

Algiers



Algiers



from the Kasbah

* Algiers Mission Band
Members now on the field.

Date of arrival

1888	I. L. Trotter	
"	B. G. L. Haworth	
1890	F. H. Freeman	
1896	A. M. Eustace	
1901	{ Paul Villon P. Villon.	
1902	Michel Olivès	
1906	A. Whistler	} still at language study.
"	A. Cayrat.	
"	Desiré Emiot	
"	S. Perkins	

Helpers to B. G. L. Haworth at Dar Naama - El Biar

1906 - L. Rolland
" N. Jones. (on probation)

" Brethren, pray for us "

Circumstances pointed last summer to a need - be for naming ourselves,
- this is the name we have taken.

No 1.

Jan + Feb. 1907.

January 1st 1907

God's New Year's gift today was the sealing of His New Year's gift of three years ago. It was on New Year's Day, 1904 that Mustapha ben Hadj - that was the name he went by then - Amas is his real name - came to tell us his dream of Jesus showing him the two doors & telling him that He must wash his heart white before he could enter.

The Spirit touch that the dream brought has never left him, though we have seen but little of him: he has been busy at work - at a native cafe a good part of the time, with long hours & no evening leisure. And he has been tossed about in soul with the doubts that must come, even

to a boy's heart, when he lets go the anchorage of his forefather's faith.

He has shot up now into a tall fellow of 16 - The round, almost childlike face is still there, frank & merry.

And today in a quiet steadfast way, fully understanding the step that he was taking, he did as far as Mary could tell, heave anchor altogether & commit himself to Christ:

It is doubly precious to us, not only as a New Year's promise, but as being the first fruits of Tolga: for his father is a Tolgi, & he was living there, a small creature, when he went there first, & remembers all about it.

January 4th ..

Another one about whom Michel Oliver is very hopeful is an older lad, Si Mohammed by name - a well-educated fellow who goes to the evening reading class & gives a hand in the teaching, of his own free will - & that means something for a native, who is usually on the look out for the 'main chance' when he gives a hand! He goes, too, to Michel's lodgings to read with him quietly, & has taken a Testament home. His people are well-to-do & his work is embroidery. It is slack just now, so he has plenty of time on his hands.

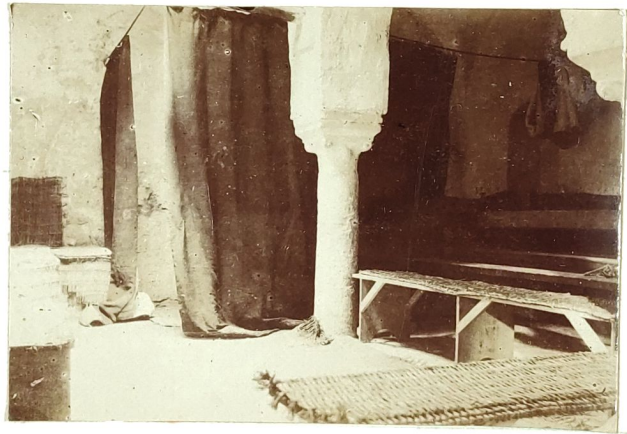
January 8th:

The war went a step ahead last night - last week there was a bad spirit at the Lantern Service - a spirit like that of the old times, unfelt lately - a weight of devil - darkness & mutterings of a storm. We wondered how it would go this week - we wanted to fight through with it this year until the men go South at the end of the month - & to fight through to victory. Somewhere while God is near as He is just now.

And last night there was again the soul-hush - & a band of the big lads lingered after, & subsided into an after-meeting - when an appeal was made for decision - (after a very straight talk from Dillon) two of the ringleaders in last week's ferment, big fellows of 18 or 20, Boualem & Hassan by name, came vaulting over the

benches & perched on the well head from alongside which
Michel Olive's was speaking.

He hardly knew whether to believe in them or not - yet there
was a touch of purpose about
them. Little by little they
drew round into a circle in
the corner of the mosque that
is curtained off in this old
photo - (I put it in that people
may see the battle-ground - the
well-head just shows at the
left-hand side, & the curtains
are only hung to screen the women on Sunday mornings when



we have the meeting there).

They got on their knees at last - not an easy thing with Moslems, for to them it stands for the Christian prayer-attitude - & when Ali broke into prayer a fresh hush fell on them - such a felt hush of the Spirit that the enemy was roused again & one sprang to his feet with his fists clenched & the *Shahada* on his lips.

That broke the current; but we believe work for eternity was done in the moments before.

January 12th

These next days seem to tell that it was so. The men believe that Si Mohammed came over the line that night, & Hassan & Boualem with him.

Omar is nearly wild with resistance & misery. Sometimes he seems like one possessed. He is specially bent on upsetting Amar, who has been his chum for years.

January 13th

And quietly while the fight over the lad has been claiming most of our thoughts & prayers, another soul has drifted peacefully over the harbour bar into the eternal haven - a sixteen or seventeen year old little Nabye wife.

We have only known her a few weeks - her husband had heard of us & came to ask us to go to her - He saw at once that physically, there was nothing to be done: she was one more of those on whom consumption lays its grip when brought from their fresh mountain air into the Alps.

stems. She has never said much except with her smiles, but they have said a good deal. She lay & cried if we missed a day in going to see her... a few words & a chorus & a flower laid on the pillow of her mat was all that she could bear— Now Christ has taken her we cannot doubt it.

January 15th..

The devil has risen up against the lads. Poor Boualem & Hassan are said to have been given drink in order to trip them up, & Amas has been terrorised by Omar until he took back the confession that he made in the Café a few nights ago & said that the Sheheda would avail for getting them into heaven

Si Mohammed holds good, but those of his own household are becoming his foes: they have taken his New Testament & torn it - & he fears to come openly just now.

January 16th.

I was going down a crooked little Impasse this afternoon, on a visit to Miriouma - the Miriouma whom Pherifa was so hopeful about last summer. They are sad visits now, for her soul has stuck somewhere - We think through fear of her husband: & she only listens with the stupid, unresponsive look that they put on when they do not want to understand.

The wind that "bloweth where it listeth" was blowing

down that dark little Impasse all the same. From the doorstep of the house next door a Tall lad called "Come in here."

It was another hard house, well known to us, a kind of rabbit-warren of dark holes & corners, inhabited by a rabble of Babyle women. They had led Chradidjah the milk Seller's wife such a life when she tried to witness to Christ there, that she could not stay, for they were turning her husband against her.

However, it struck me that it might be one of Michel Olivier's boys, & I asked him if it were so "Yes I am," he answered: "Ramadan is my name - Come up here".

So among screaming children, heaps of rags & general garbage we went with him to one of the top rooms where his women kind

were weaving a turban on one of their huge hand looms—
threading in the streaks of loose wool that form the woof,
with their fingers only, regardless of the existence of shuttles.
They peered at us between the threads & went on without
taking much interest—it was really the lad himself who
wanted to hear. He was not allowed to stay however, for
another neighbour came in & he was above the authorized size
for being allowed indoors. He lingered to get a few words
more on the threshold & was finally hustled downstairs.
Then came in Ourida—the girl who had been specially
opposed to Chradidjah—a clever girl withal, with a shrewd
plain face, sparkling with intelligence: chiefly remembered



by us as having seized the words & tune of a chorus & transformed the latter into a native version that has 'caught on ever since, & was notwithstanding a vehement Moslem.

"Here is Curida" they said - "she who brought out that song." She crouched down & said "Tell me some more": I plunged into a parable story of a town girl who married into a country ghourbi & tried to wash her clothes in the garden saquia in time of rain. She followed it intently - & when I explained the meaning - that their prophets & their good works were soiled like the rain-water & could never bear away sin, she assented instead of resisting. We got to close quarters - would she come to the Stainless Jesus who "taketh away the sin of the world"? - Would she come that night,

when all was quiet? We would pray for her then...

"Yes, speak to Him for me - & I will speak to Him too" she answered.

We went next day to see if she had done it. "Yes I came & He heard" - & there was an illuminated look with the words. Another woman - a dark hard-featured Gabye, Louhera by name, was there. The Bedouin woman overleaf is not unlike her. She had been listening with all her might yesterday & today. "Did she want to come to Him too?" I asked. "Yes - I want Him to save me: He came to me in a dream many months ago - I dreamt I was going on the pilgrimage, & I had a river to cross. It grew deeper & deeper & there was no boat. The water came to my knees & it was carrying me away. Then Jesus came &



Rather Like
Touhera!

Saved me. I have not seen Him since."

"Yes - that was a dream & a good dream - He sent it to show you His power - He wants to come to you now, not in a dream, but in your heart to save you from the river of sin."

Yes - I have many sins - Tell Him at 8 o'clock tonight to go to Youhera who wants Him to save her - I have many sins - I make mehemza "a rough kind of Cous Cous" & when I take it to the Azabio to sell, & they ask if it is dry, I say it is when it is not. I have many sins." Thank God when they pass from the abstract to the concrete - to the "thus & thus have I done".

January 24th

I came down a few days ago to join May at Blida -

She went to open the dear place again - I trust for the Spring this time - And Spring is already here - the water meadows by Gué de Constantine were clustered with yellow jonquils & the lanes are starry with great golden Celandines - as broad & strong & radiant as the African sun knows how to make them.

The people have been left long & many have moved. We have been trying to find those where there was a spirit-touch.. under difficulties, for the place is in full swing of preparation for the "Mid."

The Tchouchoua Nouina was very nice - such a light in her face. "I only remember two words" she said "Andi rofran" - (...i.e. "I have forgiveness" - the first line of ^{one of} the hymns:). But

on the strength of this rudimentary fragment she has thrown off the timidity that used to hamper her, & is trying all she can to spread the day dawn in the large house where she has gone to live.

January 27th.

This last week has been a very sorrowful one. It has brought to light the wreckage of two girl-hives: both of them girls with whom we were closely linked.

Poor little Blida Nisscha is one: we fear she is far on the downward path. It was foretold her by a fortune teller in the summer: & we are finding out that this fortune-telling, acting on the Moslem fatalism, is a terrible weapon in the Devil's hand.

The people firmly believe that they are bound to follow out whatever is decreed & let go all will-power & all sense of responsibility. She is miserable, for there is still a softness about her.

And Noor-za too. (The daughter of Ahmad's Fatima, who went home last summer) is over the line of evil. Her headstrong nature has taken the bit between its teeth at last. This, too, seems to be the result of fortune-telling - it seems that 3 days before her mother died, the girl told her that it was written on her forehead - & they say that it was the heart-break of this that brought the end. The enemy seems coming in like a flood in that direction. At Blida

last Sunday in 3 out of 4 new houses where there were stranger women, we were asked if we had come to practise this craft.

January 29th.

Willow & Olive's are off South this week - later than usual for the work among the boys has delayed them this year. They hope now that Omot will be able to 'brother' the . . . whose hearts God has touched - & they think it may be best to let the others go pro-tem - we trust with many an arrow in their hearts. For we are coming to see that God abounds in "wisdom & prudence." One sees in the natural world how He shelters & shields the buds of leaf & blossom with folds of down & shell - to bring them out in their frailty to the wind

& cold would be to risk a blight-life to say the best of it.
The long, half-lacking existence of most newborn things
is not waste time, if life pulls there, low down.

And if we try to drag the souls out into open Confession
before they are strong enough & understand what they
are about, we prepare the way for catastrophe: the
casting of the shell-sheath must come from within.
I remember reading in Pastor Hsi's life about the ancestor
worship in China a saying of his - "We must be very careful
how we take away the best thing in a man's life unless
we are sure that we have given him something better."
That is a far-reaching principle.

So we see God's "wisdom & prudence over these human buds of boy-life. If the fight of these last weeks had gone on, it is true as Villon said the other day that they could not have remained neutral - they would have had to take sides with him & the other two or with their old mates - the former if premature might have been almost as dangerous as the latter. So God has allowed it to be all shut down into quietness, we believe for their shielding, & though it is sad to hear the voices of the unreached lads in the street & to know that we can give them no shelter, we have to let it be so.

February 1st

The spring days are beginning to make it possible to get to some of

The villages near Algiers.

Today's was the Beni Mellous - a tough little place, where nothing has happened yet, except that the wind was howled against us once, before the "entente cordiale" smoothed our way - And nothing happened today that we know of - only that the spirit was softer & more friendly & the "Come again" had more than the native courtesy in it.

This triptych gives a very good idea of the 3 classes of village women - the left hand one those to whom our hearts go out for their natural attractiveness & intelligence: the middle one the hostile element - the right hand one the dull & un-
-comprehending.

Typical



Village Woman

To the natural mind the former are the ones to make for: but
the wind bloweth where it listeth - & whiled His breath lights
on the unlikely more swiftly than on the likely ones &
kindles a dormant spark.

February 3rd

Villon & Olive's started south on Thursday night & just got
through to Biskra before a heavy snow storm came down &
blocked the line.

This map gives their projected route. They will bicycle
down from the rail head at Biskra to Longgourth, leaving
their tent & camping things to follow them on camels
(Such is the mingling of East & West!) to the half-way house

at Sherai. Then they will work their way back gradually from Souggourth through the Oued (his villages, pick up their tent & a further boot supply & go camping northwards to Oued Jellal, & back by the untouched Jab. Guebli. a group of ignorant unwholesome oases lying in the bed of a salt marsh south of Tolga. Then dear Tolga itself & its villages (there must be 'good ground' in those villages for each time any of us have tried for them we have been hindered.) & home by Bou Saada about Easter.

They are at Biskra now, collecting their provisions in these market arcades, where the Beni Mzab, the Ship Chandler, so to speak for the Desert Caravans, do a thriving hard-headed

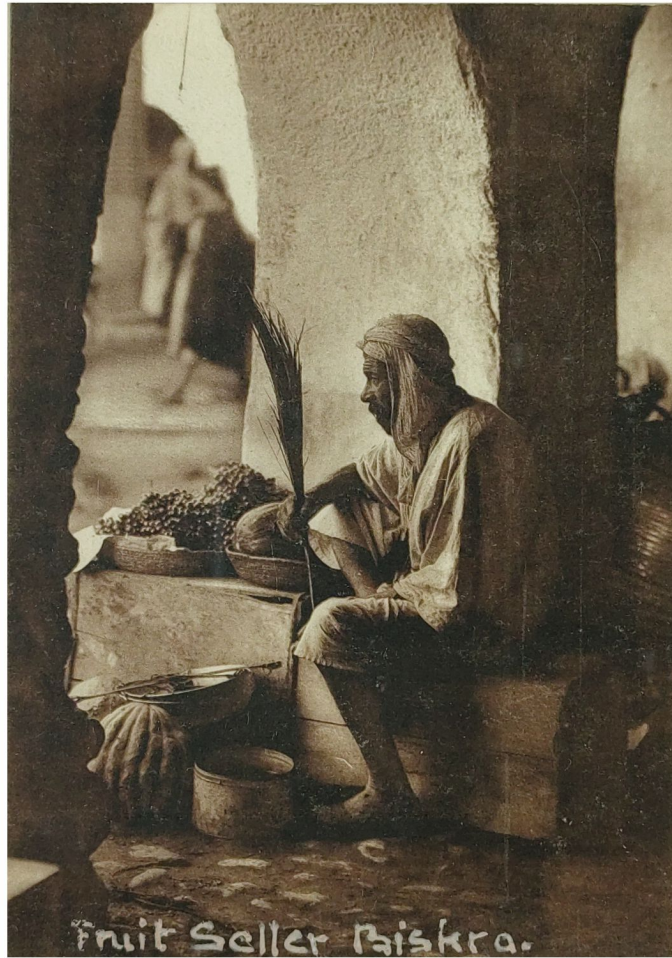
streets



Biskra Market

trade & in the market itself with its piles of dry dates & other vegetable commodities.

They have secured their guide of two years ago - Si Yahar a Soufi - He has met them there; that is one seal of God's hand, for he is a capital fellow - faithful as a dog & with an open heart Christward. The second seal is that a Protestant officer is in charge at Songgourth, which means sympathy instead of suspicion at headquarters. For of course all is under "régime militaire" down there.



Fruit Seller Biskra.

February 9th

Another village day. "Kosaba" this time - & it comes to me to put it down bit by bit with its lights & shades. It may help someone to pray for those who are "out of the way."

The road to it was a straight French one, with almond trees in heavenly bloom alongside it: then to the left a foot path wandered towards the low roofs & prickly pear hedges that stretched in clusters almost to the foot hills of the mountains.

Between us & them lay the river-bed - & the river - for the rains have been coming down: & oh! 'fry'! on the other side were tent people gathering the torrent stones for road-mending -

An elderly man had joined Company by now & asked for boots & offered to carry us across. He looked a bit shaky & we declined & sent him to get one of the tent people's donkeys, & went straight for them for it is only now & again that they emerge from their far away haunts & come thus within reach.



This is what they were like - a little like - nothing from memory

can give the details & we had not time to study them, for here they were, get-at-able for a time 12 hours of their lives, & that under difficulties, for the head-man who had brought us the donkey was for ever sending them back to their stone breaking, & they were like great children, going into peals of laughter all the time & peering at us between whistles with their dark unawake faces.

The only chance of a hearing with such-like is to look from the seen to the unseen! so I began with the stones - how one was not very big, but that as two, three, twenty, fifty, went into the basket the weight grew heavy - & so with the burden of sin - the lying & the thieving & the quarrelling.

They were a bit puzzled at first at having to get hold of an abstract idea, & stones & sins got a bit mixed up - were stones, sins, or sins stones? But soon their Oriental minds got hold of the simile & when Blanche went on to tell them how alone they could not carry the showers full of stones but had to call a man to help them, so God had sent Jesus to carry their sins away - some faint glimmer crossed their faces - then "fast - fast - it is fasting that will take you to heaven" came in a chorus of voices. Had anything penetrated? Just a ray I think by the fact of contradiction rising. We felt it would need a week of living in a tent by them to bring the light fully within their reach. Heavy-hearted for them we turned back along the river-bank

A figure stood there outside the first group of houses— a dash of crimson drapery against the grey stones of its bed & the silver links of the stream & the dark blue hills beyond— a middle-aged woman with a keen, intelligent face.



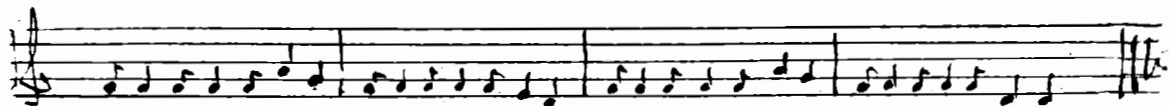
A few minutes talk & we were led into her courtyard, with its ready-made congregation of women & children. The report of our help from the donkey had gone before us. "Why did you not tell us? we would have carried you across" they said.

They listened in a dim way - intelligence itself compared to the Gent people & they gave one a curious sense of civilisation in their contrast to them. There was no sense of heart-touch until just as we were getting up from the mat under the wall-shadow, an elderly woman tottered into the courtyard, shrunk & pallid with fever. "She is ill: sing to her" they said. I was passing her with just a few words for time was going - but she stretched out her hand & said "Tell me about Jesus - He is ours & He

is yours. And as I told her a little she touched her forehead with her hands & then kissed them, in sign of reverence - & there was a wistful look in the sunken brown eyes - Yamouna was her name.

There was another wistful face in the 2nd house: it belonged to a rather sweet-looking young woman named Baija - "I have heard nothing until today - I have heard a little today" she said.

We tried to teach her Curida's Chorus, for its minor cadence makes it one of the easiest for them to get hold of - This is it -



Lehemmelna dhenoubna
Lesetterna ayioubna
Leseffina geloubna
O Allah Ibn Allah.

l. e. Thou dost bear our sins
Thou dost shelter us from our faults
Thou dost purify our hearts
O Jesus Son of God.

She listened as we sang it again & again. When we tried to get her to repeat it she hesitated "I am afraid" she replied.

"Yes - you are afraid because you do not know Jesus." And we went on telling again the ever-new story of His love.

Then as we rose to go, I stooped over her in the corner where she sat & said "You will not be afraid?" She looked up with the dawn of a smile & said "No. I will speak to Him & not be afraid."

Then we set out for the special Fatima whom I wanted to see again, (where heart-seed had begun to spring -) with a boy we had picked up to carry our baskets & keep

off the dogs. On the way a woman called out to us from the door of another new house - a middle-aged uninteresting looking woman, & utterly dark. She wanted to know for whom we were looking. "They have come for Jesus" shouted our boy. This having an alternative meaning, & 'Jesus' in its Arabic form being a not uncommon name among the men, she thought we were looking for someone bearing it.



We told her that the Jesus we knew lived in heaven, & that she knew we were speaking of Him - that He knew all about her - all her life - all the sins that she had done (for one had to

more straight for that point.

"Listen" - she called to a woman inside the Court - "There is a Jesus who lives in the sky & knows all about the lies I have told, & the way I have cut the ground from under my neighbours - (i.e. maligned them) "I am bringing these people in: we are only asses: we do not know." And she sat crouched down before us in the Court & drank in every word - how the sins were a heavy burden like the stones that the tent people were gathering - how she could no more mount to heaven with such a burden than she could climb with a sack of stones up the pure snow-line that showed above the Court wall: & one felt that God was

speaking. — Christ could carry them, we went on. He could lift the burden off her that she might be light & free — He wanted to lift it. "Does He want to? I will tell Him to lift it. I will tell Him today!" & there was a ring of heart earnestness in her voice. (Christijah was her name: she remains with us as the best bit of hope in the day's work.

For the next visit was a very sad one. The dear Fatima we had come specially to look after was constrained as we came up — constrained & stupid looking. We have got to understand sadly well that put on stupidity with its "I have forgotten" It was soon explained: up came her mother-in-law & launched into a storm of abuse & blasphemy. She would hear nothing

Talked down with an almost supernatural clearness every answer we gave - Charged us finally to go straight away without speaking to another soul in the village. 'We do not tell you to believe our Mohammed though he is good - good - you shall not tell us to believe in your Jesus - & again a shower of profanity that one could hardly endure.

Poor Fatima sat in silence - feebly saying now & then with a frightened look that the sheheda would get us all to heaven. She had said so joyfully last time that Jesus only was enough to save, & that the sheheda had gone away among the things of the past. The very fervency of the words she had raised made me sure that the look

had been a God-wrought one—our hearts ached & ached at leaving her.

In a house close by was a Consumptive woman who had listened last time. She was curled up over her firepot with the same look of dull depression. He had told her to tell her husband, who is often in Algiers to come to our house for medicine for her.

She had asked him: he had answered "If you are going to die, die: there are plenty more women— I can easily get another— so he had never gone after the medicine.

She told us all this with a quiet dogged voice. "I am just the same" she went on— "your Jesus has not heard me." "What did you say to Him?" "I asked Him to cure my cough"

& take my sins: my cough is the same - how can I tell if He has heard.'"

We told her he might want the cough to stay, that it might bring her to the brightness of His home - but that we were sure He did not want the sins to stay. It was a very faint flicker of faith that rode again - only Heaven can heal that poor crushed heart.

Our time was nearly up. For there was a long tramp back to the Station - the next two houses gathered into one group finally, & had short measure at that. One or two listened when we pointed to the muddy courtyard earth & the blue clearness of the afternoon sky, & told them that our hearts

were like the one & the purity of heaven like the other.

They listened: that is all one can say & we had to leave them with only that dim shimmer of other-world light "We would give you eggs" they said - "but the cocks have had no sons" (sons of a cock is the Arabic term for eggs!)

Dear dark loving hearts - oh! to be able to win through for them by prayer that heavens may be opened above them & grace & light poured down!

Will you pray for this village - "the Raven Village" you can call it for that is the meaning of its name - & pray for the captive soul of that Fatima - For "Thus saith the Lord even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, & the prey

of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with
him that contendeth with thee; & I will save thy children."

February 26th

We have good news from Yellow & Olive's - nothing in detail
yet - that will come later when we get their journals - They
find their bicycles an immense help (- "farfarates" i.e.
"butterflies" the Arabs call them!) - for they can fly off
to outlying villages & be back again to their slow-moving
caravan without delaying it on the march.

Opposite is Souggourth market - their southernmost point:
they are working back from it now among the tough
Oued Khis oases: the first real hearing for it all, for

Touggourt Market.



SCÈNES ET TYPES — Du marché de Touggourt. — L.L.

we were only able to pass through in former years

February 27th

Annie Whisler has got back this month, & not without hopes of reinforcements later on. Oh! that they may come true.

For even poor Sleepy Algiers calls for help now: in house after house we feel astirring & in heart after heart.

Among others in the heart of one of our next-door neighbours - a well-born, stiff-minded old Shoslem woman, in whom Helen has been interested for years. Now, with failing strength & ebbing life, she has turned Christward, & seems resisting faithfully the onset made on her by her kith & kin. It will be

a miracle of His grace if He gets her safe Home.
And I believe it is true, as Mary says, that each soul saved lightens
the spiritual atmosphere around - one feels it does. What will
the exhilaration of it be when the Sun of Righteousness arises
on the earth! I never noticed until the other day the end of that
verse in *the K. V.* " & ye shall go forth & gambol as calves of the
stall." It gives such a sense of the "abandon" of light heartedness
that will be ours when the sin-weight has all been lifted from
Creation. "Then shall Thy smile discover many things
Why laugh the hearts of children at their play
Why skip the lambs & why the skylark sings."

List for forwarding

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