as it is to new young life, is surely a fitting one in which to make some mention of the first Conference, called together under the auspices of our brothers the native Christians of Algeria. We have ventured to translate some short extracts from the report written about it by Miss M. Anderson, of Algiers.

* * *

Our warmest wishes go to M. Lull, and to Mlle. Bancel—of Paris—who expect to be married in August. Mlle. Bancel has already had experience in mission work in Algeria. Our prayers will follow them as they take up work, D.V., in the Autumn, at Tolga, the desert town at which M. Lull has been stationed.

* * *

Among other visitors welcomed to the Field this Spring have been Mr. and Mrs. W. Edwards, Mr. Gerald Collinson, and the Secretary and her sister.

* * *

Please take note of the date of our Annual Meeting (September 22nd). We want to meet as many of the readers of *A Thirsty Land* as possible that day. Full information will be found in "Home Notes," page 16. M. H. R.

* * *

Thy will is large, and deep, and free,
And yet, by heavenly grace,
All little things that tend to Thee
May find in it a place;

As well the infant as the seer
May lift his eyes above,
As moving in that wondrous sphere,
And centred in that love.

P. HURST.

The Same Old Game in the M'zab.

"Come, oh my brothers—the people from across the water are here again, with their books. Let us see who can obtain the most. Last year, I gained more than you all!"

The speaker is a small boy in a dark blue overall, carrying a French exercise book, with a bright green cover, under one arm. He and his companions have just come out of afternoon school in the little town of Melika away in the Algerian Sahara.

"Now remember," continues the ring-leader, "the way to succeed is to ask each of them in turn for books, and when you have got three, go the round again. In the babble and confusion they are sure to forget that they have already given you something to read."

Our friend in the blue overall is certainly very clever but he has reckoned without the bright green exercise book under his arm.

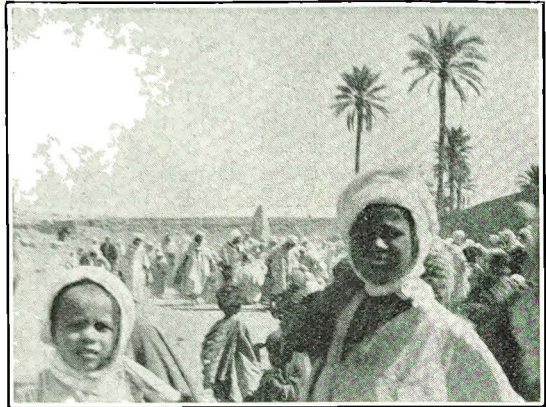
"It is no good," he says, at last, "whenever I present myself, I am instantly recognised. . . ."

"I know how to read," says a little piping voice in the crowd.

"Do you?" says one of the missionaries, holding out a tract in large French characters, to test him.

He begins reciting a prayer in Arabic and then hangs his head in shame, at the shout of laughter which greets his effort. He recovers later on, however, when one of the strangers produces a book made up of four different coloured pages, without any words at all. In fact, he comes up close and helps to explain the meaning of the different pages, because he saw a book like this once before, and remembers.

Now the missionaries are passing out of the gate of the town and beginning to



BOYS OF THE M'ZAB.

wend their way down the rocky slopes to the sandy plain below. The boys follow, like a swarm of wasps, shouting: "Give me something to read." Some of them drop off, after a while, but one or two come alongside and show every intention of coming all the way home, one little fellow especially, is rather more like a hornet than a wasp.

"I have been to the classes in your house," he says, and adds, by way of proof: "Our Lord Jesus intercedes for us in Heaven . . ." "Give me something to read." Then, away he goes, to swing in some stunted tamarisk bushes by the side of the way. Soon he is back again, however, skirmishing around and chanting snatches of hymns, picked up in former years and always ending his recital with the same request: "Give me something to read."

Some of the boys can read and some cannot, but there are those among them who have a real hunger for books, just as some boys and girls have in other lands.

Please pray that some fresh story-booklets, suitable for these boys, may be written and printed before next year, when we hope we shall see them again.

P. M. RUSSELL.

Literature for Moslem Boys.

(Abridged.)

Instead of being led into the light, Moslem boys are being led into the darkness, with a flicker of a will o' the-wisp of imitation truth to lure them on. Instead of bread they are being given a stone—a scorpion, rather, for bitter poison lies in the message of their teacher, poison against all that we hold most dear. The mystery of the Holy Incarnation, and the story of the Precious Death of the Son of God, are put before them only as heresies to be abjured and trampled on.

And it is no fancy picture ; it is a statement of what is going on throughout the Moslem countries. In the one land of Algeria there are well over half a million boys between the ages of five and fourteen—all shepherdless, all starving in soul, but for the inappreciable number in touch with the Mission Stations : and that is only one country's tally.

They are the very same as those of Christendom, as troublesome, as erratic, as affectionate, as delightful to do with as the most ardent boy-lover at home ever found them ; bubbling with energy and mischief, keen to see and learn anything you have time to show them ; only tainted already with evil in its deadliest forms, that will have them in its grip long before they are men.

What is to be done for them, these our little brothers, for whom Christ died ? How can we obey His command, " Give ye them to eat ? " It is not even as if they were massed in the great towns ; it is the few, comparatively, that are to be found there and the worst representatives as we town missionaries know to our cost. The bulk of them is scattered in villages and hamlets, and roving tent-settlements, far and wide.

Would it be possible, for some of the University men who work in the English camps, to give a vacation now and then to one of the nearer Moslem fields, and study local colour and environment, and get hold of a boy-loving missionary ; and then, through English or French, come in touch with the lads themselves, striving for a glimpse at their mentality and " make up," and use the next vacation in writing for them ? I can think of no better investment for God's Kingdom than those weeks would be !

For in these strong young lives—and here lies the intensity of the matter's importance—in these lives lie our hope for the future. In almost all the dark lands it is the young men who have been the first to catch the light ; Boys who went unnoticed through the Sunday Schools of long ago, some even who were their bane, have returned as enquirers, bringing their wives and their babies along with them, and are beginning to stand out, illuminated with the daybreak.

The time is short ; while we wait the present generation of boyhood will be swept past our reach, without a hand held out to it in its wild temptations and its infinite possibilities.

" I have compassion," said the Master, when He saw the hungry crowd of five thousand long ago. May it not be that with that same heart of tender pity He is looking out over His twenty million Moslem lads in their soul-dearth ; and looking back at us to see whether there is any bit of store, no matter how wholly inadequate, that we can bring Him for them. Let us " go and see," too—whether it is a gift for planning and writing, or money for printing, or time for praying it all through to its uttermost of blessing. If He has called for our fellowship, that is enough ; He needs us only to be there in all lowliness as a fulcrum for His lever. " He Himself knew what He would do,"

I. L. TROTTER.

“Keep on Keeping on!”

Bang! Bang! Bang! The door again. Who is it this time? If it's eggs, chickens, guinea-fowl, charcoal or brass trays, I do *not* want any to-day. No, it's some more girls wanting to know when classes are going to begin. Classes! Not yet, why we haven't a room put straight, the workmen have only just finished white-washing, and there's not a curtain ready to put up at the windows!

Bang! Bang! Bang! Some schoolgirls this time with two eggs each, in their hands. “How much?” I ask, thinking they are for sale. “They are for you,” they say, smiling shyly, “a present—not for money,” and then quickly, “and please can we soon come to a class?” Is this a bribe? Anyway, it is hard to resist their pleadings, and curtains or no curtains it looks as if we'll have to let them in soon. “But just a few to begin with,” we say hopefully, feeling the need of preparation for class work. The difficulty is to know where to draw the line. Day by day they come to the door. “Won't you put my name down too?” “And my sister's.” Then the non-schoolgirls come, a wild, undisciplined set. “Can't we come too? Please, please, only let us come in too!” So we fix a time, Thursday afternoon for the schoolgirls, for they have a holiday then, and Wednesday at the same time for those who do not go to school, and so another new beginning is made.

Week by week the numbers increase. Sometimes the mothers come asking, “Will you put my daughter's name down too? And here is her birth certificate if you want it!” One afternoon an old half-blind woman shuffled in bringing a little girl “to be taught.” She came right in and squatted down on the floor with the rest of the group. We were repeating the Parable

of the Lost Sheep, and as phrase by phrase was recited, she nudged the little girl saying, “Go on, say it with them.” Then we sang a chorus and she got up to go. Afterwards Fatma told me that this old lady had been very well-to-do, and years ago she used to beat her daughter for coming to the mission house. Now she comes bringing her granddaughter to us! After that brief visit we heard that she had said to a neighbour, “Now I've heard with my own ears and know that what they teach is good.”

Beginnings are often thrilling, continuation needs patience. “Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.” Week by week they come, friendly, loving, laughing girls, often bringing bunches of lovely wild flowers, until all the receptacles in the house are overflowing with them, and now and then an orange or two as a gift. It is something new to them to learn to play games in teams, and to play fair, but it is good for them, and judging by the noise they make, their appreciation is tremendous! After a good romp, we settle down to the class, over which they seem just as keen, but it is here that one begins to realise something of the darkness of their minds. The Gospel story is new to most of them; they do not even know who the Good Shepherd is. They have, however, quick memories and soon learn to repeat both hymns and parables in Arabic, the schoolgirls' great delight being to learn “something in French” too.

But what about the practical application of that which is taught. It is here that we have need of patience. In our Arabic version of “Jesus wants me for a sunbeam” there is a verse which runs, “God wants me to shine for Him, always speaking the truth . . .” and every week we sing it lustily and the lesson is pressed home from time to time. In the middle of one of the

classes there is a knock at the door. It is a big sister, and she says, "Tell Khira I want her." But Khira doesn't want to go, so she says to the girl who has answered the door, "Tell her I'm not here," and wriggles down behind a bigger girl in case the sister should come in to make sure! And there is no sense of shame or of anything at all wrong. Another day a girl comes in with the others, her face swathed in a big bandage. "What is the matter?" I ask. "I've got mumps," she says calmly, pushing past into the class. I follow her saying, "Look here, if you've got mumps you had better go home or you may give it to the others." "Oh no," she says quite glibly, "it isn't mumps at all, it's only a new tooth coming through: do let me stay!"

There are also those who come for a week or two, then drop off. "She's changed her mind, and is not coming any more," say the other girls. We hear afterwards that her people will not let her come "to be taught heresy." "Don't send your children to them," said one woman to a class girl of former years, who is now married, and who is a sincere follower of the Lord Jesus, "they insult God in their teaching." "No they don't," was the prompt reply, "just listen to this," and she started to read to her from the Gospel. "That is what they are teaching." "But those are good words," said the woman in astonishment, "those who told me must have lied to me about them."

"Be ye also patient . . ." "In due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

J. C. STALLEY.



"And when the field is fresh and fair
Thy blessed feet shall glitter there,
And we will walk the weeded field
And tell the golden harvest's yield."

JOHN MASEFIELD.

Praise and Prayer Requests.

Praise.

For the working of God's Holy Spirit among the native Christians of Algeria, and for their desire to witness for Christ to their fellows.

For the readiness of Arab boys and girls to listen to the story of Jesus.

For the openings found in the M'zab and for all the Gospel literature sold and given.

For the two good itineration journeys carried out this Spring.

For God's care over the missionaries during this past year of work.

For answered prayer for the Secretary's visit to the Field.

Prayer.

That all native Christians, men and women, boys and girls, may be kept, and filled with the power of God, by His Spirit. That Christian girls may not be forced into Moslem marriages.

For Stations that are closed during the hot months that God's Spirit may continue His work in hearts.

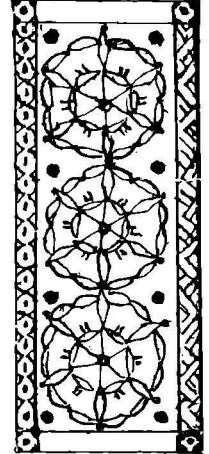
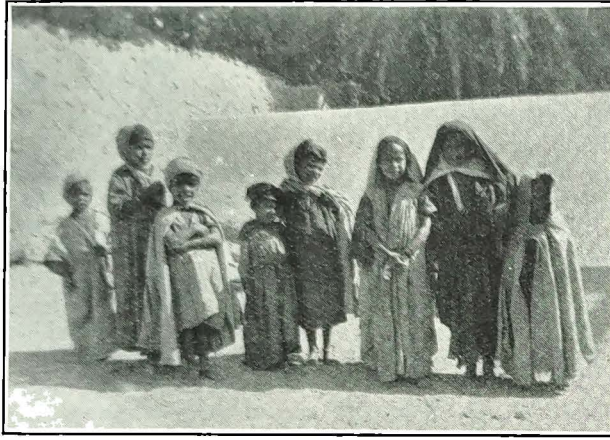
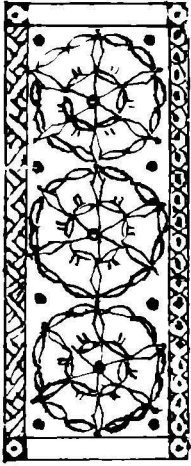
For a holiday school, probably to be held, for Miliana children. That new ones may be reached and much blessing result through it.

That all workers may be refreshed and strengthened whether at Home or on the Field.

For a little periodical prepared by M. Millon, for students on holiday, or who have left Algiers, that it may be much used of God.

That God will shield the workers and increasingly bless the "Door of Hope."

For great blessing on our Annual Meeting to be held on September 22nd (D.V.), and on all deputation work during the summer.



THE "MISTRESS OF THE UMBRELLA" AND HER LITTLE SISTER ARE HERE.

Here, There and Everywhere!

Boys and girls were to the fore everywhere during my recent visit to Algeria. They come crowding into my thoughts and I find it difficult to know which of them to choose to introduce to you.

But yes! right in front, with her little roguish face looking very determined, is "the mistress of the umbrella." I met her at a desert Station and her brown eyes looked into mine with such fun and friendliness. In her picturesque though ragged yellow frock, I saw her first with her arm thrown protectingly round her little sister. The missionaries told me that when they met her first of all some years ago, this small Arab maiden begged for their umbrella! Her pride when it was given to her to carry was immense, and ever since, though her name is Fatna, she has been known as "the mistress of the umbrella."

She listened well to the Bible story I told at the children's meeting and when we walked over the desert sand and climbed up to a village on a hot afternoon, who

should run out to greet us but Fatna herself. She has no mother and there is little love in her life, but she has a warm heart.

"When dost thou go away?" she said to me, and I answered: "To-morrow, oh my daughter, at six in the morning." Coaxingly, slipping her little brown hand into mine, she said, "Stay, do stay, go not to-morrow, stay and teach us!"

Dear "mistress of the umbrella," thank God you and your little sister *are* learning about the Lord Jesus. But what about the thousands of desert girls and boys who have never even heard of His love for them?

* * *

In the same desert town I met another girl whom I had known years ago in a far-off northern mission station. She is now sixteen years old, and, unlike many Arab girls, is well educated and speaks and reads French perfectly. With her short wavy hair, her woollen jumper and skirt, she looks quite a modern schoolgirl. She was delighted that we met again, has promised to write, and would like to have some books to read. Pray for her, and for the growing number (though small as yet)

of educated Moslem girls in Algeria. They will surely be the leaders of to-morrow.

* * *

It was the birthday of the prophet Mohammed, and in a big town in Eastern Algeria all the children had put on their gayest and prettiest clothes. We were talking to an old woman who was spinning wool, when a bright-eyed girl of about eleven asked us to go to her house. We went with her, and had a lovely time telling her and a schoolgirl friend, and three school-boys, and their mother and big sister, the story of the lost sheep. They had none of them ever heard it before, and they listened with all their ears and eyes too!

The girl who invited us to the house was so interested and happy. But just as we said good-bye, her married sister told us that this girl of eleven has now got to give up playing outside with her friends, and stay always in the house. If ever she goes out she must wear a veil over her face, according to Moslem custom. It is hard for a girl who has been free to be shut in like this, and it is what happens to so many Moslem girls. Pray for the thousands of them who are behind closed doors in Algeria.

* * *

It was three years since I had seen Hassan, who is a clever fellow of sixteen, working hard to pass his exams. He has grown so much, and told me that he thinks he would like to be a chemist, but is not sure yet.

He told me also that he is studying philosophy at school. I suggested that it would be a good idea to read the New Testament.

"You gave me one year ago," he said, "and I have read bits of it sometimes."

Will someone pray for Hassan? Pray that he may read the New Testament, and may become a true Christian, and that he may be good to his mother and his little sister.

* * *

Mohammed, a thin little fellow with big eyes, came home from school into the room where I was sitting with his mother, on a May afternoon. He lives in that dark room with his mother and father, his three little brothers and his tiny sister. The youngest brother was less than a month old, and he was hidden away under the big bed in a swinging wooden cradle! Mohammed was carrying his school books in a satchel and I watched him as he put it down, and as he hunted for his slate in a big chest full of clothes. I think he had hidden it there to be safe from the busy little hands of his brothers and sister who would not know how to take care of it properly. When he had drawn a boat and a fisherman with a rod and line, he came to show his slate to me. After I had admired his drawing, I said, "Mohammed, will you come to the class for boys at the mission house to-morrow morning?" He is a small boy and had never been to the class before, but next morning he was there at the door with his younger brother and a friend.

I saw Mohammed's mother a few days after and she told me that he came home thrilled by what he had learnt. She had been to Sunday School when she was a



MOHAMMED IS SMILING AT YOU!

girl—not so many years ago—and when her little son asked her, “Oh my mother, what is meant by—

‘There is a city bright

Closed are its gates to sin’,”

she explained it to him as well as ever she could.

Pray for this boy and his brothers and his little sister and his father who is out of work. Ask that Mohammed may go regularly to the boys’ class in the Autumn, and that he and his mother may help one another in the way of Life.

* * *

I went for a short visit to a town in Western Algeria where the storks fly about in scores and make their huge nests on the roofs. S., an Arab schoolgirl, came to stay at the mission Station for the two nights that I was there, and I shall not soon forget her. She had on her prettiest frock in my honour, but best of all, her expression was so sweet and happy.

We sat round in the evening sipping tea, well sugared and flavoured with mint, from little glasses, and we had lots of fun! S. was very thrilled practising her Arabic writing. She learns French at school but wants to be able to write in her own language as well. After a while we sang some hymns and choruses, and then we got out our Bibles and read a chapter in St. John, we English folks and the three Arab girls each taking a verse in turn. After a little talk about what we had read, we had prayer, and as I heard S. asking to be made a blessing to others, praying for her home, praying for me, I felt full of joy that this jolly happy schoolgirl is a true Christian, a follower of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though S. is so young her family are planning to marry her to a Moslem man. Do pray, that she and a Christian friend of hers in like case, may be kept by the power of God, and that His will may be carried out in their lives.

✓ M. H. ROCHE.

A Boy and a Girl in Setif.

I want to introduce you to one of the many people who have not got the blessing of sight, and who are always in darkness because they are blind. Where do we find our little blind friend Ahmed? One would naturally think, at home, because Ahmed is only about twelve years old, and being blind one would imagine that he would need some help in order to get about. But not so! Ahmed has wonderful ability. Often he is to be seen walking alone along the main road on which there is a great deal of traffic; the surprising thing is that he does not even need the aid of a stick, and one wonders why he is not run down by some passing vehicle.

Ahmed is also to be seen joining in the games with the other Arab boys. He runs with them, wrestles with them, and even tries to join in the game of football. Amidst shrieks and cries of excitement on the football field, there in the centre of the pitch stands Ahmed with his arms outstretched as if to catch the ball should it come his way. Alas! he waits in vain, for the other boys only kick the ball past him. They are not unkind, yet they are more interested in the game than they are in a poor blind boy. How pathetic it is to watch this boy seeking to enjoy life in spite of his blindness, though he can never be quite like other boys.

If you could talk to Ahmed you would find that not only is he blind but he has no parents. “They are dead,” he would say, in a most plaintive voice. “Have you any friends, Ahmed?” And he would answer, “I have none.” This poor little fellow lodges where he can find someone kind enough to let him sleep under their roof. What a condition—blind, friendless, and homeless!

Please pray that Ahmed, with many others in this land, may receive spiritual

sight through believing in the Lord Jesus as their own personal Saviour, so that they may find in this world as well as in the next the true Friend, Jesus Christ, Who will guide them to the heavenly Home.

We have made the acquaintance of Ahmed. Now come along and be introduced to Khorfia. She is a very beautiful little girl of about eleven years of age. I wish you could see her on fête days ! She wears a most picturesque costume, a robe cut square at the neck and drawn in at the waist by a gay sash, a brightly coloured silk handkerchief over her head, and large earrings dangling from her ears. She really is bewitchingly pretty and seems very intelligent and very friendly.

Khorfia, although so pretty, is by no means lazy. She knows how to work and can do it well. Passing her house one can see her sitting on the ground, ceaselessly fanning the slow kindling charcoal in the cooking-pot, or sweeping the earthen floor ; she does it so vigorously one wonders where she gets the strength. In addition to all this she works for some French people who keep her busy.

The house of the French people adjoins that of the missionaries, and one day curiosity got the better of Khorfia and a longing came over her to see what sort of house these English people have. So she came stealthily along the terrace to the open door of the mission house and peeped in. Before she had time to run away again the missionary's wife saw her and called out : " Good morning, oh my daughter." Very timidly Khorfia answered, " Good morning." Perhaps she thought she would get a scolding for staring into the house, but instead, she was invited to come in. Once in the house she looked around and expressed delight at everything she saw. Some specially bright cushion covers caught her eye and she said : " These are very beautiful." Then her eyes wandered to a book-case in the corner of the room, and

she said : " You have lots of books." " Can you read, Khorfia ? " asked the missionary's wife. " No," came the reply, and so the missionary read her a story from the Gospels. The girl listened with great interest and said she understood. Then she went back to her work.

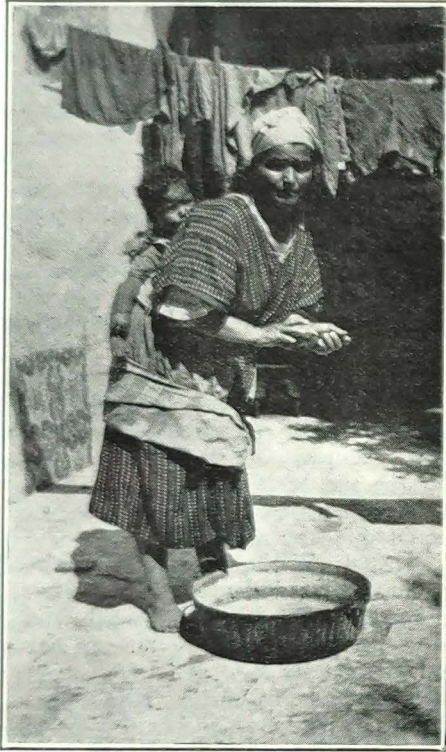
A week or two later the missionary and his wife were in the book depot in the town and were surprised to receive a visit from Khorfia. How she found the place is not known, but there she was, and she seemed so interested in the many pictures on the walls and in the stock of books. Being better acquainted with the missionaries Khorfia was more talkative and she had a sad story to tell. A great deal of mystery shrouds the parentage of this dear little girl. She and her two brothers now live with their old grandmother and none of them find life very sweet. Theirs is a hard lot. That day in the depot little Khorfia was told the story of hope and good cheer. She heard of a Saviour and Friend Who died to save such as she and Who can give life, hope and joy.

The name Khorfia means " little lamb," and did not the Good Shepherd come to " gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom ? "

SADIE THOMSON.

—◆◆◆—
 Deep to deep
 Answereth now,
 Dimly I see a Cross,
 Thirst, wounds,
 Thorn-crowned brow,
 Stripping and utmost loss.
 Over the bar the fret of the foam,
 Rain on the fell where the young lambs
 roam,
 Lord, art Thou bidding me
 Call Thy little ones,
 Call Thy little ones
 Home ?

From Dohnavur Songs (" Wings ").
By kind permission.



SHARING THE JOB !

A Gift of God.

In November 1922, we were walking one day outside the town of Tlemcen praying that God would lead us, hoping to be able to get into touch with fresh people, and into new houses. We found that the path we had taken led down to a village, the mosque being just at the entrance. As we stood looking at it for a minute or two, and at all the native houses round, longing to be able to visit the women, an elderly man came up and asked us if we would like to look over the mosque. We said we would, hoping this might lead to something

further. Thank God it did, for when he had finished taking us round he invited us to go to his house to have coffee with him and his wife.

He took us to his house and called his wife to come. She welcomed us and brought us coffee to drink. When he at last got up and said he must go, we were very glad to have an opportunity of talking to his wife alone. Bit by bit she told us her story, of the hardness of her husband who would not allow her to go out or to have friends in to see her, and of how often when he himself went out he would lock her into her room. Her greatest sadness, and as she told us this her eyes filled with tears, was that she had no child, and they had been married for sixteen years. We told her the story of Hannah and how she prayed to God to give her a child, and of her vow to give the little one back to Him for His service should her prayer be answered. We told her how Hannah's prayer was answered, and said that we would pray for her that if it was God's will she too might have a little child.

During the next two years we again visited Tlemcen, and went each time to see the lonely woman who always welcomed us warmly. In the autumn of the third year God led us to look for a permanent mission house, and soon after our arrival we met our friend's old husband in the street one afternoon. Directly he saw us he came across to speak to us and said, "You *must* come and see my wife. She has a little daughter!" We went as soon as possible. The room was no longer bare and empty, for there was a baby's cradle there and in it was a little sleeping child. The mother lifted her up and put her into my arms saying, "She is yours, for you prayed to God for her." I said, "No, she is the Lord's," and we thanked Him together for the little life that had been given.

Since then, whenever possible, we have had a special birthday gathering for little

Blessing, as near to November 11th as we can, for we count her birthday on Armistice Day. On these occasions we always pray specially that God will bless her and keep her for His service. This year we had a very joyful time. Little Blessing and all her family and a few special friends were asked to come up on Sunday afternoon when we have our usual children's class, so that we might commemorate her eleventh birthday. Everybody came in their very best clothes, and we had a coffee party first. Then I explained the reason for our "feast" and gave Blessing her present so that she should not be wondering about it during service time. Her father and mother also had little remembrances, as we want them always to think of that birthday as a very special one. Then we all went into the little church, where we had flowers arranged, and a large picture of little Samuel to show them at the right moment. We had Blessing's hymn, the first verse of which speaks of the Lord Jesus our Saviour and Friend, to Whom little children are precious, the Good Shepherd Who lifts them up as lambs in His arms and takes care of them. We have sung this hymn together ever since Blessing was a very little "lamb," and she and her mother always love it.

We retold her whole story so that all might know and praise God together, praying that she might truly of her own choice be one of those who follow the Good Shepherd. Then we repeated the story of Samuel and gave Blessing a picture of him to take home with her. It is the one which shows him listening for the voice of God, that night in the Temple.

Will you pray for little Blessing, that like Samuel, she may ask God to speak to her, and pray too, that when He does, she may be ready to obey Him and to serve Him faithfully all her life. She is still the only child, and because her father has no son, he has sent Blessing for years to the Moslem school to learn the Koran (their sacred

book) by heart just as the boys do. For that reason she has never been able to come regularly to the mission house, and also because she lives in that village outside the town she is only allowed to come when someone can bring her. She is very precious to her parents and they are afraid of what might happen to her on the way if she was by herself. Will you pray that God will answer the prayer in the last verse of her special hymn and teach Blessing the truth of *His Word*, and enlighten her mind with the *Light of His Way* and give her an understanding of the things which she has heard, filling her heart with heavenly joy and gladness.

J. K. BUTLER.

(Blessing has had another birthday since this story was written.)

A Mountain Girl.

She was a mountain girl of about fourteen, with nothing much to distinguish her from other girls of her age, except her limpid hazel eyes which arrested attention.

We, G. and P. saw her and her sister-in-law Buchta, camped out in a room of an uninhabited farm cottage. The owner and his wife had brought us there in the cool of the morning, to spend a day in the mountain forest; while they superintended the harvesting and threshing.

At mid-day, while we were resting in a cool spot under the trees, Sa'adia came to fill her goat-skin from the icy spring close by. We had a little friendly chat, and she pressed us to go to the cottage. This we promised to do.

However, before long, Sa'adia was back again, and sitting beside us. G. told her of One who came from Heaven, and how the Shepherds and star-led Magi rejoiced at His birth, and how He died to save us from our sins, and rose again. Sa'adia seemed interested, but on being questioned,

confessed that she did not understand, it was more than she could take in.

Then P. tried to teach her by the Wordless Book that all were sinners, including herself; even this simple general fact bewildered her, but she set her mind to understand, with an undaunted persistency, turning first to one and then to another with quaint questions: slowly the light dawned, and she repeated, "O God, for Christ's sake, give me a new heart, and enter me into Heaven," and seemed filled with a glad wonder when told that God heard her, and would give her victory in temptation, and patience in suffering.

Buchta was intelligently interested, but not in the same practical way as Sa'adia, who crept up to P. to have her Book explained again. She repeated the petition over and over for fear of forgetting it, also the few little concrete personal lessons arising from the Book. "And if I lose things, I can tell Him, and I will find them? And if people anger me, He will make me patient?"

P. went through the same truths, with hardly any variations or additions, at intervals, that sunny afternoon.

In a final talk Sa'adia's soul seemed to rise in quick response to the suggestion that not only might she seek victory over evil herself, but might influence the other girls, and tell them her Good News.



A Parable from an Outpost.

It was an evening of gathering darkness,
A winter evening, and the lanes were lonely.
Steep too, and stony, the path led upward
To the door of the house where God's Word
was spoken.

But the boys, red-capped Arab boys,
Came to the out-post with hurrying feet.
Eager boys, merry boys, clever and stupid
ones,

Jostled one another as they came in
And sat down on the straw mats, or on the
low benches.

Full of fun they were, and of laughter, and
movement.

But as the stories were unfolded,
The tongues were quiet and the restless
feet were still.

The talk that evening was of "Friendship,"
Joy-bringing friendships and those fraught
with sorrow,

Stories from God's own Book, of good
friends and bad ones,

And the true tale of Eric, whom wolves
tore and mangled,

Willingly giving his life to save his master
and friend.

Then as a climax, while all were still silent
The word was spoken, of Him Who died
for us—sinners

Who loved Him not—loving us even unto
death.

And when the story was ended and the texts
were painted,

The door was opened that all might go
home.

Then came Hamid, an eager clever boy,
Reader of French, and of Arabic, tongue of
the angels.

He came to ask something; "a match,
A light please, to kindle my torch from!"
And his teacher lit a match, a little flame,
True fire, though useless to light the way
for so many.

But Hamid held out his splinter of pine-
wood,

Keeping it steady in the tiny flame that was
offered,

Till his torch too was burning. Then into
the darkness

He went, holding it uplifted, a shining
beacon

Guiding his brothers homeward, safely,
through the night.

* * *

Question put to a convert from Islam :—

Question : What are the best methods of
winning Moslems for Christ?

His answer : Preaching and Christian life
by natives of the country.

Extracts from the Account of a Missionary Gathering at Easter, 1937.

The 29th and 30th of March, Easter Monday and Tuesday, marked a new phase in the history of Christianity in Algeria. It was one of the "small beginnings" which, in the Hand of the Master, may lead to immeasurable results.

Called together by M. Maoudj, of B—, we were almost one hundred who gathered round the hospitable table of the "Mission Rolland" at Tizi Ouzou.

There were missionary veterans such as M. and Mme. Cuendet, Misses Perkin, K. Smith, Welch, and E. Smith, Mr. Griffiths, etc., and those more newly come to the Field. There were Christian Kabyles and Arabs, pastors and laity, young men and women of the land. All were gathered for two days of friendly conference, called together and presided over, for the first time, by a Christian native of the country.

From the very beginning, in a meeting presided over by M. Maoudj, the presence of the Lord was felt, and His Spirit was manifested in the prayers offered in various languages, French, Kabyle, Arabic and English. In all there was the same thirst for God, the same confidence, and the same expectation from Him.

* * *

There was a never to be forgotten time of testimony. A Kabyle, the only Christian in his village, ended by saying, "We must not turn back, we must have courage to hold on in spite of everything. The Lord has left us a command—to *make Him known* to men, the question is, how to reach them. . . ." Other testimonies followed. A Kabyle told of the miracle that had taken place in him—a thief, a drunkard, proud and revengeful—"too proud ever to ask forgiveness," the Lord had laid hold of him, and he is now serving Him.

An Arab from Cherchelle said, "I thought I was a Christian and was determined to be baptised. I imagined that I was stronger than others and then I fell into drunkenness and immorality—into the gutter. But the missionaries never ceased to follow after me and to encourage me. . . . I am happy in Christ to-day."

* * *

Said M. Maoudj, "although native Christians will still be surrounded by the solicitude and affection of the missionaries, they must take on their responsibilities. They must have courage to stand out openly and boldly in their witness. . . ."

* * *

"The hour has come when we can, and we must take our stand for Christ."

M. Maoudj also told us of the reply that he had sent to M. H—, a Paris journalist, emphasising his conviction that "It is only through the new birth, and through faith in the redemptive work of Christ our Saviour" that the true evolution of the native races can take place.

* * *

M. Abouadou put his experience into these telling words, "Jesus Christ lives. He has saved me."

Then he voiced his conviction that "we Christians have come here to form a Band, around the Lord Jesus. Let us be united . . . let us preach the Gospel."

* * *

It was unanimously decided to hold a yearly gathering.

* * *

After a baptism of adults, four babes were dedicated to God by their parents.

* * *

It seemed that we had seen the laying of the first stone of the native Church of North Africa, the spiritual body of Christ our Redeemer, to Whom be all the glory.

MARY ANDERSON

(Translated.)

The Mouloud.

(These two quotations which are translated from an Algerian newspaper tell of the Festival which belongs specially to the children of Islam.)

May 22nd, 1937. Algiers.

This evening the minarets of the Mosques are illuminated with thousands and thousands of many-coloured lights to announce the beginning of the fête of the Mouloud—the birthday of the prophet Mohammed, the founder of Islam.

An atmosphere of rejoicing pervades the Moslem quarters of the city. The Arab cafés, decorated with greenery, hum with music and the laughter of customers.

People in their homes are crunching delicious cakes and sweets. Children on the roofs and in the streets are letting off squibs and crackers. This is the eve of the fête.

In the Sanctuaries religious services will begin during which readers of the Koran will chant the praises of the prophet.

These ceremonies will be repeated for seven days in the different Mosques of the town.

May 24th, 1937. Algiers.

The Moslems of our town have worthily celebrated the fête of the Mouloud. The day began with the customary visit to the cemeteries. Many were the white-clad women, who went piously to place branches of myrtle on the tombs to the memory of their dead. In all the native quarters the shops were decorated with green plants, and festoons of multi-coloured paper. The crowds were dense; the children were lords of the pavements. Little girls, their hands stained orange with henna, displayed their gaily-coloured festival clothes, while boys were yelling in an atmosphere of gunpowder and amid the noise of crackers.

At the Mosque of Sidi Abderrahman there was an abundant distribution of couscous with meat to a crowd of poor folk.

Home Notes.

4 Waldens Road,
Horsell,
Woking.

Dear Friends,

I hardly think that mention of my visit to Algeria should come under Home Notes, but I may say that God very graciously answered prayer for my time on the Field. I visited Bou Saada, Miliana, Relizane, Blida and Setif, and while in Algiers I was able to attend a meeting of the Field Committee, to see the "Door of Hope," and to visit M. and Mme. Millon and hear of their work among the Students, in their home near the University.

I had many very interesting experiences and shall hope to give some account of my visit at our Annual Meeting on Wednesday, September 22nd. *Please look on the opposite page for a notice of it, and book the date at once.*

Pastor Stalley has had a visit to Scotland with good meetings and the A.M.B. was represented at the "Fellowship of Faith for the Moslems" Conference at "Slavanka" in June.

Several members of the Band will be coming home on furlough, and if any of you can arrange meetings for one of them, or for me, I shall be so glad to hear from you as soon as possible.

There will be no prayer letter in August, but I shall hope to send one out at the beginning of September.

With greetings to you all and with the hope that you will make new friends for the A.M.B. when you are on holiday.

Yours very sincerely,

MILLICENT H. ROCHE ✓

Hon. Secretary.

P.S.—I will gladly forward free specimen copies of this magazine to anyone who could pass them on to young people or others.

Basis.

The A.M.B. is interdenominational and desires to have fellowship with all who form the One Body of Christ. The Band holds and teaches :—

- (1) Absolute Faith in the Deity of each Person of the Trinity.
- (2) Absolute confidence in the full inspiration of the Old and New Testaments.
- (3) Absolute belief in the Cross of Christ as the one means of access to God, and the redemptive power for the whole world.

COMMISSION.—The aim of the A.M.B. is the Evangelization of the Arabic-speaking Moslems with special emphasis on the needs of the practically untouched regions of the interior.

Local Representatives :

ENGLAND.

BEXHILL.—Mrs. Brownrigg, Gorse Cottage, Terminus Avenue.
BOURNEMOUTH (Winton).—Pastor W. G. Stalley, "Kurichee," Norton Road.
BIRKENHEAD (Emmanuel).—Mrs. J. D. Drysdale, Emmanuel Training Home, 1, Palm Grove.
BRIGHTON.—Miss E. Bullen, 14, Clifton Terrace.
CARLISLE (Fisher Street Mission).—Mr. T. Child, 11, Ferguson Road, Longsowerby.
DARLINGTON (Pierremont Mission).—Miss E. Armstrong, 37, Green Street.
EASTBOURNE.—Miss C. Firmin, "Dar Naama," Baldwin Avenue.
FELIXSTOWE.—Miss E. Threadkell, "Raebury," Constable Road.
HEATHFIELD.—F. Collins, Esq., The Welcome Mission.
ILFORD.—Mrs. Walter Sarfas, 121, Coventry Road.
IPSWICH.—Miss Challin, C.A.W.G., Bolton Lane.
LEWES.—Miss Lee, "Cobury," 20 Prince Edward Road.
LEXDEN.—Mrs. Willsmore, 26, Halstead Road, Lexden, Colchester.
SIDCUP.—Miss P. E. C. Russell, 8, Old Forge Way.
TEDDINGTON.—Miss Ethel Little, 32, Field Lane.
THORNTON HEATH.—Mr. C. J. Ford, 13, Heath View Road.
WEST SUFFOLK.—Mrs. Ed. Johnston, Campfield, Gt. Barton, Bury St. Edmunds.
WOKING.—Miss M. H. Roche, 4, Waldens Road, Horsell.
WOODBIDGE.—Miss M. Fisher, 24, Chapel Street.
WORTHING.—Miss Gotelee, "Heston," St. Botolph's Road.

SCOTLAND.

DUNDEE.—Miss Stewart, 8 Woodlands Terrace.
FAITH MISSION TRAINING HOME.—Miss I. R. Govan, 18, Ravelston Park, Edinburgh.
GLASGOW.—Miss Guthrie, 90, Barrington Drive, C.4.
NEWPORT (N. Fife).—Mr. D. R. W. Gavin, Benruaig.

IRELAND.

BESSBROOK.—Miss R. Bailie, Deramore House.

NEW ZEALAND.

AUCKLAND.—Miss D. Markham, 23, Lake Road, Takapuna. Auckland.

Literature.

To be obtained from The Secretary, A.M.B.
4 Waldens Road, Horsell, Woking.

Books by I. Lilia Trotter.

- "Between the Desert and the Sea." With sixteen pages of Miss Trotter's beautiful illustrations in colour. 6s., postage 6d.
"Parables of the Cross" and "Parables of the Christ Life." Illustrated. Each 3s. 6d., postage 3d.
"Focussed." 3d., postage ½d.
"Vibrations." 2d., postage ½d.
"A Challenge to Faith." 1d., postage ½d.
"A Ripened Life." 1d., postage ½d.

PLEASE NOTE.

OUR ANNUAL MEETING

will (D.V.) be held on

Wednesday, September 22nd

at

CAXTON HALL

(Court Room)

Tea - 4.30 p.m.

followed by an Exhibition of curios, photos, work, etc.

Meeting - 6.30 p.m.

Chairman - Dr. C. K. MOWLL

Speakers - Missionaries from the Field.

Algiers Mission Band
 Sketch Map of
 Algeria and Tunisia

