

Algiers Mission Band



Jourizal N° 6



the next people for whom we want your prayer



see page 27

Nov. + Dec. 1907.

Nov 3. 1907

Things are settling into their winter grooves here in Alger, & there is one point specially where we long to see the grooves broken up. We have long felt that the Friday meeting for the women has been very lifeless, & that the element of death in it is a band of old adherents who come persistently & never get an inch further. They maintain that they are "following in one way not two" as they express it - before us and before each other they make a certain profession of Christianity, but with no ring of reality about it, & they bring into the spiritual atmosphere of a meeting a sense of weight & stoniness that amounts to suffocation. To be with them can be nothing

but a clog on souls newly touched, & somewhat strangely these latter ones have never come much on Fridays

The only thing I can see on the human side is to make this Friday meeting into a separate one, for these limpet-like adherents only, & to leave off for the time all exhortation & Bible teaching, to which they calmly assent & bring definitely to the front the antagonism that there is between Christ & Mahommed, reading their lives side by side & pointing out how life & teaching are at variance the one with the other.

For a choice is what these souls need. It is said to be part of the make up of an oriental's mind, that two incompatible

ideas can lie in it side by side, without in the least disturbing one another. We have proved this to be true again & again. Backed as this inertness is, by the fatalism of Islam, it needs the direct impulse of the Spirit of God to stir in it any power of choosing; He alone can break into the ranks of these stagnant souls, or break them up. It would be far better to have them in the line of definite opposition than in this dull heavy consent.

It all comes back to that - the one simple needs-be is the outpoured Holy Ghost - "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost & with fire" is the promise that comes before the promise of the fan being in His Hand. "I am come to send fire

upon the Earth" comes before the other promise "I am come to give division" As it was in the beginning "God divided the light from the darkness, so it must be now.

Will you pray about this Friday meeting & about the possibility of starting a fresh one on Tuesday afternoons for the younger generation of souls who shew signs of life & newcomers in general. That a hunger & thirst may awake that will bring them together & that it may be given to us to prepare the way of the Lord there.

That preparing of His way has been opening out to me these last days in the 4 fold description of the path that

John the Baptist had to prepare for Him.

"Every valley shall be exalted" it was an age of low ideals & low standards.

"Every mountain & hill shall be made low" - the necessary counterpart of low ideals is the Pharisee Spirit, just as infallibly as that a land of valleys means a land of hills as well.

"The crooked shall be made straight." - the unfailing marks of native paths, as Henry Drummond tells in his "Tropical Africa" is that they wind interminably, because of the habit of their makers of swerving at every obstacle instead of removing it. That again was a mark of John the Baptist's age - 11

was an age of people who "went away" when difficulty supervened.

"The rough places plain" - the stones of stumbling - prejudices, superstitions, misconceptions without number, had to be gathered out.

And it is all as true of this time & this land - low standards & lofty self satisfaction - facile natures that swoon at difficulties - stumbling stones left so long that they have become imbedded in the soil - all these things can only be dealt with as ^{Baptist} the [?] dealt with them, by being filled with the Holy Ghost.

Nov 11th

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Mustapha came in this morning in a fresh dilemma. His father has forbidden him to do the medjibond as a means of livelihood at home, & says that if he finds any of it about he will destroy it. This is with a view to forcing him to take Jewish shoemaking which means the sacrifice of his Sundays.

He did not come in any way to be consoled with there was a look of real manliness about him - he seemed half as tall again. "I will not give in - if I die for it I will not give in" he said.

We feel there must be some solution by which both the 4th commandment & the 5th can be obeyed, for it is perfectly

natural & right that his father should wish him to follow a trade, & have regular employment so far as his lameness allows. Villon thinks he may be able, if Mustapha finds a Jew who has a vacancy, to persuade him to take the boy at 5 days a week of work & 5 days pay, working here on the Saturdays when the Jewish shops are closed.

Nov. 14

To Mustapha's intense joy his father has consented to this, & allows him to bring his medj bond embroidery here to work at in the mornings, spending the afternoons looking about for an opening in the shoemaking direction. This is a clear answer to prayer once more

Another prayer answer has been that night after night - through this Ramadan our French helpers, M.M. Villon, & Olivier, have had their Book Depot up in the native down crowded out & overflowing into the street (this is the street, overleaf, taken from the door of their little shop)

The hearers have been this year almost entirely young men, headed by a band of students from the Arab college - These are usually kept at their studies in the evenings, - now in Ramadan, being free so all hours of the night, they can come & listen - listen all the more intently, the more freely. our men speak of the falseness

By
the
Door



of the
Book
Depot

of Mohammed & his creed. There is a big hope in this
Nov. 16.

I got the chance a couple of days ago of a straight talk with Yamina on the subject of Mahommed - many of you will remember her sad soul story in the past, & how through the set-made on her by her relations & their terrible brain-drugs, she drifted back into the ranks of the half hearded - Her sister was in the room & her neighbours were busy over their firepots in the gallery, & she would not commit herself. All the answer I could get was "If my husband heard you say these words, he would never let me enter your house again." That is the touchstone that chinging generation

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so their leader & till we have thrown down the gauntlet
there, there can be no release from his direful influence.

Next day Friday, the whole of the womenkind were at
the cemeteries for the year's gathering at the end of
Ramadan, & only she & Fatima turned up. We went
on upon the same line. Fatima was apologetic for
her "you see we are bonafit." she said "she would follow
if she could - we cannot help ourselves - we belong to
the men."

Fatima was called out of the room just then, & I went
on to Yamma "she is a married woman too, but her
husband knows what she is - he knows that she will

not witness & she will not part, & she suffers this blow for Jesus". The old self satisfied expression was gone from Yamma's face - "Pray for me that I may see the road of God" was all she answered -

I have been studying through St. Matthew the ministry of our Lord in its relation to Judaism, noting the gradual development of the attitude of antagonism which led to the final clash of arms - It is full of teaching for us now -

Nov 2 -

Villon & Oliver set off yesterday on their winter tour - their last together on the old lines, & limited as to time by Michel Oliver having to be back by the middle of January.

This being so, the way for them seemed to be down to our nearest stretch of desert as the crow flies, to which curiously none of us have yet gone, partly because there is a long uninhabited stretch of country between the Sable land & the oasis, partly because Roman Catholic influence has been strong down there. This has probably abated, & their bicycles do away with the waste of time in a jog-trot diligence over the waste lands, so Laghouat & the villages round are to brave their chance at last.

Their first-halt Boghari, is where Ali's wife lives, & he has shamped back to her on foot. He has grieved us much, poor Ali, by going dum-dumming with the other negroes

The Sheep Market



outside Boghail

again this feast, & has spent the 10 francs which came as his share of the spoils on a Melai for her - an indigo & white cloth laced together between its seams with red & gold silk dear to the negress soul. Having had no acknowledgment makes him fear for its welfare - or for her own - Hence his 2 days march to enquire!

We cannot feel somehow that he is altogether wrong in his own. He sees that he has been wrong "I have woken up" as he expresses it "I have been out of the way" "now I want the will of God." It may be that he is taking this into His working, out of the answer to our prayer that he may learn to stand on his own feet, apart from us.

Dec. 2. 17

We hope Mustapha has got his start, He found a Jew's
cobbler on Friday who wanted a lad & M. Villon being
away M. Rolland went with him to see what could be
done about his Sundays. That fell through, & M
Rolland took him off to a Spanish Shoemaker who
employes 30 work men & is a Christian.

30 work men means a regular scare for Mustapha -
his lameness gives him a kind of horror of going
among a number of strangers - However he has taken
out his savings to get the cobbler's stool & apron so we think
the battle is won & that he will start work next Monday.

We have heard from Villon to-day that they have seen

Ali & his wife & that she seems a nice young thing: they doctored her for a hurt finger. He was bright in his soul & prayed as they had never heard him pray before. How strangely God works His way through our Saufes!

Villon & Olives themselves seem having a soufn time. We had a feeling that it would be so, down that way.

Dec 4

Here in Algiers we are having spirits of light. The way came clear for Hawawach our arab servant, to leave during Ramadan; it was sorrowful to let her go, for she had been with us (keeping on her own room for sleeping) for 7 years. There have been times when there has been cause for hope:

over her, & she is one who could have stepped out as far
 as outward circumstances go, Only we always felt there was
 a rock bed of density & superstition below, & of late it has cropped
 up more & more till it came to be a distinct counter-influence
 in the house among the women who come & go & over Cheira
 Gasim's younger sister who has been helping daily in
 housework since the summer. And when in a fit of jealous
 anger against her Hawawak took herself off, we felt we were not
 to have her back: & the atmosphere within doors has cleared greatly
 A manifest softening has been going on in Cheira; & now
 that her poor wizened deformed baby girl, on whom she
 lavished her big mother-heart, has gone wearily to its

rest she has come to us altogether, sleeping on her mattress in one of the tiny rooms on the gallery - a decided step for a young arak woman.

Another one where we see a spirit-douche is a young woman in one of the houses where we have been visiting, the naughtiest scamp of the little girls' gawp class, Tamani by name, who has been in disgrace for using bad words.

In one of the downstairs rooms of her house lives Miss Haloma & she came up to listen, proving the reality of her understanding of what it all meant by the way she "shied" when brought to the point before the others, specially before Tamani's mother who is an "absentee". And when Tamani's mother was

successfully engaged in conversation apart, the soul in Halouma opened out as we expected. — opened out not to us only, but we hope & believe to Christ. We have seen her once or twice since. — "I do not know — I have not seen Him" was all we could get the first time: next time there was a light in her great dark eyes & a shy but definite "Yes He has come in" There is a strong counter-influence felt by her somewhere, we are sure, & it is difficult to get her alone & give her the chance of talking freely. She is far too young & pretty to be allowed to come out to our house, & here is one of the free & easy kind where they are always in & out of each others rooms. One's only chance with her lies in going

two together & the odd one keeping up a stream of conversation with the inevitable neighbour, do drown the few words that are being snatched with Halouma.

There are others of these unsatisfied souls that we have come across these days. One was a Kabyle man kept indoors by inflammation in the eye. "Our religion is heavy & hard" he said "we ought to go to the mosque five times a day to pray, beginning before daybreak in the morning & we have the month of fasting: it is heavy & hard" We told him of the perfect work wrought for him to set him free from his bond service "No" he answered "that cannot be; everyone has to stand for himself before

God "We gave him the old illustration of a man unable to pay his rent & his brother paying it in his place, & a glimmer came into his face "I will ask God if the Messiah really did that for us, if He shows me it is true by a dream or some other way, I will become one of you" & follow with you forever" he answered.

Poor heavy laden soul, we went twice within the next few days, hoping to find him, but he was out again: the men may not stay in their houses in the day time unless compelled by physical suffering: & the landlords wife was obstructive we have had to leave him with "the Father of Spirits" . . . "I do not know & do not understand &

cannot see" was the soul-weary answer of another young thing: these days. It is better than the old "I have need of nothing".

Blida - Dec 16

I came down here with Blanche on Friday, to set on foot the repairs & alterations necessary to make the new cottage habitable for May & Michel Olive by the end of next month. All the surroundings were looking so beautiful when we went up to settle details with the mason - the copper of the last vineleaves of the vineyards glowing against the indigo of the rift in the mountain behind, & a rainbow spanning the foothills & plain to the East.

Dec - 18.

The rainbow & its promise of sunshine after storm is good to have for the new start - for a storm is likely to be working up: The field is within a few hundred yards of the cottage where the light came to Haoua, & the stay of the way it was quenched, as far as human power could quench it is apparently known around. A girl asked us into a house just below our field, whose owner used to listen earnestly. She was civil & hospitable, but we caught the quickly breathed "they speak against Mohammed" & the arksome look of her neighbour - Two or three little maidens greeted us on the way down - "She knew Haoua" remarked one of them "Do you see her sometimes"? I asked "Will you tell her that

you saw me & that I think of her?"? A sudden whispering between the little heads laid close together, & a scamper off, showed that they too knew they were on dangerous ground. . . . So we must prepare for a prayer battle when they discover that Christ's standard is twisted in their midst.

Dec 20

We came back to find "rumours of war" further afield - that Yellon & Olives were on their way back, 3 weeks sooner than they expected, feeling that they must return & claim their liberty of action: & they

arrived last night.

There has been it seems a renewal of the obstructions of five years ago, & a battle has yet to be fought for freedom in working down south.

At Boghari all seemed fairly serene while they were there - after they left the names of the natives who had bought books were all taken down - a thing that terrifies ^{these} timid people with their huge imaginations.

In the next place a mounted horseman was sent round to warn the people against buying the books of "these Christians" - They still bought them here & there in secrecy - Two days later, on the market day, a down

crier was sent round, to threaten all buyers that they would be taken to a penitentiary away in the desert where the treatment is of the severest.

Finally at Laghouat their furthest point, things came to a crisis again - their books were seized & police orders issued that all buyers should be imprisoned - The reason given was the disturbances in Morocco, & the fear of any excitement being created, & this gives a certain amount of *raison d'être* to the renewal of these blocks - Behind that we feel the invisible hand that would hold its captives, & we see the clear need - be for the restraint we felt for going ahead at Bou Saada - a



Saghout

fresh check for us would have been much more serious than for these two, with their French rights behind them. They have entered a protest as not only their own right to sell, but the liberty of the natives to hear & to buy is threatened. It was for this that they came straight back, for staying on did more harm than good. . . . and yet, as ever, there is the understone of joy & hope - this time over a tribe whose encampments stretch over a wide reach of country west of their road south Helen has just touched their western limit years ago near Chelkale. These encampments are tough soil generally - Look at the picture overleaf & try to imagine the fallow



ground that such hearts must be - But this tribe has an individuality about it: "Oulad Airoa" - "Children of Jesus" is their name, & they believe themselves to be lineally descended from Him: there is probably some lost son of christian blood in their veins - Crusaders or Captives of bygone days.

"Tell us what Jesus did" "Tell us what Jesus did" echoed from one after another as Vittor - Olives went among their tents, & the men spent their scanty pence in buying gospels that they could not read - (schooling is rare among the nomads unless a wandering schoolmaster

elects do wander with them) - They put the books
to their foreheads & kissed them & died them in
their robes saying "we cannot read them, but they
will bring us a blessing."

If the block on the part of the military
authorities had not arisen Vitton would have gone
through the whole stretch of territory belonging to
them. Like, coming back by Chellaira; they have to be
left now with their dumb gospels: they will be a
mark for which to aim when our right of way gets established
again in the desert lands -

And while Vitton & Dives were away came another

bit of cheer in a little band of 4 or 5 men from Yefaha "the apple" village, its name means - where the Villons were driven by the rains in September from the mountain camp in which we were to have re-joined them. These men failing to find Villon hunted up Belard, & left a message, that many in their village wanted to hear. I do not remember a like message ever coming before, It gives wings to our faith that God was moving there.



Dec 28

Another happening with the ebbing of the year

has been in Chrira's soul. Annie was busy reading a letter the other day when she broke out "I have something to tell you": wait a few minutes" said Annie "I must tell you" she answered "a great joy has come to me": I know not what it is. It came yesterday afternoon & it stayed all night: & it is getting greater: it is unlike any joy I ever had before "If it is unlike any other joy it must be from God" Annie answered - it must be that Christ has come in" - & she called me to come & talk to her - It had been evidently a touch, bit of His working without any direct human touch - I told her how

Christ wanted her whole heart now, & could lock the door that Satan should never get possession again - when we prayed she went a step further "O our Lord Jesus" she said "take the key of my heart & throw it away & lose it, & take the key of Boudlim's heart & throw that away & lose it too"!

Boudlim is a small & naughty nephew very dear to her - the next younger brother of Omar whom God took last year. When his mother, Fatima first came to us, 6 or 7 years ago, he was about three & had just been found one night trying to cut the throat of the baby brother next below him, in a

fit of jealousy: the mark of the knife was actually on the little neck! He has turned out a dear scamp & a terrible anxiety to his mother, as he was getting among a wild street set. Now to her great relief, Blanche has taken him on at El Biar & in spite of such escapades as might be expected from such a piece of quick silver, he has settled down wonderfully.

These small boys have been much on our hearts lately & we have been on the look out for some way of getting so close quarters with them, such as the daily coming for their native embroidery lesson

has brought us with the girls - The boys have
dumbled in & dumbled out for Sunday classes &
evening magic lanterns, & we have never had a
chance of getting to know them, except one here
& there - - The difficulty has been to find any
interest for them corresponding to the embroidery
learning for the girls - Michael Nives has made friends
with the older boys by means of arabic reading & writing
lessons & with the intermediate ones by teaching them carpentry
- now he is going off to Blida, & neither of these things
would meet the case for the small imps who are specially in
our mind - creatures of the size overleaf, who run wild in the

The
haunts
of



The
little
lads

4
down as soon as they are out of babyhood - if only we may win some from the wreckage of boy-life that goes on there! They crowd on the doorsteps & plunge into gambling & every form of evil before they are well in their teens.

Dec 28.

Two sorrows of the dawn of this year seem lifting with its suns. One is that at Blida the younger sister of "Blida Aisha" told me that she is ill with smallpox in Algiers & that her mother is with her - that may so well be God's Hand arresting her. The other, within 8 days of this, was a clue to the Monina who went on the downward path at the very same time. A little figure -

drolled up to the roof room where I was writing last week
& a boy face with a huge forehead & mournful eyes was
at the door. It was her little brother Yahia, & she had evidently
sent him. Helen has been with him since to see her
& found her in the safe custody of an aunt, out of harm's
way & sobered into a quiet, warm hearted girl, thank
you - Pray that his going after these two may be
"until He finds" them

I have collected some photographs of Boudaada
& its people - a French artist-photographer M. Green
has been that way lately: I have also some sketches

from scribbled notes down there, & am strungjg them
together with the journal of our flying visit there,
given somewhat more fully than in the extract sent
round. If any would like to see this when finished
will they let me have a post card, & the portfolio shall
go the same by parcel-post. I believe the sight of the
very places & the faces of their people is fuel for
prayer, & the story of this months check down south
shows how prayer is needed still for that beloved
desert land, that "a great door" & effectual "may be
opened there."

Pray too for the scores of gospels that did get sold

this time, by making the best of the hours in each place before the prohibition was issued. There was such an eagerness to buy, especially in La Grange, that their stock would have run out if the men had had a free hand

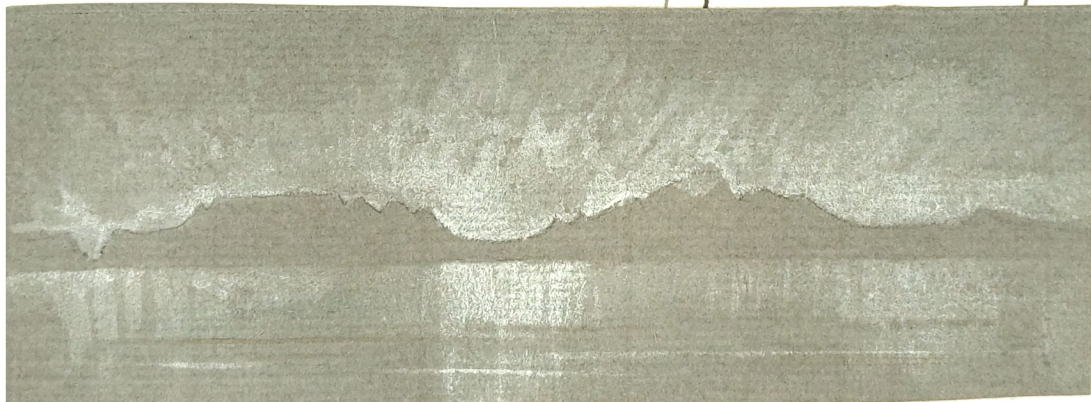
Dec - 30

Helen has given I believe the clue for attracting the small boys. i.e. to teach them painting. They have the old arab genius innate, for decorative work of the kind incorporated in our word "Arabesque" - & to have it a bit developed may serve them in after life & keep them out of mischief meantime -

featured, sullen-looking girl of the part. Her dear round face with its black silk drapery & dancing black eyes is a sunbeam about the house, & an appeal to the Christ in her has brought several very practical victories these days. - - Will you gather your prayers round her too; an orphan divorced, & childless, she is fiercer than death to follow on & out, if the powers of darkness are held at bay.

And so, in a weaving of lights & shadows, the old year dies: but they are the lights & shadows, not of sun-set, but of dawn - a dawn that will dawn its dreams into realities.

"A dim Aurora rises in my East,
"Beyond the line of jagged questions hear
"As if the Head of our intombed High Priest
"Begins to glow behind the unopened door:
"Sure the gold wings will soon rise from the gray!
"They rise not - up I rise, press on the more,
"To meet the slow coming of the Master's day"



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