



NEWS SHEET
REPLACING PRO TEM.

A THIRSTY LAND

The Quarterly Magazine
of the
ALGIERS MISSION BAND

Secretary : The Rev. Harold W. Stalley.

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Algiers.

No. 75.

WINTER, 1945—1946.

EDITOR :
MILlicENT H. ROCHE

“He that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.”—*Eccles.* II. 4.

“Fields—white already to harvest.”—*John* 4. 35.

“The labourers are few.”

“Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest.”—*Matt.* 9. 37, 38.

Without pausing to regard the world-clouds which are dark with difficulty and anxiety, members of the A.M.B., though few in number, continue their work of sowing and reaping, in the harvest fields of Algeria. But their voices re-echo the words of our Lord Himself, with more and more insistence. “Pray ye . . . that He will send forth labourers.” May it be that some, as they read of the need, will be led to go forth, in answer to faithful prayer.

In this number we have, besides two

addresses given at our Annual Meeting, and other news, the report of Blida Station, from Mr. and Mrs. Buckenham, promised in our last issue. The report from Tlemcen is not to hand yet.

BLIDA STATION,

Report for Season, 1944-45.

“The church was built in troublous times.” There are always greater concerns weighing upon individual hearts than current political, international, or internecine

strifes which surge around, and Christ is always "there" where and when needy souls are seeking Him; and He is ever Saviour of mankind as well as Prince of peace. So through the turbulence of another transitional period in the affairs of men and nations when wide issues have caused local impacts, there have been many earnest comings together at Blida Mission House to hear the word of God and to see Christ as Lord. It is difficult to say whether the Women's Meetings or the Children's Classes have been the most enthusiastic as week followed week. True that with each coming together there was the element of social enjoyment—for the women, the sipping of coffee, at low tables, the older generation sitting on their cushioned mats, and the younger choosing their places on the seats. For the children a parting token of "chewing-gum" or some such delicacy provided by the men of the Forces from their own stocks—but paramount with many has been the desire for "the hearing ear and understanding heart," to take in God's one saving message, CHRIST. If numbers interest readers, the average attendance at the children's classes twice weekly has been fully 100, while the Women's Friday attendance has usually been 50 sometimes rising to 60.

Then beyond this focused interest, individual souls scattered amongst numerous families have come to us with their particular needs and distresses, and, something always most highly appreciated, careful parents solicitous for their children's highest interests have sought to ensure their place among those who come to be "taught" in the classes. Young men, too, from those whom we have from time to time been privileged to help, have called to greet us.

In addition to the above, for which the Mission essentially exists, nightly meetings for the troops have been continued until quite recently, when they have resolved themselves into twice weekly, because of many moving off. Enthusiastic Sunday services still continue, and in connection therewith our chief joy has been in knowing of many seeking and finding their seeking Saviour, in seeing others, who had slipped from the way, restored, and still more who

had lived the Christian life coming into that "which is more abundant" and going out in turn to know effective service.

We solicit prayer for the season now upon us, and which will be advancing when this issues.

H. W. BUCKENHAM.

* * *

Miss Perkin, in a recent letter (written early in November), says that Monsieur and Mme Lull and their children have gone back to Rassouta (Tolga) and work is in full swing. She also writes: "Mlle Butticaz has heard from Bou Saada, where there is great distress, there having been no rain for more than a year; there is disease and famine, dead beasts lying about unburied in the river-bed and elsewhere." Mlle Butticaz was hoping to get back there but is not well enough to undertake the journey which is long and arduous.

Fifine and her husband Lakdar and their little son Paul, are living very happily in the Orange Court at Dar Naama, for the time being. Let us pray that God will shield and bless this Christian home. Miss Perkin also tells of happy Sunday afternoon meetings run by the men themselves and attended by American and British, including members of the W.A.A.F.

Our Secretary in his Home Notes refers to the resignation of M. and Mme Millon. In a letter to Miss Perkin, M. Millon wrote, "I have received a call from the Baptist Churches of France which are reorganising, a step made necessary by the war.

As the work among Moslems and particularly among students has been made still more difficult, and without immediate results, through the political upheaval, I felt, after prayer, that it was my duty to respond to the call I had received, and to go to a work where I can be more directly useful.

I cannot forget the kindness that you have always shown to me. During these last years which have been particularly trying, it has been a great help to me, and I thank you sincerely.

I shall always remain united in heart and prayer to the Mission."

Greatly as M. and Mme. Millon will be missed, we are glad to know that he will still help us in translation work. We shall

pray that they may be used to bring the great need of the Moslems of Algeria before the Christian men and women of France, particularly those of the younger generation.

* * *

Address given by

MISS FARMER,

*at our Annual Meeting on November 18th,
in London.*

My work in Algeria was among Arabic-speaking Moslems, and consisted of class-work, visiting, villaging, and itinerating. Of these I prefer the latter. This afternoon I am going to tell you about a visit we paid during one of our journeys. It is comparatively easy to gain an entrance into new houses if one has a link of some kind, e.g. the name of a relative or friend who has sent a message to somebody in the village one is visiting. While enquiring for the person one can generally make contact with other people, and it is better still if we find the one for whom the message is intended. For this special village we had no links. It is one of four, built round an important French town, and is on the road to the desert. Some of our missionaries had tried but failed to get an entrance to the houses. We decided to try, and took some sweets with us to coax the children, hoping that they would be induced to take us to their houses. They accepted them gladly and then fled!

At last one child ventured to lead us to her mother's house. The woman was civil and listened well while we told the children a Gospel story at her door. Then she begged us to leave her at once and to return the following morning, when the men would be away at the market. Accordingly, early the next morning we appeared at her house. As soon as the woman saw us, she sent a little girl to call the neighbours, and then made us a strong cup of black coffee. There is something wonderful in telling the good news of the Gospel to people who have never heard before, and to watch the expression on their faces as they begin to understand the portion of God's Word that is being read. We always begin either with a parable or a very simple passage of Scripture, or something they can visualise. The

Holy Spirit prompts us through their remarks how best to develop our theme to enlighten their darkened hearts. It is such a colossal task, to try to put in the space of half-an-hour's talk, the Gospel Message and to try to prove to these people that they are sinners needing salvation, and that Christ has died to save them from their sins.

Only one thought consoles me at such a time, namely, that God has given us the command to go and preach the Gospel to every creature. He has promised that His Word shall not return unto Him void, and we know that the entrance of His Word giveth light. Little children were eagerly waiting to lead us to other houses, as by this time the neighbours had heard of our visit. That morning the village was open to the Gospel. In all we visited seven houses, and crowds of women gathered in each.

As this was our first visit to any of these houses we were offered coffee in all. Arabs are very hospitable and we have to be careful not to refuse what they put before us. Having drunk six cups I felt I had reached the limit of my capacity! In the seventh house, when we saw the women run to put on the coffee pot, we excused ourselves by saying that we had already taken several cups of coffee, and as we were not used to it we were afraid to take more. Our hostess replied, "I quite understand, but of course, you will eat something?" We accepted. She invited us to sit on a high bed, and then opened a trunk which had previously held her wedding trousseau, but now contained various things. She dived into it, and brought from among some dirty clothes a kind of greyish black muffin. This was about the consistency of india-rubber, and the woman poured some rank cold oil over it, pulled it in halves, handed us each a piece, and then sat down to watch us eat it. I put a piece in my mouth and prayed that God would help me swallow it, but even then there was all the rest to dispose of. It was too oily to go into my bag. I looked at my companion to see how she was managing. She looked so calm and cool. I found that she had discovered a dog at her end of the bed and was breaking off pieces and handing them to him. I

passed mine on to her to give to the dog, so my prayer was answered!

Our classwork among the children in Setif was very interesting and encouraging. We had the girls four times a week. Often enough to teach them many passages of Scripture, choruses and hymns. One child whose name was Ida specially interested me. She was always so gentle and good. I felt at last that God laid it on my heart to get into closer contact with her. After prayer, I went to see her father, and asked him whether he would allow his daughter to help us daily in the house. He very readily consented. Ida was then nine years of age and she remained with us till she was twelve, proving very trustworthy. We had prayers in Arabic every morning, and she was very interested in the Bible reading and asked many questions. We knew that her heart was opening to the Light. One Friday afternoon while she was with us, her old grannie came into the Women's Meeting. She listened well and at the conclusion, turned to the women and said: "It was true what my grand-daughter told us last night. These English women know the way of Salvation and we must learn through them. The Koran does not teach us that Christ died for our sins." Then she went on to relate that Ida, the previous night, had waked the family to tell them that if they did not repent of their sins and seek salvation they would be lost, and it was only the English who could teach them the way. The family thought that Ida had been dreaming, but she told me that she felt she must give them this message to warn them. The old grannie ended by saying, "This is the reason I am here this afternoon."

We were sorry to be obliged in 1942 to close the station at Setif. From that time as many of you know, we were all very much restricted in our movements. We were ordered not to go outside the El Biar zone. After the occupation by Americans and British, of North Africa, many missionaries were engaged in canteen work. Some put their homes at the disposal of the men. Mr. and Mrs. Buckenham have done splendid work among the British troops. Quite a number have become interested in Moslem

work, and hope when free to devote their lives to it.

At Dar Naama we had regular Sunday afternoon services with men. Some have professed conversion. Others have formed themselves into groups and held meetings in camps and clubs, and the result has been much blessing among the men. Missionaries in many lands have become in a very true sense, helpers together with Christ. Some men, convicted of sin through missionaries in Palestine, were converted through others in Algiers.

We also had much contact with men of Allied troops. French, Corsicans, Arabs, Kabyles and others. Some of these men had been lads in our different Station classes. and it was touching to see the pleasure of these young men in finding themselves in the home of the English. They often brought their companions and asked us to read the Gospel to them. Miss Perkin our Field Secretary was excellent for this work; in the way she mothered these young men, and even when they were moved on to other places she endeavoured to keep in touch with them by correspondence. She has been splendid all through this difficult time, and I hear she is still untiring in her efforts to help the men.

Monsieur Lull, a Spaniard and a neutral, has been able, till recently, to carry on his mission work without interruption, and has sold a great deal of literature during his itinerations. He and his wife are very faithful workers. M. and Mme Nicoud have also had much blessing among the troops in their canteen in Algiers. Mlle Butticaz of Bou Saada, has been working alone on her Station, since Miss McIlroy left for England quite early in the war. She is Swiss Algerian, and for this reason has been permitted to travel, when we were restricted. Being a trained nurse she has been a great blessing to some of our number who have been ill.

Now that the war is over we hope that conditions in North Africa will soon be more normal. Many missionaries of the different Societies working in Algeria have been ill or have met with accidents, others are badly needing furloughs. During the lapse of six years some missionaries have

left the Field and none have been able to replace them. This is one of the great problems for the future of Mission work in North Africa.

Speaking with Sister Annie of Frieden-short, about the future of the A.M.B., she quoted, "New life grows out of the ruins." I believe this is a quotation from Miss Trotter's writings. Is it not a challenge to young people? Perhaps God has a fresh vision for us, but we need to wait on Him for the answer to this difficult problem. "Man's extremity is God's opportunity."

To quote from an article I was reading in the *Life of Faith*, by the Rev. A. R. Pittway.

"The need is urgent. The time is short, the labourers are few, the difficulties are many. But God's provision is more than sufficient! The command is clear: 'Go ye.'"

(Miss Farmer is hoping to undertake some deputation work in Scotland in the New Year, and will value our prayers.)

Late News.

We much regret to hear that Miss P. Russell has had a fall at Dar Naama and is in Hospital. Please pray for speedy recovery. —[Ed.]

* * *

Address given by MISS P. RUSSELL.

1. *Power of Pentecost.*

It is no light thing to be returning to the Moslem Field after two years of breathing the purer Christian air of the Homeland. The missionary does well to take stock of the position and to look to the weapons at his disposal.

The first of these is the power of Pentecost. In 1 Cor. 12. 13, we read: "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body . . ." and then in Colossians 1. 18, we find:

"He [i.e. the Lord Jesus Christ] is the Head of the body, the Church . . ."

Since the Baptism of the Spirit took place at Pentecost and every believer has (consciously or unconsciously) had a share in it from that day to this, we find ourselves all members of the One Body. We love singing about it in our favourite hymns. We experience the reality of it when we meet at Keswick and other places. How can this apply on the Mission Field?

We all realize the value of co-operation in time of war, and the blessing of having a unified command. Time and again victory has come to our arms through the most amazing combined operations. The forces by land, sea and in the air have all made their contribution in a properly co-ordinated manner and the results have been highly satisfactory.

Mr. Faithful reminded us at Slavanka, this summer, that the Holy Spirit has come, not just to make us safe and happy, but to lead an army of attack. There are various agencies (or shall we rather say members of the body of Christ) waging war in North Africa against the Father of lies and his spiritual host.

When we consider how urgent is the need, how short the time and how very few are the labourers, ought we not to co-operate in a more practical way than ever before?

The Holy Spirit of God alone can enable us to dovetail into one another harmoniously but surely the instrument thus forged will be mighty through God to the pulling down of the stronghold of Islam?

2. *Prayer of Faith.*

The second weapon is the prayer of faith. Here we are aided powerfully by "The Fellowship of Faith for the Moslems." Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to Mr. Collinson and Miss Botham, and the others who carry on the work entailed. It was a rich experience to be present at the Conference in June and to hear that drops of revival blessing have fallen in the City of Damascus, as the result of a Mission held there. A little later the same story came through from Egypt, of revival amongst believers there, in answer to prayer.

How we long that Algeria might be visited in a similar manner. Will you pray for the scattered groups of French protestants, that they may be quickened by the life-giving spirit? Pray, too, for the members of our Band, equally scattered and greatly reduced in numbers. Before the war, we were all able to meet under one roof, at this time of the year, often there was a special speaker from England or America, and as we waited before God, cobwebs and misunderstandings were blown away

and we went forth strengthened and refreshed.

Transport is so difficult nowadays that these gatherings are no longer possible, for the moment, but the need for them increases especially when one remembers that several different nationalities make up our ranks.

3. *Sword of the Spirit.*

The third weapon of our warfare is the sword of the Spirit.

Mr. Pittway, of the C.M.S., Nairobi, in a recent article upon the "Evangelization of the Moslem," exhorts us to a study of Our Lord's own methods when preaching to the Jews. He came to them for the specific purpose of revealing Himself as the Son of God and Saviour of the World, but to do this He did *not* keep to that which they had in common, until He had gained their confidence. On the contrary He insisted upon the fact that He was the Divine Son of God, which to their ears was blasphemy, in spite of the madness of their fury and their determination to kill Him.

Much more then, should we, who take the Gospel to the Moslems, be prepared to declare Him to be the Son of God with power by the Resurrection from the dead."

"By one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body . . ."

By the same Spirit do we learn to wield the weapons of the prayer of faith and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

God has placed boundless and inexhaustible resources at our disposal. Shall we, one and all take afresh from Him to-day, that which we need for the accomplishing of the task entrusted to us ?

HOME NOTES

It is as an act of Thanksgiving that we publish once more a statement of our financial position at the year-ending, June 30th, 1945. Throughout the war years after 1940 we have been unable to print such a statement owing to paper restrictions, but our Balance Sheets have been at the disposal of all who desired to see them, and are so still. They all bear testimony that yet He

is able to "prepare tables in the wilderness."

The Balance Sheet here shown is that of Home Office Accounts only, and of necessity it can never tell the whole story. Owing to French North Africa being outside the sterling area the amount we have been able to send to our Field Treasurer is very limited and transferable only under licence from the Government, and the sum is determined by the number and needs of British personnel. This, of course, could not make provision for faithful fellow-workers of French, Swiss, and Spanish origin. The Field statement has, however, reached us, but rather than reproduce it in detail as it stands in French currency, here is what it says in plain English. Allowances paid to workers on the Field amounted to £1,872. Then £267 was needed for running expenses of headquarters and Stations, including rents and taxes. Over against this, a total of £2,139, we can place the £600 sent out from this office in Britain. £150 went direct from American friends, to the Field, and £87 came from various sources in Algeria. Over and above this however, we note with praise that what we have looked upon as our "cruse of oil" for famine years, so divinely provided in the nick of time, was still pouring forth its provision for our non-British colleagues. £1,304 was the extent of its supply for the financial year. Add it up and you find a provision of £2,141 against a need of £2,139. "Lacked ye anything?" "No, Lord!" they answered. "Yes, there have been many things we thought necessary that money has not been able to procure, but Thou hast by Thy Grace sustained Thy servants in health, hast clothed and fed them and been their aid in trial and testing. We can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us."

Some of you will be interested to know just what that "cruse of oil" is. We look at the story and rejoice again over another wonderful proof of the sure foreknowledge of our Heavenly Father. Just forty years ago last July God gave the A.M.B. the "blow-hole" they had been looking for, "to be the saving of the health of the Band." Miss Trotter wrote of it "A perfect rabbit-warren of a place, bare and dilapidated,

but oh! the possibilities of it, not for ourselves but for the work. It seemed like a kind of fairy tale or dream suddenly dropped down to earth, yet with a curious sense that it was no dream but a wonderful bit of God's unfoldings." That was Dar Naama, and with it went a few acres of hillside and scrub, all for a mere song. In 1939 we find those acres which had become somewhat of a burden to the Mission, on the edge of the city, and prepared for building development. The sale of the plots over the intervening war years was the beautifully-timed answer to the needs of His Servants, some of them born in the land itself, just when other usual channels were failing. The widow's "cruse of oil" dried up when the famine was past. We, too, now see the bottom of this vessel. His purpose for it is complete. We trust also that famine years are over in another sense and that sowing and harvesting with new meaning and results are to follow.

One indication that we enter this new stage is that, after long waiting, Miss Phyllis Russell, has at last been provided with a passage and is back on the Field, much to the joy of her fellow-workers.

On the other hand we receive with regret the news that Monsieur Millon and his wife are to leave us, after more than ten years of work and fellowship with us in Algiers. He feels that God's will for him at the present time is to help in the reconstruction of spiritual life and work in his native land, and he has accepted a call from the Baptist Churches of France to come to their aid. I am sure he will have your prayers as he goes to this very important task. Pray also that God will raise up others to take up the task that he has to leave, of work amongst the students of Algiers. His help in the preparation of Gospel literature in French has been very valuable also, and there, too, is a Field which is just crying out for labourers.

On October 18th last there was a very happy gathering of friends at the Alliance Hall, Westminster, for our Annual Meeting. A number came from quite a distance away, and we much appreciated their fellowship.

We had the privilege of two Missionary speakers and a closing address by the Rev.

F. Hart, of Lansdowne Hall, Norwood, once a missionary on the Congo. His spicy message appealing to the Servants of Christ not to be sidetracked from the root of the matter of the world's need to-day, well capped the addresses of Miss Farmer and Miss Russell, both of which we publish in this issue. This is the first time that the former of our two sisters has been with us for a number of years, and it was refreshing to have her bringing direct contact with the Mission Field. For Miss Russell we felt it would be a valedictory meeting, and so it was. I am sure that the message she gave, will appeal to all of you, especially as she goes to take the work up again, under by no means easy circumstances, after two years of absence. The world of Islam, of which North Africa is an important part, is coming into the picture of to-day very forcibly, and the Church of Christ cannot ignore it as it has hitherto done. It is a fact that many of God's People in the past have seen in Moslem lands a fruitless and unprofitable field of service, and therefore their spiritual investments, prayer, service and sacrifice, have not been attracted in that direction. This is a confession that one has heard from not a few. It is true that the Scripture represents our earthly sphere of service as a harvest field or vineyard, but it also shows us very clearly that it is a spiritual battlefield with all its attendant struggle, hardship, setbacks and casualties, its needed discipline, organization, vision, faith and endurance. Victory may never be in sight until the end of the campaign. Neither parable can picture exclusively any single part of the Church's sphere of action, but some present one aspect far more than do others, and for the Church to neglect or ignore the sterner challenge of the battlefield, do so at her peril.

This aspect is very much before us in North Africa, and here and now we want to send out a Call to young Christian men and women who have helped to bring about the triumph of the "forlorn hopes" of 1940, to engage in yet another. We cannot offer you a fruitful, responsive field of service, God willing, that will come ultimately; but a sphere which will tax your

faith, love and devotion to Christ to the utmost, to a land where Islam stands defiantly upon the grave of a once great Christian Church, where the very foundations of your faith are regarded as blasphemy, and where are found those "dark places of the earth, full of the habitations of cruelty." If there is any question about the reasonableness or unreasonableness of such a course, the words of an old warrior of the Lord, C. T. Studd, give an irrefutable answer: "If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice is too great for me to make for Him." Remember "He must reign" and He shall reign, but just when and how soon, may well depend upon how we respond to His Call to take up the most forbidding of tasks. There will be triumphs, for there are trophies to-day of the Cross of Christ, who, to follow Him, have gone through the fire of affliction and persecution, and have known from the day they first came to Christ that their lives are a battleground, as well as a garden of the fruits of the Spirit.

May we appeal to all of you, those who

will go and those who cannot, to "Consider Him, who endured the Cross, despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Throne of God. . . . Henceforth expecting . . ." Is there any sacrifice too great that we can make for Him? Let our living praying and giving shout out the answer. Begin by praying-in with us, during this coming year, the recruits we need to re-occupy the vacant and half-manned mission centres on the Field. We shall need at least twenty for that. Pray with us too that God will bring to us some lives with a real Call and vision of His Purposes to strengthen the work of our Home base.

We believe that God has brought us in a marvellous way through severe trials and testings, not in order to liquidate His work entrusted to us, or merely to let it fade out, but that He might use it and us again, only now more fully, as an experienced, tested and tempered instrument in His Hand. Will you say "Amen!" to that? So let it be.

HAROLD W. STALLEY.

ALGIERS MISSION BAND

HOME OFFICE ACCOUNTS.

Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 30th June, 1945.

RECEIPTS.				PAYMENTS.			
	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
To Cash in hand at Bank, July 1st, 1944	793	10	7	By Remittances to Field			600 0 0
" Cash—Appropriated Contributions	336	0	0	" Allowances to Missionaries in England		549	1 3
" Cash in hand	3	5	0	" Travelling Expenses of Missionaries		50	19 0
" Subscriptions and Donations			1,132 15 7	" Deputation Expenses		17	15 3
" Appropriated Contributions			1,232 5 9	" Stationery, Postages, and General Expenses		73	12 0
" Dividends and Interest			29 0 0	" Office Furnishing		97	18 3
" Income Tax Recovered			180 6 1	" Cash at Bank and in hand, June 30th, 1945	869	18	1
" Magazine and Book Account	44	19	3	" Cash—Appropriated Contributions	365	0	0
Less Payments	43	11	0				1,234 18 1
			1 8 3				£2,624 3 10
			<u>£2,624 3 10</u>				<u>£2,624 3 10</u>

INVESTMENTS HELD ON BEHALF OF THE BAND.

£	s.	d.	
2,639	5	1	3½ per cent War Stock.
1,934	10	3	3 per cent Conversion 1948-53.
1,050	0	0	3 per cent Savings Bonds, 1960-70.
360	0	0	Investment Trust Corporation Deferred Stock.
20	0	0	Industrial and General Trust Ordinary Stock.
200	0	0	Anglo-Argentine Tramways 4 per cent 1st De-
			venture Stock.

I have examined the foregoing accounts with the books and vouchers and have found them to be correct. I have also verified the investments.

C. NEVILLE RUSSELL,

(Incorporated Accountant)
11, Poultry,
London, E.C.3.
21st August, 1945.