

Algiers Mission Band

1912
2



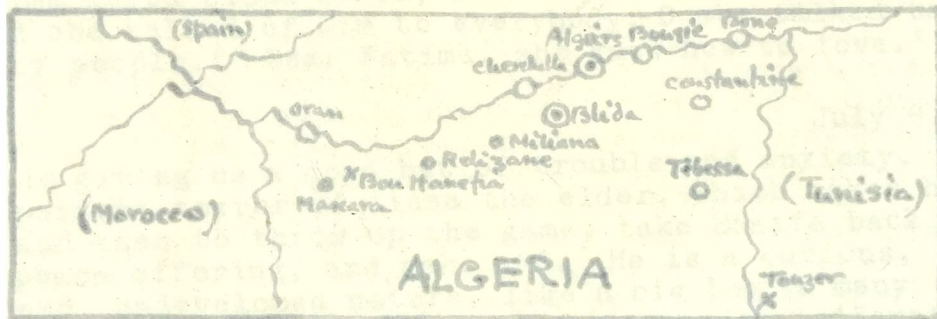
Journal 1912. (No. 2.)

Algiers Mission Band

Journal vol. 2

1912

sketch map of Algeria



A.M.B. Stations in working order •

" " in preparation X

Stations for Arab work of other societies ○

142

July 4.

The second half of the year opens with a fresh soul safe in port. F. H. Freeman writes from Relizane: "Dear Fatima is gone; she passed away as one falling asleep. I was with her twice yesterday, for the first time I went the room was full of people, and she asked me to come back and read to her in the evening, which I did. She could not speak then, but there was a wonderful sense of peace in the room. Si Harrath said: 'Fatima loved Sidna Aissa; I have seen her cry for love of Him, and she talked of Him to everybody; O she talked to a great many people.' Dear Fatima, she knew how to love."

July 6.

Hamdan is giving us a good bit of trouble and anxiety. He gets a perfect terror of Aissa the elder, which makes him ready now and then to throw up the game, take Hanifa back to him as a peace offering, and make off. He is a curious, undisciplined, undeveloped nature, like a big boy in many ways, though he is 22; impulsive, thoughtless, inconsiderate, rough. This morning his face boded a storm, and so did the expression of his fez, which he cocks on one side when he is "out" with the world in general. I suggested that he should pray. "I will not pray to-day I think," was his

answer, "the Lord Jesus is tired; I will let Him rest!" The storm broke, and he hurled one of his heavy shoes at the dear woolly pate of Hamido. Hanifa flashed up in indignation, and Hamdan went and sat on the outer door step in shame, his fez laid down. At last he consented to pray; then came a call to Hanifa without looking round, "Come and kiss my head." After a little demur she stooped down and did so; he gave her a bit of bread to eat with him, and peace was restored for one more day.

July 9.

The clouds have been low again, and I do not know what we should have done without Mustapha's help. He is here these days assisting with page sorting and Plex printing for last year's Journal, and has been a real aide-de-camp, gentle and tactful as a woman, wearily dragging his lame foot by the hour between whiles to steer Hamdan away from Aissa, his plain face shining with inward light every time he lands him back to work alongside him in the reading-room of "Dar el Fedjr." He (Hamdan) has to be humoured like a child, for he is not in a responsible state. Whether it is that his mind is unhinged, or that it is a possession of the enemy, or the result of drugging, or a combination of any or all, we cannot be sure, but the restlessness and unreasoning terror

and fits of fury are such that we have to keep constant guard over Hanifa. This is simplified by our having moved over to 'Dar el Fedjr' for the summer months, and we either have her to sit with us in the top house or go to keep her company in the douira. It is getting on her nerves, and no wonder, for she is a highly-strung creature, and we believe that it is for conscience sake that she holds on with him instead of going back to her people for refuge.

July 14.

I was called off to-day by a summons from Boualem, begging us to go up to Rue Palmier at once, for that Yamina had almost got Chrira. True enough, when we arrived we found the latter taking refuge in a neighbour's room, and that to pacify her sister-in-law she had said she would go to stay with her that afternoon. The whole question was very complicated. Aissa the elder was extremely angry because Boualem had given notice to leave the house of which he is landlord, and had brought down on his head a debt of five years standing for his marriage expenses, which had stood over only partly paid. Boualem had offered to find a surety and to pay it off by degrees, but Aissa had cornered him, and said it must be paid altogether and at once or he would summon him to-morrow. By nightfall F. H. F. had found a

solution and the crisis was passed; for Aissa, thinking he had him in his hand, had said that if it was paid up he might live where he pleased. And Boualem, with a shining face, says that now there is no more hold on him and that he can go right on ahead.

July 16.

I have been thinking how the next step of God's promise is here in bud. "An hundredfold more houses and lands," that was last year's fulfilment, and how we longed then for all that lay between that first and last clause. And now the "brethren" that head the intermediate list have begun to gather; night after night, with the eager faces of Boualem and Omar over the study of Acts together, we feel the linking of real brotherhood of spirit it is like watering thirsty plants to see their eagerness after their long day's work (Boualem is up at 4.30 every morning) over the simple Word of God.

July 17.

Day after day we have had a battle to keep Hamdan and Hanifa in the douira. Aissa seems to have a kind of mesmeric hold of him amounting to fits of absolute terror, and yet he cannot keep away from him; the poles of fear and of attraction

alternate, and finally to-day, to our distress and that of his wife, who longs to stay on with us, he marched her off and dumped her down in their own room, so as to make an end of the feud. Thereby he got himself into a bad tangle; straight-way Hanifa's people brought her a country aunt as guest to nail him there, and on the top of that came an announcement from Yamina and Aissa that they also were coming to stay, and finally it was only by a breach of hospitality, which could only come from desperation on the human side, that they let the aunt go back to her sister and escaped again to us. Fresh tangles came, for little Hamido had been left playing in the street, and Aissa took possession of him, and held him as a hostage for an old debt on Hamdan's furniture. Both Hamdan and Hanifa were willing to let it go and begin life again, but Aissa outwitted this. The furniture was old and worn; he must have the value he paid for it. We felt the whole thing was entirely unfair on Aissa's part, and we prayed, not because we did not see a way, but because we did; for, wonderful to tell, a gift of almost the amount needed had come from England, saying that the giver felt it might be wanted in some way for that family. It seemed to us that this was God's solution, and we took it. "I can do nothing with this man," said Aissa, as he gave him the receipt, "God is with him; I did not want the money, I have enough

till I die, I only wanted to stop him in his road. But God has made him a bridge in the sea; I cannot conquer God.’’

July 24.

We have been a bit troubled over Boualem by hearing round about that he had been very angry with Aissa over his action ten days ago: but saw no way of bringing it home to him without breaking confidence, and now God has dealt with the matter. He told us to-night of a dream that had come: ‘‘I dreamt that a great snake was coiling round my foot and leg, and you were there, and in horror I called to you; you said to the snake, ‘In the name of Jesus leave go.’ It uncoiled and fell like a rope, and I awoke almost dead with joy.’’ These Arabs need no help in interpreting their parables. The shining of his face told that his soul had got free.

July 28.

The fight still goes on as hard as ever. Our reason for wanting to keep Hamdan and Hanifa is that there is a strike of some weeks standing going on in the Algiers port, which means that Hamdan can get no work, and if they went back to their own room he would run hopelessly into debt with Aissa, and thus be again in his power. We have been finding him odd jobs, and finally sent him last week to Blida, where there

was the hope of work for him, and Mustapha with him. To-day, to our dismay, he re-appeared, minus his fez and blouse, and very cross. He and Mustapha had stupidly tramped at night and were set on by thieves, and we are much afraid that more of trouble lies behind it. This evening has come a fresh onset from another quarter. Boualem and Chrira are here for a few days. This afternoon he came in with a wan look that he gets when trouble is on. He had been to their room for something, and found there a summons from Aissa to appear before the French Court over another debt he had raked up, i.e., for the furniture of their room at the time of their marriage. The only available way of escape was that Boualem should take the sum set aside for their journey to Tangiers, and let that stand over. Poor Boualem, it was a bitter moment for him letting the hope fade. And then the root of the dismay came to light. "But supposing I die before I am baptized, should I be saved?" When he was comforted on that score, and told he could be baptized here, his face cleared. In any case, it would hardly have been possible for him to get there this summer, for through Aissa's intervention he has been unable as yet to start getting his official passport. We are sorry, for it would have made a breach between him and the past that is wanting as yet. There is an unsatisfactory want of action on his part about leaving the Rue Palmier

house, which he felt he should do before Ramadan. No new room within their means has turned up, and he leaves it all in abeyance. It looks strange that over this, as well as over work for Hamdan, prayer has as yet brought no sequel: "Neither hast Thou delivered this people at all," was the prelude of the Exodus, "He answered her not a word," was the first step to the answer to the cry of the Syrophenician woman, and the words come back that were given us last summer by Mr. Daintree at the closing meeting of "The Olives" on that woman's story, and the other words, "Asleep on a pillow," and "We trusted that it should have been He that should have redeemed Israel." This was a summary which gave of their threefold teaching.

"Trust in a Christ who is not working,"

"Trust in a Christ who seems not to be caring,"

"Trust in a Christ who seems to have failed,"

Amen, . . . if such is the path by which He leads!

Aug 5.

Hanifa said on Saturday that Hamdan had had a dream which seemed to have struck him. To-day he told it to us. He was standing by a pool and some one came and pushed him right into the middle of it, out of his depth. "I may as well put my head under and die at once," he said to himself in his

dream, . . . so like our poor daft, easily-daunted Hamdan!
Then a voice called to him from the shore, and he saw there a
tall, bearded figure. "What doest thou?" said the voice.
"I am going to put my head under and die," he replied.
"No, look at me," said the man on the bank--"look at me and
move thy hands a little as if thou wert swimming." And as he
did so he found himself moving to the shore and safely landed.

He is still far from being on the shore, but I think he
has settled not to put his head under yet!

Aug 7.

These are heavy days again. Poor Mustapha, who seemed
doing so bravely, has had a terrible fall, card-playing, and
stealing from his aunt to make good the loss; hoping, of
course, to be able to refund by gaining back again before it
was discovered. We think a cousin was to blame in drawing
him in, and that it is best that he should go straight off to
Tangiers, for his ticket had just been taken. He is miserable
and ashamed rather than broken down as yet.

Aug. 10.

F. H. Freeman and S. Perkin went off to-day, so all the
more we are cast back on the prayer forces in England and on
the measureless prayer forces of "the Priest upon His Throne"
above.

Aug. 13.

To-day, at the Ali Medfa house, there was a perturbed hush before the door curtain was raised, and no wonder, for there sat Aissa the elder. He looked a bit embarrassed, and it seemed a good chance for going straight at him, so I told him how we were all expecting him to help us as much in the future as he had tried to hinder us in the past how there were scores of people praying for him, and he could not prevent them! I read him the story of Saul of Tarsus, and said that a like crisis was expected for him. He looked sometimes cross, sometimes half-amused, sometimes inattentive, but on the whole he bore it well without a word of self-defence or argument. Then Chrira struck in boldly about his coming over to Christ's side, and said that if only he would come to our house with Boualem and hear! That brought the first note of assent: "If God sends me a dream I will come." And with that I left.

Aug. 14.

New moon last night, and the Ramadan fight has begun already over Chrira, our housemaid. Her husband, after a battle in the night over trying to get her to swear she would fast, summoned her to the Cadi for his orders.

The Cadi read the complaint, and commanded "Fast."

“I will not fast,” she replied.

“Fast.”

“I will not fast.”

“Fast.”

“I will not fast,” was repeated.

“Hast thou forsaken the Prophet?”

“I had hold of a rope and found it rotten. I let go and laid hold of a chain,” was her answer.

“Have a care that thou dost not hang by thy neck by this chain. How long hast thou been with those English?”

“Since I was ten or twelve.”

“It will behove thy husband to take thee away where thou wilt never see them again.”

“Thou canst cut the branches off a tree,” she replied, “but thou canst not cut off its roots; the roots are there, and the branches will spring again.”

Much more passed. Her husband said he would kill her if she broke the fast, and the Cadi said he might that he would not blame him. They brought the Koran to take her oath, and she refused to swear; twice when there was a pause

she turned to go and was brought back. Finally they let her off the swearing if she would say that she would fast. "I will fast with my lips, if I must," she said at last, when she saw no escape, "but I will not fast with my heart." And we feel that the seeming defeat was better far than the half-victory of secret eating in former years.

"I know full well
How far high failure leaps the bounds
Of low successes."

Aug. 15.

With the men things go more quietly. They compared notes over the day's experiences at the prayer meeting this evening. Hamdan and Hanifa had eaten together, though not venturing on cooking. Omar had had his mid-day meal at the cook shop of a semi-drunken Arab, who, having thrown opinion to the winds, keeps his trade going in Ramadan. Boualem had bought bread and grapes on his way to work, and had eaten them for his dejeuner. So far so good, but we are afraid for Boualem's Chrira: They have consented to the mother's urging and gone to the Ali Medfa house on a visit, under pretext that the mother is ill and needs her help in the mighty cooking that goes on all Ramadan. Boualem has a hope (I think a true one) that this visit may mean a chance of getting

at Aissa the younger, yet one feels the heart sinking over any compromise; we have seen its fatal down-hill tug too often.

Aug. 17.

Last night it seemed as if the hour of deliverance for Hamdan had struck, for Boualem brought word that he could begin work at his workshop to-morrow morning. But alas, when I went to congratulate Hanifa to-day, I found her in the depths, and wearing the violet head handkerchief, which is always a storm signal, whereas her pink bridal one means fair weather! Hamdam had come in very cross before Boualem arrived, she does not know why, and it had ended in a violent quarrel, in which he had struck her.

Aug. 18.

It seems that behind it lay a fresh quarrel with Aissa, who had heard a rumour that he was breaking the fast, and summoned him to account for it. "Yes, I am eating," he answered, and took up a fig and ate it before him and his workpeople. Aissa spat at him and called him a pig, and a scuffle ensued, in which Aissa kicked him. So he went home in far from a martyr spirit and quarrelled with Hanifa, and nearly escaped having her taken from him, which he fully deserves. . . . Meantime, to-day has brought us a joy,

for Omar has captured the boy chum, Amar Ben el Hadj, whom he had coerced five years ago into denying Christ. He brought him to us this evening. He is a grown man now, married, and living with his wife's family. Boualem and Omar went hard for him, and he took away a Testament.

Aug. 20.

Aissa the younger came to the reading to-night wanting medicine or a doctor for his father, who has come up from the country very ill dying, he looks. . . . I went this afternoon, just before the cannon sounded, to tell him that the doctor would come. Rabbah was in the room below the first sight of him since he came, a little fellow, to the Sunday Class fifteen years ago. He is a fairer likeness of Aissa the older, and very shy.

But the joy was over Aissa the younger. As we sat at supper there, he said spontaneously, "I want to tell you about last night. I have had a great many clouds in the sky, black and heavy but last night a little wind began in my soul, and the clouds commenced to move, and I begin to see the sun again." O, praise God! He seemed to see that fear of Aissa the elder had been the outset of his going back. We traced in the spring his down grade to the time when we had given him a Bible picture to replace one of Mecca

on his wall. He had at first put them side by side, and then, at Aissa's instigation, so we heard after, . . . had taken down the Bible one and left the other! May the "little wind" grow rushing and mighty, and sweep his sky clear.

Aug. 22.

Since Sunday week Ben Aissa has been coming off and on, and now has begun appearing regularly at the evening reading. I committed him to Omar to explore as to sincerity. He was dubious at first . . . now his confidence in the lad's earnestness seems increasing, and when they all go off together at 9 p.m., he and Boualem have dealings with him, of a forcible kind, to judge by the bits he let drop as quotations!

Aug. 23.

Now the battle is raging round little Fatima. Her husband allowed her tacitly to break the fast for the first ten days, and then last night turned upon her and took her down to the commissaire, and then this morning to the Cadi, who backed his demand for divorce. It stands over till her marriage papers are obtained from Boudawaw. The Cadi, his aoun and the native police spat at her by turns seven times each as she went out. Her heart has risen to the fray, and she does not seem oppressed, only anxious to see what is right to do.

Aissa the younger was here again last night, and Amar Ben el Hadj, with a clever young brother-in-law. How one longs for Si el Yazeed for them!

Aug. 26.

Little Fatima has decided that she must obey the Cadi's order and fast: the alternative is divorce, which means re-paying her husband her marriage portion, and giving up to him her five children. We do not feel it is ground lost. The object of breaking Ramadan is the giving a definite witness to having broken free from Islam, and as she and Chrira have done that publicly at the Cadi's, it answers the same purpose in a more open fashion; it is the spirit, instead of the letter.

Aug. 27.

Aissa the younger has had a dream that has laid fresh hold of him. The Lord came to him and said, "Thou has been in much darkness, I will take it away," and He pressed His hands over his eyes and wiped the darkness out, and then drew with His finger an arch on his forehead, which meant a rainbow, with His promise that the clouds should not return. "Go forward and fear not to eat," He had said. And he and his wife have both broken the fast in their room.

Aug. 28.

That poor foolish Hamdan has done for himself once more. He was summoned to a funeral on Monday, and went off, like the impulsive creature he is, without giving notice at his works, and has been dismissed. Hanifa, seeing yesterday that this was imminent, had on her mauve head handkerchief, and to-day has changed it to the deepest purple. And no wonder, for Hamdan was lying prostrate on the floor, declaring he would cut her throat from ear to ear and run away.

Aug. 30.

Complications over the story are coming out, that look as if a want of veracity has been at the root of his misfortunes and his failures. There is a serious doubt whether there was any funeral in the case, and clues are coming that point to a good deal of bare-faced lying in the past, of which poor little Hanifa was cognizant, but kept silent by him. If this was so, it explains why there has been no real deliverance from his troubles and his sins.

Sept. 3.

One onward step this Ramadan, for which I have longed for years, has been the taking round of a magic lantern to the houses, where the women sit for hours gossiping together

between their night feasts. Last summer brought the gift of a portable Church Army lantern, and it is being used nearly every night, and with such a listening that we have altered plans and kept M. Ridley and Mlle. Gayral back from Blida, to follow up the openings that come for it day after day.

Sept. 4.

Things seem coming to a crisis over our poor Hamdan and Hanifa, for she is hiding we think with neighbours, and that her people know where, but Hamdan does not. A. Krebs met him, a woe-begone figure, in the Ali Medfa Street, with the hardness gone out of his face, and he says he will come to-night. At 8 p.m. he was back, imploring me to come home with him, that Hanifa was dying. She proved to have escaped from the charge of Aissa the elder, and after some vicissitudes was safely in her room, but certainly extremely ill, and that as a result of his violent outburst of temper. We often fear for her a fatal heart failure. If she had been less ill Aissa would have taken her down to the Cadi and got a divorce, as it is, her breakdown has saved the situation once more. And Boualem, seeing the one thing for Hanifa is quietness and peace, has got the foreman of his works to take Hamdan back on the staff to-morrow. Poor

fellow, he is like a great child when I got there last night, I found he had brought to comfort her a huge water melon and a honey stick, and was gazing at her most pathetically, and, notwithstanding all his sins, she looked as if she had got back to her refuge!

It is a comfort to leave them thus far at one again, for to-morrow I go off for four or five weeks, leaving A. Krebs in charge, and E. Thorpe soon to be there as second. . . .

The one for whom we feel that Ramadan has meant defeat here is our poor old Hawawash. She maintains with all her might that she asked God to show her what to do, and that He told her to fast. . . . But the light has gone out of her face, and she is restless and touchy, showing that conscience is at work. It is the tenacity of the past that has held her bound for years of twilight.

Sept. 14.

B. G. L. H. got back a few days ago from her six weeks in England, and we have come for the inside of a fortnight to Majorca as being the nearest place for getting a breath of other air and surroundings. Yesterday evening we got on the little boat that crosses once a week to Palma, and sunrise found us there. It broke over a bay dappled round with low buildings, centering in their town clusters around the

cream-coloured pile of a huge medieval cathedral. On shore, all had those quaint touches that make the charm of a new country. The first novel sight was a cab stand like a row of bathing machines mounted on balustrades, of which B. G. L. H. desires to take one back for carting the native children up to Dar Naama.

There are homelike details interwoven (home meaning, of course, the African shore), from the relics of the Moorish possession of long ago, and deeper than that goes the linking, for Palma was the birth-place of Raymond Lull, and the island is full of the memories of that long, lonely life of fighting for his vision that the Saracens were to be won, not by force of arms, "but by love and prayer and the shedding of tears and blood."

Soller, Sept. 18.

We have finally come over to the north coast of the island; so beautiful it is with the bare heights of the sierras above us and the wildest luxury of vegetation in the valleys below. From the valleys upward mount the terraces of olive trees; some of them are known to be of 500 years standing. The twistings and gnarlings of them and the patient endurance with which they still bring forth fruit in old age are beautiful. No matter if their branches have been

shorn off one after another, or if their roots have hardly a foothold left, or if their hearts are worn to a shell, there is still the soft crown of grey-green waiting for another crop of berries, and yet another.

Sept. 24.

To-day we got to the loveliest place of all; a road round the promontory showing the whole sweep of the coast line, where mountain after mountain plunges down into the deep blue of the sea. On one of the spurs lies the site of Raymond Lull's College, and below it the cave where he used to go and pray when his disciples became trying!

Sept. 26.

And yet one more sight before we leave this afternoon for Algiers--that was the Church of San Francisco, the birthplace of Moslem missions, for it was here that Raymond Lull's call came to him, and he was, as Dr. Zwemer says, 'knighted by the Pierced Hands for a spiritual crusade.' And there in a side chapel, bronze-tinted with age, he lies awaiting the day when he that soweth and he that reapeth shall rejoice together.

Algiers, Sept. 28.

The first news to meet us was the joyful hope of two fresh Short Service Candidates; and P. Hurst and M. Freeman will

be out again next month, the latter in time for the Rally, for she is returning as an A.M.B., and as an A.M.B., too, we have welcomed E. Thorpe back. The two new ones are the outcome of the Bognor Camp, where, at last, the thought of Short Service seems to have caught fire. The girls there rose "en masse" to the thought and subscribed to help a representative to come, and more of themselves are on the horizon. E. Thorpe has some old Olivites also in view, so out of our two seed leaves of last winter the spring growth is breaking, and it is beautiful to have fresh help in prospect, and to feel one may dare to make lists of the new things which come into view as possible "means of grace" for the people, instead of having mercilessly to shut down fresh thoughts because all hands are already over-burdened and all days over-full.

Oct. 1.

Yesterday F. H. F. and I started for a fortnight in her Oran parish before the Rally brings us together for the winter's start.

The first and chief objective is Mostaganem, the seaport of Relizane, to see her Chrira, Si Mouloud's widow, who has gone back to live there with her father. A hard place, report says; it has only had one chance, and that was for two or

three years when the N.A. occupied it temporarily, yet out of that far-off seed sowing (it is twenty years since it has been left to the darkness) one tiny blade has kept its brave struggle for life, and is, we believe, transplanted already into the summer land above.

Chrira told F. H. F., just before she went away in June, of an old Arab woman who had heard the way of life from some man long ago, and had kept the words in her heart, and would like to be baptized. We looked forward to seeing her, but now we hear she has died. Chrira herself is from Mostaganem, and so was blind Fatima, who passed away in the faith this year. Who can say whether they were not the fruit of prayer long ago.

Chrira's future is the problem that calls for solution. She has been fighting again all the summer against the re-marriage question, through many storms of anger on her father's part. Being a widow, she has, according to Arab law, a right to refuse, and she has won through hitherto, only at the cost of a tension that cannot continue. The clue that has come to F. H. F. is to offer him the out-of-pocket expense of her support, and claim for her the right of continuing to gather the women to hear. This she has been doing for some months past, whenever there were lulls in her father's wrath.

There is a Spanish friend of hers who can read French, so she reads and Chrira translates and expounds, and between them they hold a meeting when the father does not intervene! F. H. F. went straight away with her proposal, one that had not much weight on the human side against the dowry that he could secure if he insisted. But the balance was struck by God's touch, and the man consented; and consented, further, that Chrira should come up to Algiers whenever we chose, to be taught to read so our hearts are very glad.

We spent the afternoon with them to-day, and saw her Spanish aide-de-camp--a wistful-faced woman of the ouvriere class. They certainly are a pathetic pair in their weakness to be the first witnesses for Christ to the Arabs here.

Such a place it is! it breaks on the sight in a sea of white houses as one comes out of the gate of the French town, far more purely native than Relizane or Mascara, where the Arabs and Spanish live mingled together. One longs for the time when this tiny breach in the defence can be followed up. Meantime Helen will send Mlle. Gayral for a few days at a time to stand by Chrira and visit her woman friends.

Oct. 7.

This morning we started for Tizi. The land is still bleached pearly-white till it might be the foothills round

Biskra, and it takes the same tints of rose, and amethyst at sunset and sunrise, against the same sky background of mauve clouds with faint green rifts. The touches of peacock colour where the plain meets the hills have always been appealing in their loneliness; they mark out by the score the prickly pear hedges of the unreached villages. There were just two that one could look at from the train with joyful hope, for they are the baby outposts of Relizane, Bel Hacel and Amara by name, where regular classes are held now, even through the hot months when it means a scorching drive, with a Christian Spanish lad, brother to Sara Aluminos, who gives his services and his cart free for the cause.

Oct. 9.

We had meant to spend this next week picnicing at F. H. F.'s farm--alas, the farmer's wife is ill, and it has been reduced to one day for verifying the progress of events. The best onward step is that the farmer in charge is taking himself off, a year before the end of his lease. This sets all free for going ahead much faster than would otherwise have been possible.

The excavation for the reservoir has its motor house reared alongside now, and the engine is lying there in its great English packing cases. And scaffolding poles of the

new farm and its first few feet of wall are standing near the shanty of the present. All else is still in its native wildness and beauty, ochre and mauve in its late summer dress, with the last few blossoms of the oleanders in the river bed, and the first few daisy-sized narcissi and the Algerian imitation of the soldanella with its frosty white bells, studded in the gold brown grass, telling that the autumn is passing into spring.

An ex-gendarme who understands farming is coming as manager for a year, and the baby orange trees can be planted in February. Beyond that all waits its development.

Oct. 16.

Monday brought us back to Algiers, and to-day we met with all the local workers for the Day of Prayer for the Moslem World. We met with a sense that the time may be very near for the stretching out of God's hand. The war cloud in the East has just broken, and who can tell what it may portend!

It seemed at our Committee afterwards that for us it means for the moment a block out eastwards; and that the moving of A. Krebs to Touzer, which we hoped for at the end of the month, must wait. We have had bad experiences in the past of the unwisdom of starting new work when the minds of

the authorities are bothered with political difficulties, and between the Tripoli question and that of Turkey, a place like Touzer, purely native and in close touch with the hinterland, is sure to be restless underneath.

Oct. 18.

Yesterday and to-day have been our Rally days, and now the next step is the Revision Committee for the Acts, which is due to begin in a fortnight's time. It is beautiful that we should have it just as the need comes for showing the meaning of the life of discipleship to those who have lately entered God's Kingdom. It is difficult at home to realize how in these beginning days there is no one to point out as an example of the path the native Christians should tread. They must look back to the early Church, and that is well.

Oct. 21.

The opening event down at Rue du Croissant is the welcoming back of our dear 'Big Kab' and her month-old baby. Hamid, her husband, has a three months sentence for conniving at a murder, and has adjured Fateema (her mother) to bring them to us, proof of a vote of confidence of which we are very proud, for he is extremely particular about her. She seems sweet and docile--such a child herself still--and she and the other children rejoice over their baby plaything together.

The other point of advance down below is that A. McIlroy and C. Mennell are promoted to living four days a week at the slum post, taking another day in the villages within reach of El Biar. That slum post is just the right adjunct for "Dar Naama," being an intermediary step for the station work of the future.

Nov. 10.

This was a joyful Sunday in the welcoming in of Si El Yazeed. We have transferred the morning meeting permanently now to "Dar El Fedjr," where we have light and air that were impossible in our Rue du Croissant Arab room; also, it is perfect for the women, who can slip down through the side passage of the reading room and enter their screened-in corner without a glimpse of them being visible from the men's side.

Nov. 13.

The miracle of Cana has been taking on a new meaning in these days. I was talking over the difficulties of it for the Arabs with Mr. Smeeton in the spring, and he suggested an interpretation that I had never heard, i.e., that the whole of the contents of the six water pots were not turned simultaneously into wine, but that in the dipping them out they became transformed. There is nothing in the text to

contradict this, and if it is true it answers to God's way with us. All around us, in the Kingdom of His Son, into which we have been translated, there lie potential resources in fullest measure; but the human touch of faith has to come in to make them visible--just like the chemical re-agent that with a touch brings into light the properties lying invisible in solution.

Nov. 15.

Time has not taken long in proving that the powers around us in the Moslem world dread a native worker's influence more than ours. For years Villon was at his post in the little Depot, talking and reading, now with individuals, now with groups, without raising the wind, even when from time to time a crowd would surround the door and block the narrow street. But the first time that Si El Yazeed spent an hour or two there with Mr. Smeeton, stout Moslems rose in arms, asking what made him come here with his blasphemies and teach them to their boys. He was a bit down-hearted about it, and came to be comforted. We told him to lie low for the present, going backwards and forwards for short spells at unfixed hours, and doing a good turn when he could in letter-writing, etc.

Nov. 29.

We are in the thick of the revision work, and have had a joy this week in seeing Boualem sitting with us day after day to give the native element needed in testing words and phrases, for we have failed to secure Hadj Zouaui, the extremely intelligent and far-from-saved Moslem who has helped on former committees. Boualem is far less capable, but it is good to be all of one mind and heart, and he sits with his face attent pondering to the best of his powers the shades of meanings submitted to him. Even he took a long time to understand the equivalents we wanted for humility and hope, especially the latter. They have no expression for either in the colloquial, which thing is a sermon in itself. And now to-day, at the wind up, Mr. Summers and Mr. Smith have had a long talk with him on the subject of baptism, and to our joy feel him to be ready for it. He has come back to stay at Dar El Fedjr, and now has brought there Rabbah and his wife as definite enquirers. It is surely in answer to the prayer fight that went up for them in the summer. The old mother has accompanied them, and we hear that Hamdan and Hanifa wish to come too, so that Dar El Fedjr guest accommodation will be taxed to its utmost.

Dec. 6.

A great new joy has come down from Heaven, for we hope and believe that Rabbah and his wife are "added to the Church." Boualem was reading with them when he returned from his work last night, and went up to fetch E. Thorpe. He, Boualem, was shy of helping at first, but when he found his tongue he used it with a God-given wisdom, leading them, step by step, to a closing with Christ for forgiveness and a yielding of themselves to His Kingship and to the indwelling Spirit as their power to obey. Praise to the glory of His grace, there only remain Aissa and Yameena on the resisting side in that family, and they show signs of softening now and again.

Dec. 7.

We went to-day, B. G. L. H. and I, for a few hours to Blida to see the new road and what was to be done for its hedging.

The proof is already there that "He Himself knew what He would do" when He set aside our prayers that the making of that new road might be stopped. It has proved impossible to carry on the work in "Dar Er Rih," which is now exposed by it to public view, and so all has reverted to the first thought that this should be used as a little rest house, and that

Dar El Ain, with its native build shutting it in from observation, should be the centre for work. Already the new developments there have been countless, and the Sunday class of little girls is growing steadily every week, with the women's meeting on its heels. It is opening Blida, too, in the guest direction, which has been one of this year's notes of advance. Little Zoura's eldest sister has arrived for an indefinite stay and another big girl is coming, while the baby sister is with them all day.

Dec. 9.

The whole Birgebaa family took themselves off to-day with one of those sudden and apparently inconsequent moves which remind one more of the way a bird hops from one perch to another than anything else. Hamdan and Hanifa remain; he is certainly much quieter and more reasonable than he was last summer. Only until there has been a confession of an over-reaching, of which we are almost sure he was guilty then, we cannot feel satisfied about him.

Dec. 10.

Si El Yazeed needs much prayer around him! it is difficult for him, after having had fellow-workers for years, to shift for himself as he must now, and he does not seem to interest the Algiers men in the way Ali used to do. He gets Moorish

friends into his little den, and his great housekeeping anxiety is to have sugar enough to give them in their tea, tea drinking (or rather syrup flavoured with tea and mint) being the great form of Moorish hospitality.

Upstairs, in the 'House of Dawn,' five dear 'Daybreakers' are hard at work with all their labour saving to the rest of us; two of last year's and the three new ones who have reached us in one way or another through the Bognor Camp. One of the extra works that lie before them this winter is the getting ready of maps and diagrams for the series of visits that we are expecting in the late spring from American delegates on their way to the Zurich Convention. We long that once more God should meet them here with a sight of the needs and opportunities such as may tell for Christ's Kingdom on all their widespread spheres of influence in America.

Sunday, Dec. 15.

A terrible shock came this morning, at the beginning of the meeting, in finding that the collection box had disappeared. It is kept safely locked in the cupboard in the spare room, with its key hidden on a high shelf, and now it is nowhere to be found.

The culprit was little Hamido and he has confessed it, but with some asides that make it look as if Hamdan were in it

and as if Hanifa knew. They have now ‘‘lifted themselves,’’ as they express it, and departed, and the cloud of mystery remains. We have had interview after interview alone and together with the three and the mother and no light comes, all that we arrive at is the same story of Hamido’s, that he took it out into the street and sold it to a boy.

Dec. 28.

We are in the thick of Christmas festivities, and have happy news from the out-posts of their keeping of the feast. Miliana writes they have had 200 Christmas guests, many of them women.

Here all has been shadowed with this theft. It has meant that the whole of that family, after having decided to spend it at Dar el Fedjr, has withdrawn; probably Hamdan would have made it too hot for them if they had come and left him in his disgrace alone.

H. Freeman writes:--‘‘I am so grieved about Hamdan and his wife, but I always take comfort in the thought of the confessions by the Korean converts when the revival came. I am sure the only thing is to pray for deep conviction on them both; if they are accused it will only drive them to untruth.’’

Chrira is in Relizane on the occasion of the death of a niece. She says that sometimes she has as many as 28 women at Mostaganem to listen, but of course not often so many.

One hope for the new year is that Si Mokter, her father, has given leave for her to come and stay with us for a few weeks to learn to read, and that thought and the decision that the baptism of Boualem and Omar is to take place when Mr. Summers comes back here in March for his marriage with Queenie Pfeiffer, throw a strong ray of brightness with which to close the year.

It has been a year of grace--an Anno Domini for which we praise the Giver. May He gather all its fragments of the Spirit's working into His eternal purposes and keep them there.

‘Of broken shells He maketh, so He wills
The everlasting marble of His hills.’

Amen.