

Journal No XI

Algiers Mission Bonds

May - Dec. 1909

An Explanation.

We have tried for 3 years the plan of an M.S. Journal, each copy to be passed round to a dozen or more addresses. This plan has involved much delay in news reaching the latter ones on the list, + many copies seem to have been lost or mislaid, + have never finished their course.

We are now going to try another plan - that of sending every half year an autotyped or cyclostyled copy, each to go a round of 3 or 4 only. The following was begun in January on our new zinc press + being our first experiment thereon had many vicissitudes. Before it was half through our dear fellow-helper Laurent Olives, who was working at it, fell ill, + he was taken from us in May. The press needs a man's strength to work it, + no one is now available, so we have had to begin again, having recourse to a cyclostyle which has grown a bit cranky, so please overlook both delay + defects this time.

When we meet again in the autumn I shall try to supplement this half-yearly story by a short monthly edition in M.S. for those who follow us closely in prayer. If you would like your name down for this latter, please let me know. Otherwise you will be on the list for copies somewhat like this present one. Please pass them on as indicated on the last page.

I. U. T.

April 22. 1909.

The figtrees are reading us anew their lesson of resurrection life. "Ye know that summer is high, & even at the doors" comes to mind as we watch them these days. Two or three weeks ago they were as the one growing across the watercourse on the card below — the picture of death



in their naked branches of ashy grey. Then, suddenly the "mouseears" as the Arabs call them, open at the end of every twig, & with a few warm days they have unfolded into their broad leaf-fans.

"Ye know that summer is high": Jesus — earth's Summer — is at the doors. Alleluia!

Did I tell in the last journal, how Sister Evas last message before she left, was on the very verse that has been the year's keynote "awake o north wind, & come, thou south": we could almost hear the crackle of the dead wood breaking off with the winter blast as she described

it, & told how we needed the beating of the north wind to get rid of all that was barren & useless. "I want to be beaten" one of her little brothers used to say when he felt uncomfortably naughty, & some of us know the feeling! — and when the clearing blast has done its business, all is left in readiness for the south wind to begin to blow.

It is true for the outward as well as the inward. This last year has broken off many dead branches in the work: there are souls in whom we had waited anxiously for fresh buds, & instead has come the sudden snap. The Friday meeting of old "adherents" crumbled to pieces lately

after a few weeks steady expounding of the contrasts between our Lord's life + that of Mahomed. All these things have been the North wind's business. I have a strong feeling now, that the first wafts are soon coming from the South.

God has sent us bits of cheer lately, saw the long long hold of the spiritual winter here: they may seem a strange kind of comforting, yet they are very real. One was through Dr. Frease, the new Director of the American work. He told us that, used as he is to wicked heathen cities in India, none had ever given him the same sense of spiritual oppression as came over him in passing through the Algiers streets. He echoed almost word for word, what Mr. Summers said on the same subject a year ago, comparing it with the atmosphere of other great godless towns in Spain + Morocco. Since Dr. Frease's words a third corroboration has come, spontaneously again, from Mr. Clearer of the Egypt General Mission. - used likewise to life in Moslem strongholds. He was here for a few hours in the early Spring, + wrote the other day - "I cannot get rid of the sense of indescribable need - I had almost said hopeless need - that the sight of Algiers has left upon me."

All these seem to tell that it is in some special sense a stronghold of the powers of darkness, + that there may be factors unrecognised by us, that make the winter chill grip stiffly, apart from our own shortcomings in faith + service!

Dar Naana May 22

Influenza has left a long gap in this journal, + ordinary life has begun with a sight of the



"gingaffe" - i.e. embroidery children. They came up, 20 of them, for the day. There was much to praise God for in the gentle happy spirit that has grown among them since last time they came. Overleaf are some scribbles of them as they sat on the garden paths, stringing garlands of jessamine blossom from the golden showers that fall.

May 24

Good news of the well today: the water has been rising steadily since the workmen finished. it has now flooded the subterranean gallery & risen a metre above it. This is all the more the gift of God, as none has been drawn as yet, & the drawing is ordinarily the means of increasing a supply. This drawing is now the problem, owing to the immense depth, & Michel Olives has come up to see the proposed apparatus.

June 5.

A "resumé" in concise language, of last month's doings in Turkey, is worth recording. It comes from an American missionary in Constantinople. — "In 3 weeks time we have had, first a revolt, second the old régime back, third an invading army, fourth an attack & victory, fifth Abdul Hamid dethroned, sixth Mohammed the 5th enthroned, seventh Abdul Hamid sent to Salonica, eighth the first Salamik of the new Sultan in St. Sophia mosque, ninth a new cabinet formed, tenth the mutineers punished: all too wonderful!"

This seems another indication that God's day of redemption for the Moslem world may be ushered in by miracle touches, the more wonderful in their swiftness that they fall on the very heart of these slow-moving races. Who can say when they will be followed by a miracle touch of grace!

For God's way of working, as we see it revealed in these outward features, & as we gather it in watching the spiritual horizon, seems to be a working, not from the front, so to speak, but from the back: & thus the breaking into view can come in an instant, like the path through the

Red Sea, that opened, not gradually in front of the people by a west wind, but driven by an east wind all the night, till the last shore waves were cleft, & the way stood clear from end to end.

June 7.

Helen Freeman writes - - - "I am very happy this morning for the first Arab woman has had courage to come to us: she is the woman whose hand ^{M^{me}} Barrier is massaging, & as she is a person of much force of character, I expect others will follow."

It has been a long wait for this first step on their side, though her own visiting list gradually grows. They seem shy & suspicious at Relizane, being wholly unused to Europeans coming among them. I have tried to get a postcard to show their outward appearance, but evidently they have balked the photographer, & all have hidden their faces except 2 or 3 headdresses who look stolidly indifferent.

I am back in Algiers at last: there is a sense of the Spirit's brooding over the house, & specially over the band of children. Some of the details that I have been hearing are full of the stamp of His working - only they are best left in silence with Him - one rubs off the bloom in the telling.

Some of the outside can be told - one bit is that we have five little housemaidens now - the last importation among them is a girl of 12 or 13, a half sister of Chirra, Aissha by name. She is raw from the country & unused to discipline of any sort, such as being forbidden to look over the parapet of the roof into the excitement of the street below. We are thankful to have got her before her mother had placed her among the Jews.



1. - RELIZANE. - Le Village Negre.

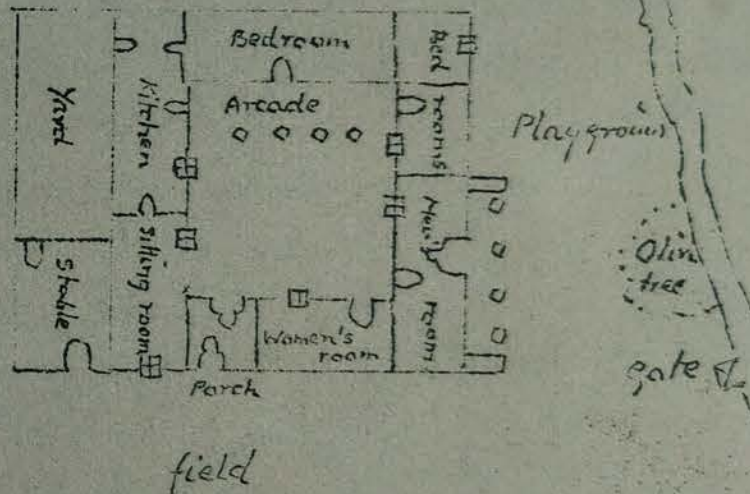


This head is so like her! She sleeps on a mat in Annie's room, & is getting really biddable for such an untrained young colt.

June 11

Down to Tslida at last to see how the new house gets on. All seems right & good so far. They have built the yard wall nearly as high as the house itself, but that is native! It is all native, with no trace of the "banal" European element. For instance the builders are busy now with the arches of the arcade in the court - 5 arches are being built on a scaffolding of wooden segments. Michel Olive raised a doubt, when we were there this morning, as to whether these same segments were all of one size. "Yes, O my master, they are quite of one size" was the reply - "but you must not mix them!"

This is the ground plan - between the house & the lane alongside, we have marked out a playground for the boys, with the shelter of an olive tree



in the hedge in the summer, - In the winter they will have the outside arcade, built on the pattern of those in their Zaouia compounds. Boys seem taking root here, as girls with us in Alger. "Are you coming up to our field?" asked a creature of about 6 today as we passed each other in the lane below. I felt quite proud of the joint proprietorship!

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June 15.

Such a lovely "beholding" today! I went with Michel Olives to the well, + he uncovered the mouth that we might look down. Instead of the still circle of water that I expected to see, it was all heaving + rippling in spreading rings. Then it ceased + grew quiet, + while I was wondering if my eyes could have deceived me, the tremor of life shot up through it again + all was repeated, till it grew glassy once more, as the periodic upburst from the hidden source below, sank down once more.

I never knew before what the "well of water springing up" meant. I thought of it vaguely as a springing up all the time - but this is so much more like God's way with our souls - a sudden rising + flooding of the underlying life, + then a sinking back into stillness. May "the Lord of the Two Worlds" as the Arabs call Him, make it true indeed!

June 21.

These last days have brought unfoldings east + west. - West first, in a derisivement of Helen Freeman's hope for reaching her unworked province of Oran, through the rousing of the Christian Colonists scattered here + there. Now M. Delabert, a French missionary among the Kabyles, has a free year before him, + has accepted her proposal that he + his family (which includes another pair of baby twins,) should go to Oran for headquarters, + that he should go tours in the interior, with a special view to stirring the Christian Colonists to care for their native workpeople.

Then, almost simultaneously, the eastern door has sprung open - oh such a glad one! for it is settled that Paul Villon + his wife should go down in the autumn to attempt the opening of our first desert station, in that oued Souf district among the sand dunes that has been on our hearts in love + prayer since the two visits that we paid it in the days of our long desert journeys of times past. Villon's heart has been strongly drawn there too, on each of his visits. The question was whether M^{me} Villon, who is far from strong, would be equal to

the journey (7 days march south of the rail-head at Biskra) + to the isolation from all things European that it involves. At first she shrank from the thought: we waited + prayed, + now her whole heart has turned towards going for next winter - beyond that we can tell nothing yet.

But what even this means, after all the years of heart-longing over that special bit of the South Land, can hardly be told. It took our hearts from the first with its weird loneliness among the sand-dunes + its people who spend their lives in fighting them from drifting into their palmgardens. It has developed in them a moral backbone that makes them a wholly different race from the dolce far niente Arab of the Coast.

And the Soufa maidens remain as a vision of the loveliest girl-life I have ever seen. They are brown-skinned, indigo-robed, with heads swathed in veils after a fashion of their own as to colour, being dyed in every gradation in varying proportions, from white, through lemon yellow, orange, + flame colour, to deep, terra-cotta. I can see their wearers now, sitting in circles round us, the picture of grace + sweetness, their spindles flying + their demure faces listening gravely, shewing no sign whether they understood or not. They must be wives + mothers long ago, those little maidens, + they have never heard again, for those military-ruled districts have been "out of bounds" to us, as you know. Hence the joy that at last those can go, who, by their French nationality, have a perfect right to stay!

Some anxious news came from Chira (our "housemaid" of last year) the other day - or rather news about her - a rumour that she had been divorced. The upshot was that Fatima, her sister, had to go off to her to find out the truth, some hours by train + diligence. Poor women, it is an expensive



June 24

matter for them to ascertain the truth on any subject: their menkind tell them, as much or as little as they judge expedient & they cannot read or write a letter: their only way is to go & see for themselves. This morning she brought Chrira back, round & beaming as ever. We saw at once by her spotless hair, that she is not divorced. — a divorced woman has to go about dirty & dishevelled to be in "good form"!

It was a long story: the résumé is that she had taught a hymn to some neighbours children, & their singing it had brought troubles & her husband had left her for a month. It all rang true, & the child-soul in her seems to have strengthened with something of a buffeting. The compromise is that her husband takes her to another town where she knows nobody, & will lodge her in a room in a European house, & lock her into it when he goes off to work.

July 4

A window of fresh possibilities has just opened: it may turn into a new & beautiful door. As we went out 2 days ago, Blanche Hawthorn & I, we saw pasted on the wall of the native house opposite ours, a bill of sale for another native house, in the thick of the Cirab quarter that rises above us. Something in that pink bill & the small sum named, took hold of us, & as I happened to be visiting that afternoon in that very street with Annie Whistler, we went in to look at the place & were still more taken. It would make such a "slumpost" both in position & character — a step down towards living among the people, such as never seemed possible here in Algiers. Today Blanche went there with Annie, & feels so sure that it is of God, that she is ready to take steps at once towards sending a bidder to the auction in 3 weeks time. It brings the same sense as the other houses he has given, of having been built exactly to the need, room by room.

Joy & sorrow have mingled these days over our housemaiden Aïsha — joy first, in a real touch of God on her hitherto unawake soul: there is something so wonderfully sweet about these little maidens when that touch has come to them. — then, swiftly the sorrow, in the coming fire of a rumour that her

9
mother has some burnous weaving on hand + needs her help. She went + sobbed when she heard that it must be, + our hearts were as sore as hers.

We have begun scattering for the summer: our last rally was at Blida, where we all met for the dedication of the new house: not that it is habitable yet, but it should be, + the settling in over, before we gather again. Helen Freeman chose its name - Dar el Ain. "The House of the Well".

She + I have come off for 10 days rest at Sidi Ferruch, a fishing village along the coast. One special beach is the home of shells - cowries + Venus' ears, + things like tiny green peas of the most delicate colour + hosts of others: the sunsets are reflected cloud for cloud in copper + gold + purple madder in the burnished waters of the bay, with groups of fishing boats on the shore, a series of pictures of peace.

Today's "find" was of another order, beautiful July 22
to the inward vision as well as to the outward. - it was clusters of lilies, white + fragile + fragrant, growing out of the hot salt sand that drifts into dunes round the juniper + lentist bushes that fringe the shore had



They spoke such a message of the reserve forces that had gathered below the surface + were welling over into a tide of life that scorned all the difficulties of its environment in sultry days + arid soil. Cannot "the same Lord over all" store the roots in His spiritual Creation, even though they have but the smothering sand-drifts of Islam around them!

Tomorrow I go back to Darr Naama, for it is the eve of the installing there of the first "Childrens Camp": Blanche Haworth has asked a dozen "gurgaffs" to come for a weeks stay

in the Arab court below the house, headed by Fata + Fateema as housemothers. Fateema, Fata's sister, has had a touch of "illuminating" we believe, in these last days, + the inner light has broken out in her dull face, with the kindling of the daydawn. Fata's old, nearly blind husband, wholly a Moslem still, completes the party.

They have been happy days. The first thing to meet us was the joyful news that the slumpst was secured, + that by such a hairsbreadth that we felt it to be God's direct gift. Through not knowing the rules of French auctions, the services of the special functionary who bids had not been obtained beforehand, + he arrived on the spot within 10 minutes of the critical point.

Then the Arab court here + its guests have been full of the touches of God's grace, + full of sunny gladness. The shrill tremolo "youyouyouyou" which marks all native rejoicing, from a wedding-feast downwards, resounds when the children are let out to play, or called in to eat. They return from the orchard, when meal-time comes, with heads wreathed like so many small Bacchuses with winding tendrils, + the few summer flowers that still survive the heat.

Fata's old husband was concerned by the second day, at the amount it must take to feed so many, even on strictly native lines, + begged urgently to be allowed to help to the extent of a precious franc that he had earned on the road by cutting grass the last two days -- a rare windfall for one with his failing sight.

We could tell many stories of the happenings: Today's was a very pretty one. His smallest daughter, the little pickle Melha, aged not quite two, went up to him + pointed to one of the pictures on the wall, shewing the Lord calling a little child to Him, + said "O father, look at Jesus!" "I have no eyes, O my daughter, I



cannot see" was the answer. The baby thing lifted her face to the picture + said "O Jesus, look at father!" — was not that a piece of heavenly wisdom? 11

The tribe went off this afternoon, + all seems silent + empty without them. They went round the place to say goodbye. "O trees remain in peace — o grass remain in peace: remain in peace o flowers. Dear little souls, it is sad that the city + its sin lie before them again. We dare not keep them a day beyond the week's leave given by their people, or we should not be trusted with them again. Things move slowly in these Moslem lands!" Aug 2

Fata's old husband said, on leaving, to his wife. "They are good people, + Jesus was good — I have heard bad things of the other prophets, but never in my life have I heard a bad thing about Jesus — thou mayest follow them." May it not be that the Lord has heard his baby's voice, + is looking on him with that look which brings heaven's light into the deepest darkness!

August is busy with various things that do not get fitted into ordinary working days. The first has been the setting up of the new zinc-plate press, whose history I gave last time. It has found its home in one of the out-buildings here, a cool vaulted place looking out into the garden. It will be beautiful if it becomes a fresh seedplot for God's kingdom. Aug. 8

Meantime Paul Villon is using his rest-days in fabricating ingenious camp furniture for his stay at El oued — packing cases for his goods + his books that will turn straightway when unpacked into cupboards + trestle tables — He is a born traveller — already he is longing to make El oued a base later on, whence to push forward to Ghadames, 17 days camel-ride beyond, on the Tripolitaine frontier!

May Oliver + the babies have come here for refuge from the Blida heat, to our jug. Aug. 18 The eye-baby has been flagging, + they are anxious about her: the boy is thriving, in spite of its being 103° even here, in the shade, these sirocco days. He is livelier + jollier, the hotter it is, just

like a cicale! This is a joy to his parents, who see him qualifying for a mission post down South. He has already been offered to Belaid as a companion to Timbuctoo & accepted!

Aug. 27

August has gone into its twenties, so September plans are coming to the front. I have longed to try Tefaha again for tenting, but it would have to be taken by itself, or at the end of another fourmèe, for opposition has been roused there, & opposition at the beginning of a tour means a following of suspicion all the way. I have had a great longing over the mountain range that lies between ~~that~~ + Jablat, but with no clue till just now, when Villon, with whom I was talking over the matter, told me of a young "garde forestier", a whole-hearted Christian man, who has just been appointed to a post in the heart of those very mountains. He is going to see whether it would be possible to make this a camping ground, & a centre whence to work.



Sept-10

Yes, the way is clearing. The Villons are to go & stay with this garde forestier, Laurent, & Blanche Haworth & I go to Jablat (their nearest village) hoping that friendly French in the neighbourhood may tell in our favour among the authorities. (The "Entente Cordiale" cannot be counted on yet in far away places, where much is in the hands of local officials). Jablat was the first place in which we made our experiences about mules & hill villages. That was 15 years ago now -

Tablat - Sept-18 -

The remembrance of it has stayed vividly in consequence - a dreary looking place it seemed then, for it was winter, & the earth-coloured hills were broken only by naked grey thorn-bushes & slippery with mud. Now it seems to have its share of beauty after its kind, for the earth is sunburnt instead of sodden, & the bare contours are golden in the sunlight & madder-pink in the evening, & their modellings remind one of the flanks of some great couchant lion or panther. In the olive groves that cling to the ravines of the riverbeds are the villages for which we have come. Years ago we found a real sense of sin in those villages

+ we have often longed, during the years when all was obstructed, to get back to them, feeling that Someday there will be a beacon light for God among these mountains.

They have been days of lights + shadows: lights over the villous valley, where in spite of some ^{Sept 29.} opposition from the officials, they have worked unhindered - gathering shadows round our path - culminating today in our being told, though most politely, that we must withdraw.

I will only tell about one of the villages - the focus will be clearer thus: Beni Tzelkassen is its name. It was on our second village day that we made for its stretches of olive trees, clustered on the hill side: we could trace among them a long chain of hamlets.



Our mule driver halted at the outskirts of the nearest, overhanging a gully, + we peered up among the twisted stems for a sign of life to serve as an introduction. At last a glimmer of red betrayed a woman, + then one + another gathered + sized to us a bit doubtfully. Our Arabic pretty reassured them, + soon we were sitting on the "doutane" of the first house - a seat of cement following its contour outside under the thatch. This was our first friend - she was a fearless

brown-eyed thing of about five, clad in a single calico garment nearly the colour of mother earth from much wearing + little washing. She attached herself to us + took us from hut to hut, + her mother + sister were the ones in that group who insisted on listening to what we had to say. The others were laughing + talking over us - the eldest of them bent on extracting a promise from us that if we came again we would bring her a cake of scented soap - very strong of musk.

The top house of that hamlet was the warabout, perched on a ledge overlooking a



great panorama. The marabout himself was a somewhat forbidding, looking old man who sat on the terrace telling his beads. Gradually a thaw came, interspersed by a good deal of waggish interruption from his wife, a bright eyed old thing, with hair dyed carrot colour by henna.

He looked at us in a puzzled way - "yes - there were two like you who came here 3 or 4 years ago with these same books - they went about among the people + ate with them" - (it was ourselves - only alas, 15 years had slipped, not 3 or 4!) He listened + thawed, + thawed + listened + took joyfully a gospel for his son, + said would we stay the night if we came again - he had 2 or 3 rooms + would give us one.

Then he got up + led us to within calling distance of the next cluster of ghourbis. Again a glum reception - the owner of the nearest was lying full length under an olive, + hardly stirred. Then we saw his face + under it - sore illness + Ramadan fasting had made it white + drawn under its bronzing, - he seemed too limp to move. His wife came up + stood alongside - a wild looking beautiful young thing in scanty garments, with a baby strapped on her back + another child half blind with ophthalmia at her side. We talked to her, + advised what remedies lay within her reach for her husband, whose suffering seemed to be pleurisy. Then we went on talking to her about heaven, + sin, + forgiveness, as simply as we would in England to a little child - + we saw the man was listening + his face was softening. Our hearts ached for him, lying there so patiently, with never a mouthful of nourishment or a spoonful of water to help him through - thinking thus to serve the Father of Mercies.

It ended with another Gospel staying behind, and a parting with a warm hand-grasp - rare among the Arabs, whose partings are as callous as their greetings are effusive.

This man's face + manner followed us in the days that follow after with a prayerburden + sense of pressure towards seeing him again. The clouds had gathered, in



the meantime over our prospects, + we knew today's visiting would be our last. But we were not forbidden yet - we would go + find him once more.

We were off soon after 6 a.m., + oh the joy of it, as we got to the olive trees there he was, tattering with a stick to meet us, for he had seen us coming. We had some grapes for him, + he stowed them lovingly in his burnous hood, not to be tasted till the release of sundown. We had flowers too, + the children - not fasting yet - ate the fallen rose petals as if they were sugarplums. He showed us his book, safely hidden, + we talked out the bits of God's truth that were burning in our hearts for him, with that sense of relief that comes when a message is in it.

Time - or rather space - fails for telling of the other hamlets of the village. It took us till the late afternoon to go through them all, speaking to one or two groups in each. They rose tier above tier on the rockledges of the hill, the last one crowning its summit. All were full of strong intelligent women, who laughed together over their memories of us across these 15 years. Will the eternal things grip them this second time? And will half a generation pass before they can hear again? Oh the awful spiritual destitution of them! And through the mountain ranges that lie behind them, they have not heard so much as once. That is why I have wanted to make visible this one village among the countless others.

The last of its series of huts was reached by a scramble up the shale. It gave us a clue to the reason why the two nearest clusters had been fougher than those below, for this proved to be the marabout village of the little tribe, armed to the teeth in its fanaticism, + dominating its neighbours. Sorrowfully we went off at last, + turned for a last sight of its band of women, silhouetted against the western sky. We called up "You will not forget". All the answer was "You will not forget our words" + they hurled the shout of the sheheda down the hillside after us.

We had just one more hearing under the olives below while the mules were being brought: + the last words we heard, sad in themselves, had a horizon of light behind them. "Your words have spoiled our religion for us". Oh that in the end it may be that blessed spoiling where with the candle light is spoiled by the sunrise!

16 On our return came, as I said above, the deathknell to our hopes of getting further among the ^{Algiers, Oct 20} Tablat hills. We have to learn once more to take our hands off, + wait for God's re-opening of our way in that ~~direction~~. Neither would it be best under the circumstances, to push on to Bousaada as we had hoped — so sorrowfully we turned back to Algiers, + went off west instead of east, ending at Miliana, the next new hope of extension. Mabel Grawloff + her cousin, Mary Walling, are due for starting there in 2 or 3 weeks, + we had not yet secured them a roof over their heads.



This is their mountain, the Zaccar, seen from some miles off. Miliana itself lies hidden by the spur on the left. After securing the place, we came to terms over the cottage outside the walls, that had seemed the right one in the early spring. If we had been 3 hours later it would have been lost to us by another offer, after having stood empty for 6 months.

A great longing has come into our hearts over Algiers visiting this winter: it has sprung out of the check at Tablat, + the heart hunger that such a check increases tenfold over the unreached villages. The longing hope for Algiers is that women from these out of the way districts are constantly now coming up to the capital, for weeks or months at a time, to accompany their husbands in the search (mostly in vain) for work. If God will guide our steps to the hearts He has made ready, + give them the touch of kindling, they could go back far + wide with the living sparks, to the places we can hardly hope to reach, however many we might be.

The very first day's visiting brought us across a woman from Bir Rabalou, the centre that lies next to Tablat, in the very line we should have taken if we had followed on our way east as we had hoped: + not a visiting day has passed since without forging fresh links with untouched regions. It brings a great breath into these oppressive streets, to feel that

in one day we can visit the mountains, the plains + the desert, through these souls that have found their way here. The tide of the Algiers population rushes in + out more rapidly every year - May God help us in buying up its opportunities.

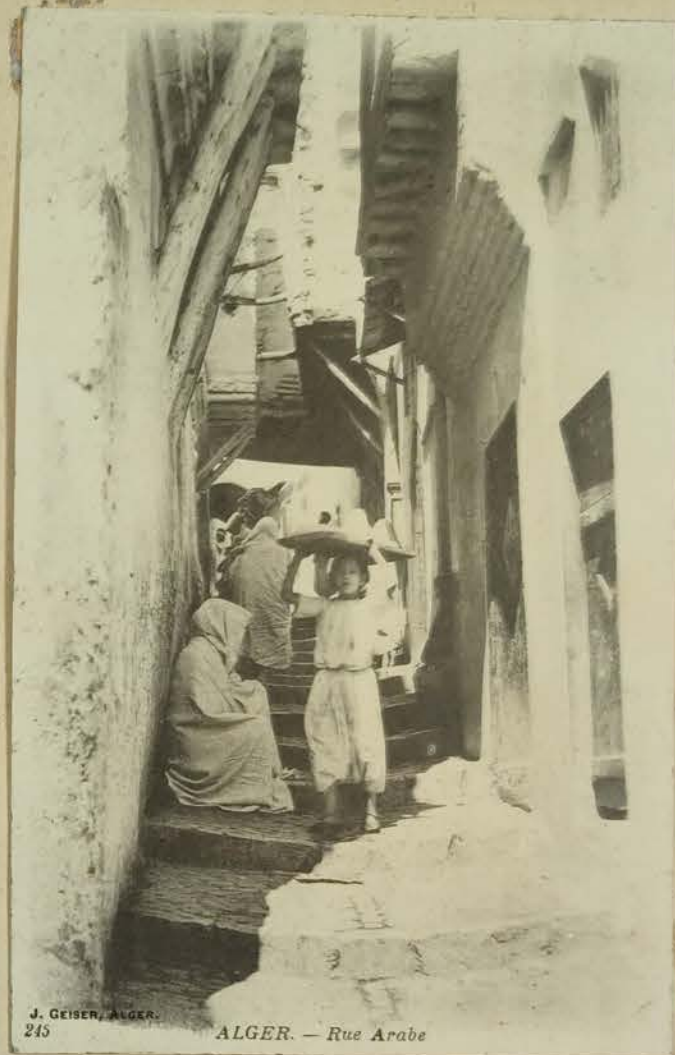
Oct. 25.

I wonder whether I told, a couple of years ago, about a family that we called "the locusts"? (a widowed sister of Fatima + Chira + her 3 baby daughters) They came to stay with us for a while + would swarm all over the house + devour their day's portion of food at one meal. We heard a rumour lately that they want to come up again, as the gherbi they live in is wanted for a stable. Blanche Haworth welcomes the thought of housing them all in Dar Naama, + Fatima has gone down to investigate the matter in their village. She has returned without them (these Arab plans take long to get under weigh) but with tidings of the Kouiba girl Aïssa whose stay with us in the summer was cut short. The glimmer that sprang in her soul just before she left seems still unquenched. Its manifestations are limited: She will sing her hymns, whether they are approved or not, + she had refused to go to a wedding of a questionable character, with the decision "It is not in my road." This gives hope that she is holding on.

Oct. 29.

We have with us, these days, Pastor Pedersen + his wife, from Denmark; it was they who sent us Edel Jensen, our first Danish helper, in the spring, + now they have brought another, Marie Hanson, who will be with Edel as Mission Helper at El Bim. The Pedersens are full of eager sympathy

A bit of the Algiers
Whirlpool.



+ longing to help.

This month has brought also the incoming of Mary Krabbing with Mabel Grantoff, + of Kittie Lurie + Millicent Roche. — Alice Mc Troy, of the Faith Mission, will be here in a day or two, + our other two Dames, Alma Krebs + Ellen Dagenskolw, a fortnight hence, will complete the filling up of our ranks.

Yesterday + today were the "Two days with God" with which the winter campaign begins. "The doors being shut ... came Jesus" was our first word, + it has been true: the fragrance of His Presence lingers still.

Algiers Nov. 5.

Next day came our first farewelling, + Mr. Pedersen commended to God the Villans for Cuvel Souf, Mabel Grantoff + her cousin for Miliana, + Michel Olives for the new start in the new Mission house at Tslida. Since then Helen Freeman has left again for Relizane, so our first twelve are scattering into a very thin fighting line. "Today brought the goodbye to the Villans, + they are en route for Biskra. Tomorrow will see them through that desert gate of El Kantara that seemed to shut so fast behind us seven years ago. That it should open again, + open to two of our number going to attempt settling down in that remotest corner of all our journeyings, would have seemed a wild dream then." Surely there is a sequel" (Prov. 23.18. R.V. margin) was His word to us in those dark days, + He has made it true.

There are Relizane souls where a stirring has begun to come. One of them is the Chrira of whom I wrote last March. The



El Kantara. The desert gate. J. G. G. Alger

young wife of a well-to-do man, still listens persistently, + seems to drink in silently the word of life.

There is another in whom Helen Freeman is much interested... a middle-aged woman of a Derrist family, named Fatima. The first time Helen visited her, + talked with her + her household, she looked very sorrowful. "Are you ill, or unhappy?" she asked her at the end. "I am not ill", she answered. "I am sad - if I had been a boy + had gone to school, I am certain that I could have replied to you, but in our land the girls learn nothing, + I know not what to say." - And yet she listens + listens, + a little before Helen left in the summer, she saw the Fears in her eyes, + again asked why she was troubled. "I am sad when you read about the blessing there was in the old time, + when I see how the world is now" - such was her new reason for grieving... Other souls - one Jewess + one Spanish woman, are moving out towards the light. - So the lonely fight out there is not in vain.

Nov. 18.

In Algiers more + more dear girls come every week - the daily average is over 20 now - we count this time as very precious with them, + specially with the older ones. Several of them are veiled now for the walk to + fro, + that means that they will soon be shut up, prisoners for the rest of their girlhood. Another thing that throws much into the balance these days, is that 2 or 3 of them - notably Zubeida, Tamani + Hawawach - I put down their names for special prayer - have come to the parting of the ways where their child-love for the Lord + their parents fanaticism must come to "variance" - tacit if not yet declared. - if they try to drag the two paths into a parallel they must become untrue + double. We need such heavenly wisdom in dealing with this crisis, + in the complications that must come if they are to follow the King whose diadem down here is "but of thorns".

More + more country-women too are coming to light in the visiting. The visiting lies heavily

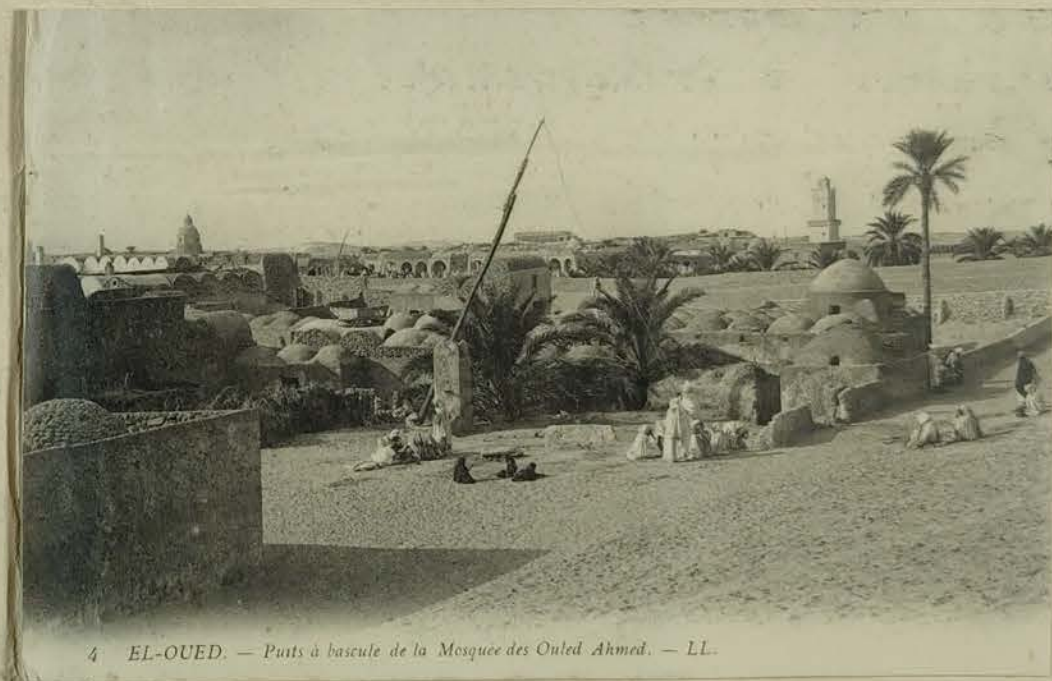
²⁰ on my heart - we get so little done - it may be we are meant to concentrate just now on the homes whence the children come, for boys as well as girls bring us in touch with many. Laurent Olives, the brother of Michel, who has been helping us for some months is getting a steady hold on the middle sized boys - the scamps of 10 to 14 - that we have never had till now - He is making furniture for Blida + Miliana in our café-workshop, + is never without half a dozen of them doing their own amateur bits of carpentering alongside. He gathers them up week by week for their Bible class, + they + the smaller boys who still come for the painting, have shewn a spirit of quiet listening which is a new thing.

Nov. 24.

The first letters have come from El Oued. They are installed in the house of their camel-driver, Jahar. + cleaning + repairing are still going on - a necessary sequence to taking a native house. It has three windowless rooms of different sizes, + an arcade where they can have the boys + girls classes, turn about. Visitors come in numbers, for it is still the early days of favour with ... man. Oh the joy that Christ's banner is set up at last in that desert land! The French authorities take the line of discouragement, telling them that it is the religious centre of Algeria, + that they are wasting their time in coming thus to take the bull by the horns - but they raise no opposition.

Dec. 6

We heard yesterday another of the stories of God's working with barely a touch of the



4 EL-OUED. — Puits à bascule de la Mosquée des Ouled Ahmed. — LL.

human fool - stories that fill us with hope for the surprises that God may be keeping for the world to come. Some may remember that Chrira, our housemaid of last year, had been divorced by her first husband. He was good to her + really loved her, but this, as is so often the case where real love exists in a Moslem home, roused such wild jealousy in his mother that she made life a misery to both till the young wife + her deformed girl-baby were sent away. They have heard lately, from a country woman who came up from his village, that he passed away not long ago. She told the story of his passing. As death drew near, his father had tried to make him "witness" to Mahammed, but in vain. Then they got in a Moorish marabout to win from him the creed "there is no God but God + Mahammed is the prophet of God" - the Moslem's password into paradise. - again there was no response. "Poor fellow, thou art not with thy reason" was the marabouts excuse. "Yes, I am with my reason", was the answer. "but I witness to Tesus - Chrira knew about Him - I want Chrira - I witness to Jesus + Chrira" + as nothing would move him, he was left to die as a "blasphemer".

Poor darkened souls that stretch out their hands to their one dim ray of the Eternal light - so dim this ray must have been - for Chrira's knowledge in those days was but head-knowledge, + not much of that - + we cannot remember that any of us ever saw him, unless it may have been May Olives one day in his village (a day that seemed a fiasco, for the authorities were irate.) Did not the Hands of the Great High Priest receive the bit of smoking flax + kindle it in His Temple above? Does He not watch, it may be, far + wide through these Moslem lands, souls such as his -

"upward tending, all though weak
- like plants in mines which never saw the sun,
"But dream of him, + guess where he may be,
"And do their best to climb + get to him:"