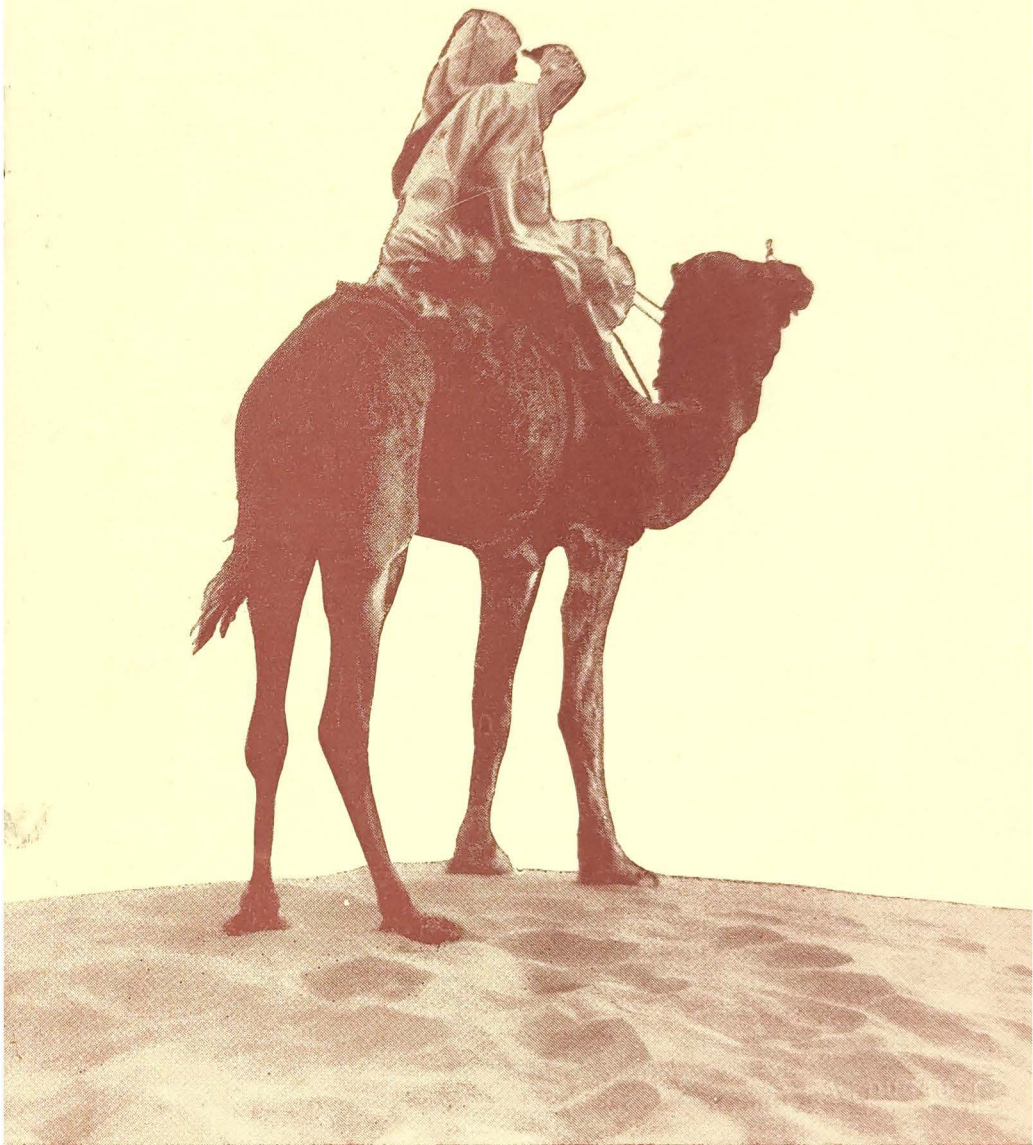


A Thirsty Land



Algiers Mission Band

No. 132.

DECEMBER, 1960.

ALGIERS MISSION BAND

Founded in 1888 by Miss I. Lilius Trotter

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A THIRSTY LAND

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“ In Him was life ; and the life was the light of men.
And the light shineth in the darkness. John 1: 4-5

EDITORIAL

IN MEMORIAM. The Algiers Mission Band has lately lost a faithful friend and helper by the sudden death of *Mrs. H. G. Kaye*. Of late years her help has been given as a member of the Home Council; but before that, from the time she first came to Algiers on “short service” till the year when she was obliged to leave the Field, she had served (for longer or shorter periods) in various other places. So she got to know the stations and something of the people and the work amongst them in Relizane, Tolga, Tozeur and Miliana; and her memories of those days no doubt helped to sustain her deep interest in the Mission, and sympathetic understanding of the problems of the work, when she was no longer able to take an active part in it.

Miss Grautoff, who first made her acquaintance during the days when, as Miss Grace Russell, she came out as a “short service worker” has contributed the following short tribute to her memory:—

In Loving Remembrance of Grace Kaye

We first met when Grace Russell was one of the Short Service students living in Algiers at Dar-el-Fedger, with Miss Elsie Thorpe as Superintendent. Shushan the Palace some of us called it, for it was a beautiful Arab house, with a central court and the students' rooms opening out of it.

I was a beginner missionary at Miliana, but came down from time to time to stay at Rue du Croissant, where Miss Trotter and Miss Haworth (and at times Miss Freeman) were living; so I only met the short service workers occasionally.

Then came the war of 1914—how long ago it seems—and Grace went home to serve her country. After the War she came back, and joined the Algiers Mission Band as missionary. She was sent down to the desert station of Tozeur in Tunisia, and there with Miss Krebs' help she was able to continue her studies in Arabic. Later she was posted

to Relizane, and then part-time worker at Tolga, another desert station. It was a typical Arab house in which the missionaries then lived, primitive and with few comforts—but right among the Arab population, which must have made her very happy. But the desert water (impregnated with magnesia) was trying to the system, and many found they had to live on mineral water when they could get it.

Later, toward the end of her short but useful missionary life she came up to my mountain station at Miliana, but she was not in good health. Still she had mastered Arabic for our people then, and with her quiet manner and good voice was able to give the Gospel message, though different towns have each a somewhat different vocabulary, and after the Arabic of the desert she must have found it distressing.

It was a grief to us when the doctor in Algiers ordered her to England for health reasons; though we did not realise then that she would need a serious operation, and be unable to return to the Field.

When in later years she invited me to her beautiful happy home in East Grinstead, and I watched her life there, I felt that God had over-ruled, and her kindness and friendship will always be remembered with thanksgiving, for we knew her heart was with us out here.

M. D. GRAUTOFF.

MRS. S. A. SUTTON KAYE

MY FIRST contact with Grace Russell was when, in the summer of 1929, she came to talk to the students of Ridglands Bible College about missionary work in North Africa. As an accepted candidate of A.M.B. I remember listening spell-bound to all she had to say and being especially thrilled by her description of a sunset in the desert, behind the town of Tolga, where she had been working. We travelled out to Algiers on the same boat, that Autumn. During the voyage she briefed me, for the new life to which I was going . . . I have since often pondered her words and realised how true they were.

We had the same family name and, in large measure the same missionary interests. An added complication was the fact that there was a Phyllis and Evelyn in each family. Luckily marriage has helped to straighten out the muddle, though even to this day, people whom I have never heard of profess to have known me in the past. What an honour to be mistaken for one of the Sidcup Russells !

It was never my privilege to work with Grace Russell, for a few months after my arrival, she fell ill and had to be invalided home for good. Her interest in this Field, however, remained as keen as ever. After her marriage, she used to invite us to "Hansla"; when we were on furlough. Once she gave me the chance to tell of the work to a group of her friends, most of whom were associate members of the Officers' Christian Union. Others of the Band have been given similar opportunities.

In recent years we have caught occasional glimpses of one another at a meeting of our Home Council in London, but there was always a train to catch and never time to talk. The last time we met was at the Annual Meeting of A.M.B. in 1956, to which she came accompanied by her sister and brother-in-law, the Rev. and Mrs. Peter Johnson . . . After her Home Call, we were all very touched to learn that one of her last acts was to write out a substantial cheque to the Mission.

Among many excellent qualities, Mrs. Kaye possessed two which particularly attracted me. She was gay, with the type of humour which is always kindly and she was intensely loyal to her colleagues. The Christian world is still in need of people who possess these virtues.

P. M. RUSSELL.

ALGIERS — A PORT OF CALL

BY REASON of its geographical situation, Algiers is by no means off the beaten track of the world's routes. In spite of present difficulties in the country, many varied personalities pass through from time to time. Although the majority of these rarely have the time or inclination to visit missionaries, there are on occasions those who make a point of calling.

In August, the Aircraft-Carrier H.M.S. "Hermes" was in port for four or five days. More than a dozen of the members of the Christian Fellowship on board were glad to spend some of their free time at "Dar Naama." A special service was held on the Sunday afternoon, led by Mr. Waine. At times like this we are pleased to provide fellowship for British service men far from home.

Early in September, Dr. J. G. S. S. Thomson and Mrs. Thomson, of Edinburgh, former A.M.B. missionaries, spent about a week here, on their way from Morocco to Tunisia. Dr. Thomson gave three very interesting lectures on Islam, and also a number of much appreciated devotional Bible studies. About twenty people, missionaries and others, in Algiers at the time, gathered for these meetings.

During the last week in September we held our Annual A.M.B. Field Rally. Our Guest Speaker was Monsieur Emile Krémer of Colmar, France. We all listened with great interest to his messages, especially as he recounted some of God's dealings with himself, and underlined the spiritual lessons which such events illustrated. He also described to us a new evangelistic work recently commenced in the centre of France. We enjoyed hearing reports of the year's work from each of the A.M.B. stations, and, in some cases, seeing these illustrated by coloured slides. This time of quiet meditation together was a refreshing moment before our missionaries separated to return to their usual spheres of work. A few missionaries of other societies joined us at one or two of the sessions, which were presided over by Monsieur Rolland, President of the Algerian Intermission Council.

All our members of the A.M.B. on the Field pass through Algiers at one time or another, some staying only a brief day or two while on their way to or from holiday or furlough, while others stay for longer periods. We have also recently had the pleasure of welcoming members of other missions whose work or leisure has afforded them an opportunity to visit us.

We have regretted the continued absence from the Field of Miss Collins, who is still detained in England, but we believe that God must have His purpose for her even in this. And as yet there is no certain news of the date we may expect Mr. and Mrs. Dowling to join us, but we continue in prayer for them that the pathway may be made plain. The depleted missionary force, in this country of growing importance, still constitutes a challenge to the members of the Christian Church in all lands. Is God indicating that Algiers is to be a port of call in your life.

P. G. LONGLEY.

“OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM”

WHOSE words are these? These are the words of our Master, and we believe them applicable to the children around our headquarters at Dar Naama, as well as in other parts of the world. So we seek to tell them of the One Who spoke thus (Mark 10 : 14). So far, the work of the session, which concluded at the end of July—to begin again, after the school holidays, in October—has been limited to the girls of the district.

Come with me now, down to the Orange Court, where the Girls' classes are held. “What may I expect to see?” “I don't know, only be ready for anything.”

RAT-TAT-TAT heralds the arrival of the first girls. They come sometimes up to an hour before the time the class is due to begin. This is one of the problems we face. The girls are keen and come early. But this early arrival inclines them to be restless by the time the class really begins. Usually they come in small groups, each delighting in having a good bang at the door, and having shaken hands with each one as they arrive, we can now begin the class.

The numbers in the class vary. We have had upwards of forty sometimes, but when that number was reached it was thought better to divide the class into smaller groups, meeting on Wednesday and Thursday morning and Thursday afternoons.

We have been very fortunate in obtaining the help of the Arab Christian Colporteur's wife with the Thursday afternoon's class. This is a help in controlling the girls, who like to be in large groups, but tend to become unmanageable if too many of them are together. Usually, they all want to speak at once, and it seems that Arab children are not used to speaking quietly, all shout at the pitch of their voices. Can you imagine the noise, when forty wanted to speak at once and each of them claimed your individual attention? This was another difficulty to be overcome.

But now it is time to begin the class. How the girls enjoy singing the well-known hymns and choruses, which have been translated into Arabic—hymns such as “Jesus loves me, this I know,” “Christ the Lord is risen to-day,” “I know a fount where sins are washed away,” etc. To you the singing may not sound too tuneful, but at least it can be described as a joyful noise—may it be “a joyful noise unto the Lord.”

Following the time of singing, the girls have been memorising the Twenty-Third Psalm in French and Arabic. Then comes the Bible Story, usually illustrated by picture or flannelgraph. After this, each girl is given an exercise book and pencil, to write out the verse of the psalm, which they have just been learning. Some write in French only, some both French and Arabic. When they have written their verse they are given pieces of paper, on which to draw and colour something from the story they have been told, with coloured pencils. From the youngest to the oldest (six to fourteen years of age) all seem to enjoy colouring. At the end of the term, many of the girls were able to take home their exercise books, with the written out psalm and their own coloured pictures stuck in the books. If you could look through the books, you would see a wonderful assortment of monkeys and zebras (taken from Dr. Paul White's stories) and also a variety of trees and flowers, illustrative of the Garden of Eden, and so on.

When colouring is ended, the girls are given ten minutes to play in the Orange Court—to “let off steam” before they make their way out through Dar Naama Garden and go home. Watching them play their own games is very interesting; one you might recognise too, as “Broken Branches,” played just as British boys and girls do.

Two special events occurred during the session. On Easter Sunday morning, an extra class was arranged for the girls, at 8.30 a.m., and Miss Russell of Blida, spoke to them, and showed them a film-strip on the Resurrection. As they left after this, each girl was given a tract in French or Arabic, and a few sweets. The other special event was the gathering of all the groups on the last day of the classes, when Miss Wood spoke to the girls on the Psalm they had been learning; and afterwards they enjoyed a treat of lemonade and biscuits.

One often wonders how much the girls have understood of the Message of the Gospel. How much has penetrated their darkened minds, and reached their hearts. But we rejoice to see that, on the whole, they do listen with attention to the lessons, and remember what they have heard when questioned next time. So we carry on this work in faith that, after much sowing, there may come a good harvest. And at times we are given encouragements by the way, such as the following incident on July 14:—Here, as elsewhere, people had heard that it was to be expected that the End of the World would come on that day. One little girl came to the class in a state of great excitement and fear. She could hardly sit still a minute before she would start again to repeat horrifying tales she had been told of things likely to take place. Our Arab Christian helper spoke so kindly, and reminded her

that when she was afraid she could remember the Psalm she had been learning, and ask the Lord Jesus to keep her and take away her fear. It was remarkable to see how this girl calmed down, and then to hear her say that she was not frightened any more.

I trust that now, dear reader, you have a picture of the work among the girls here, and will pray the more earnestly for them.

Praise the Lord for all the girls who are allowed to come to a Class, not only at Dar Naama but in all mission stations.

Pray that continual wisdom and understanding may be given to those who work amongst them, to meet the various problems and little difficulties which arise.

Pray for all the homes from which these girls come.

Remember, Jesus said, "Let the children come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

I. B. Gow.

A MESSAGE FROM SETIF

THE new season of work which began in October seemed likely to be somewhat difficult; but we know that the forces of God are not limited by our want of force, and in the midst of difficulties new strength and help is given. Once again, we have been helped by the Lord's message, delivered to us at our Rally by Monsieur Emile Krémer, making us realise that the work is not our work, but the Lord's.

On my return from Algiers to Sétif, I had the impression that there was a spirit of opposition amongst the people in this quarter of the town. However, little by little, the children began to return to the classes. And I have been able to start another small class on Thursday afternoons for some children from another quarter.

During the summer we had the pleasure of seeing A. of St. Etienne, who came from France to visit her parents, bringing her young family with her to spend the holiday months in her old home. It was nine years since she had left it. Her children, born in France, do not talk Arabic, but they have learnt all the Arabic hymns that Miss Farmer taught their mother when she was a child. There are five children, the eldest seven years old, the youngest 20 months. They have all gone back to France now, taking with them A.'s sister, lately married to a "sous-officier" in the French Army. The young couple will be living at Versaille, as soon as they are able to get rooms. (The accompanying photo shows A.—in white—with two of her children and her sister, who also has had Gospel teaching, and loves the Lord Jesus).

News has come from France that A. of Bousaada has disappeared without leaving any address. (She has been separated from her husband for some time and trying to support herself and her children by such work as she can get). Will you pray for her and her three little ones, that in spite of her difficulties her faith may not fail.

The last time I was able to visit Ain-Arnat, several of the children who used to come to our classes, came into the house we were visiting.

They were very happy to be able to sing the little hymns and choruses they had learnt in class, and to receive, each of them, a Gospel tract. Several of them used to come to us in the evenings with their mothers and sisters to join in evening prayers, when they were our neighbours.



**"A," with two
of her children,
and her sister.**



**Girls' Class
at Setif.**

Now I can only pay visits there in the early afternoon, as the road is closed on account of the curfew at 5 p.m.

The Christmas Fêtes will soon be near. Will you pray that they may give opportunities for telling of the Saviour's coming to many of those who have not yet heard the Good News.

May I send you my hearty thanks for your interest in our work, and for your prayer fellowship in Christ.

GERMAINE CHOLLET.

AUTUMN TERM AT MILIANA

WITH thanksgiving I have been able to open the Miliana Station, and get back to my home and people for this Autumn term. Though my fellow worker (Miss Collins) is still detained in England, Miss E. Chantler has come over to take over the household needs. She can also visit blind Yamina, whose home is beyond my walking powers; and she has undertaken a class of infants, with the few girls who bring them to our upstairs class room, while I have a small group of boys downstairs. These are boys whose parents wish them to come.

Sunday afternoon Bible Reading goes on with the two Christian men. One reads only Arabic, the other only French. I sometimes wish we could get back to the time before the Tower of Babel!

There are problems connected with our women's meetings. While some listen attentively, others are old, and deaf and needy, and these get fretful and inattentive. Some of them have old age pensions, but others are not eligible. Some others are young mothers, already widows, refugees from destroyed villages—who have come to seek rooms around Miliana. Living rooms are hard to find, though many new little houses have been built outside the town.

Our faithful Z (now a widow) comes six days a week for housework, and this means she can attend the women's meetings once again. Also an old friend of years ago, now needy, has returned, and wants to earn something by knitting. This means industrial work—buying wool in quantities, and dealing it out to three needy women, towards making of scarves and children's woollies for Christmas.

We ask your prayers that God may inspire the messages, and give the daily strength to fulfil His Will.

M. D. GRAUTOFF.

MISSIONARY WORK: IS IT DULL?

WHAT do the words "missionary work" mean to you? Or to your friends at home? What do you think it is like?

In a book published not many years ago I came across this statement:—"So long as the words 'missionary work' conjure up in people's minds no more than a picture of a rather dull-looking missionary in a sun-helmet, sitting under a palm tree, Bible in hand, addressing a crowd of respectful but abysmally ignorant 'natives,' no one is going to get very excited about helping." I wonder if that is really what many people think about missionary work? It does not sound very exciting certainly; and might make some say:—"If that is what missionary life is like, I should not like to be a dull missionary to a dull people in a dull land, like that." But is it a true picture?

To be sure, "preaching" is not the whole of missionary work. What has been said of the Dohnavur Fellowship is probably true of most missions:—"We have no workers who are only preachers." But it may be equally true that every missionary has sometimes to do some sort of preaching, whether in giving addresses or teaching classes, or simply in talking with the people in their homes or by the way.

But is it dull? That is the question to which I want to find a good answer. It should not be so, though I know by experience that it is quite possible to become, not merely a “dull-looking missionary,” but really a *dull* one—dull because discouraged and weary in the seeming uselessness of the task, dull in vision because of the heavy darkness of the spiritual atmosphere, or dull almost to the point of not thinking it worth while: in short, dull deadly dull, because lacking in the supreme necessities of a missionary life—FAITH, HOPE, and LOVE.

The people may be dull, indifferent or antagonistic, but the Saviour loves them and died for them, though they know Him not. Their opposition may be exciting, but not dull; their ignorance is pitiable, but how heart stirring the thought of being allowed to bring them the first knowledge of His love. How precious too, the moments when the intent listening and earnestly seeking eyes make us feel that, in spite of their “abysmal ignorance,” there is something in these souls that is capable of responding to the voice of God, and that His Spirit may use even our faltering human speech to bring the first glimmer of the knowledge that is Life Eternal to those who sit in darkness.

I think the lines which I quote from memory (I hope correctly) were meant to express the feelings of one who had been a “preacher” for the time being:—

“Lord, with an eager hand indeed,
 I scattered wide the precious seed;
 Oh, may Thy Spirit bear it far
 To fields where no glad harvests are,
 And to the wilderness that knows
 No grain, nor yet rejoicing rose.
 And where my memory gave way,
 Or where my best points went astray,
 Do Thou come in, O quickening Breath,
 And bring triumphant Life from Death.”

V.W.



“ . . . In a manger, in a cottage, in an honest workman’s shed,
 In the homes of humble peasants, and the simple lives they led,
 In the life of one an outcast, and a vagabond on earth,
 In the common things He valued, and proclaimed of priceless worth,
 And above all in the horror of the cruel death He died,
 Thou hast bid us seek Thy glory, in a criminal crucified.
 And we find it—for Thy glory is the glory of Love’s loss,
 And Thou hast no other splendour but the splendour of the Cross.
 For in Christ I see the martyrs and the beauty of their pain,
 And in Him I hear the promise that my dead shall rise again.
 High and lifted up I see Him on the eternal Calvary,
 And two pierced hands are stretching east and west o’er land and sea.
 On my knees I fall and worship that great Cross that shines above.
 For the very God of Heaven is not Power, but Power of Love.”

OCTOBER 20th AT THE CAXTON HALL

Westminster

THE ANNUAL MEETINGS of the Band were held in the Tudor Room, Caxton Hall, Westminster, on Thursday, 20th October last, proving an occasion of happy fellowship.—There was a warmth and friendliness about it which was heartening.

The Chair at the afternoon meeting was taken by the Reverend A. Brambleby, who spoke of his happy association with this grand old Society—among so many new ones that had come into existence within recent years. He spoke too, of his interest in their quarterly magazine “A Thirsty Land,” where he had read, among other items, one or two interesting descriptions of that beautiful land of Algeria with its picturesque people; but, he said, we were now met together to hear something of the not-so-beautiful side of that “Thirsty Land,” and of the way in which the Great Physician is meeting the need among the Moslems today, through the work of His servants.

A special feature of both afternoon and evening meeting was that of the tape-recorded messages from some of our missionaries on the Field. One note predominated, it was the challenge to *pray more*.

Among the familiar voices, were heard those of Miss M. D. Grautoff, from Miliana, in the mountains; Miss I. K. Nash, from Touggourt, in the desert; Miss P. M. Russell, of Blida; Miss A. E. Powell, of Relizane; Mrs. R. J. Waine, of Tlemcen, and Miss I. B. Gow, who was at present studying Arabic while at the Mission's Headquarters in Algiers. Mr. P. G. Longley, Acting Secretary in Algeria, also spoke and introduced each of the others.

Following on the tape-recording, Mr. R. W. Withers, a member of our Home Council, gave an interesting commentary on colour slides of desert, forest and market scenes in Algeria. There were also pictures of Dar Naama, meaning “House of Grace,” our headquarters in Algiers, and of the missionaries whose messages we heard.

The closing address was given by Miss E. Collins, who had been working with Miss Grautoff in Miliana. She told something of the work being done in that mountain station, and of one and another of the Arab Moslems who had come to know the Lord and who were having to face a certain amount of persecution. Special prayer was asked for these people and for those who work among them. Prayer, being the paramount need of the Mission Field, was needed more and more, the kind of prayer which breaks down barriers that tend to halt advance; prayer for more men and women to go out to sustain the work and workers already there.

It was good to have with us Miss M. C. C. Wood, just back from a visit to her sister at Dar Naama, and again holding her stall of Christmas gifts.

The Book-stall was successfully presided over by Miss M. Reid,

C.B.E., and was sold out of Mrs. I. R. Govern Stewart's book, "The Love That Was Stronger" !

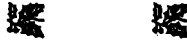
After the tea interval, which proved a happy time of re-union, came the evening meeting with Mr. W. C. C. Smith presiding, and with further tape-recorded messages and colour-slides from the Field, we felt our Missionaries were with us in that hall !

Mrs. I. R. Govern-Stewart, Guest Speaker—who needs no introduction to those who know her book, "The Love That Was Stronger,"—a new biography on the life and work of the founder of the Mission,—spoke of Miss Trotter with warm affection, saying how privileged she had been to work with her for a short time in Algiers. She told of her graciousness, her delightful sense of humour, her *undaunted faith*, and of her *powers of endurance*, which undoubtedly lay behind all that she had been enabled to accomplish through faith in Him.

We were brought into the very Presence of the Lord as Mrs. Govan Stewart spoke on Hebrews 11 : 27. "By faith . . . he (Moses) endured, as seeing Him Who is invisible."

It was that same endurance by which, said the speaker, God had been able to begin and do a great work in Algeria, through His servant. A work now being carried on so faithfully by others of the Band. Let us, therefore, "endure . . . as seeing Him Who is invisible."

D. B. EDGE.



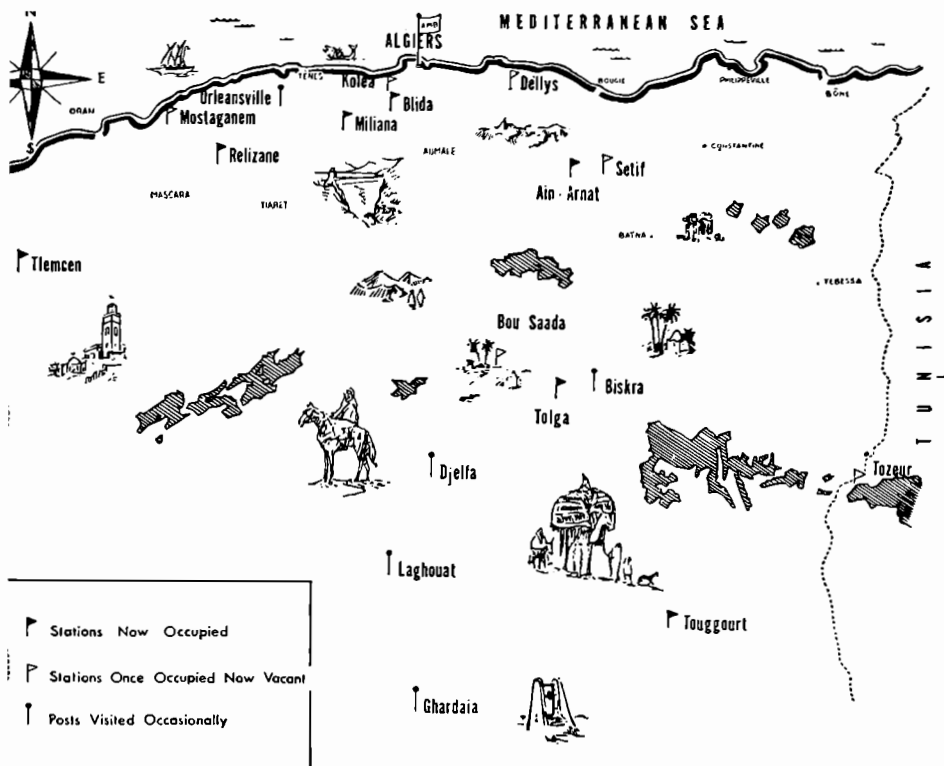
"There are two Bethlehems in the land,
Two little Bethlehems there.
O wise Men, do you understand
To seek Him everywhere?
The heavenly Child lies holily,
The heavenly Child lies lowly,
No crown on His soft hair.

But when He died upon the Rood,
(The King of Glory, He),
There was no star, there was no good,
Nor any majesty.
And so for diadem was scorn,
A twisting, torturing crown of thorn—
And it was all for me."

“ Let us go to Bethlehem,
There the King of Glory lies ;
He has left His diadem,
And His throne beyond the skies ;
He, the Lord of endless years,
Now a feeble babe appears.

Let us go to Bethlehem,
Now the joy of man begins ;
Floods of guilt no more o'erwhelm,
Jesus saves him from his sins.
Jesus is His matchless name,
And to save us thus He came.”





STATIONS AND WORKERS

ALGIERS (DAR NAAMA, EL BIAR)

1920 Miss V. Wood
 1956 Mr. & Mrs. P. G. Longley
 1959 Miss I. B. Gow

BLIDA

1929 Miss P. M. Russell
 1948 Mlle. J. Guibé

MILIANA

1907 Miss M. D. Grautoff
 1956 Miss E. Collins (*on leave*).

RELIZANE (MOSTAGANEM)

1947 Miss E. Clark
 1951 Miss A. E. Powell

TLEMCCEN

1949 Rev. and Mrs. R. J. Waine

TOLGA

1937 Madame Luli

TOUGGOURT

1930 Miss I. K. Nash
 1959 Mlle. M. Daniel

SETIF

1946 Mlle. G. Choilet