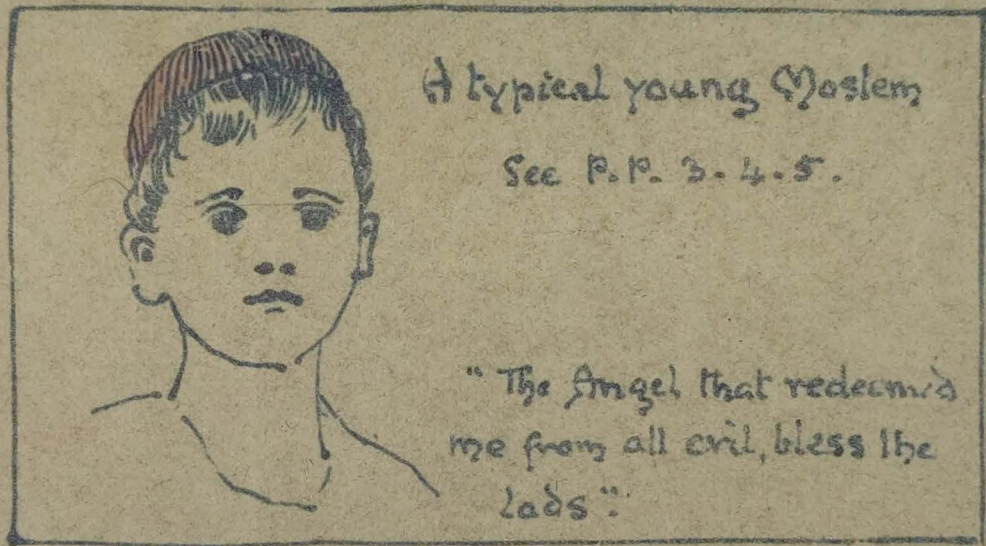


Algiers Mission Band.



Journal - winter Number - 1917 - 18 -

There is, as you will see, a dearth of illustrations
in this number. You will understand + forgive.
We shall, I hope, do better next time.

I. L. T.

ALGIERS MISSION BAND.
Stations, Winter 1917-18

Date of opening.	Algiers.		Country.
1888.	Headquarters.	1908.	Blida.
1906.	Dar Naama.	1909.	Relizane.
1909.	Beit Naama.	1909.	Miliana.
1911.	Dar el Fedjr.	1912.	Mascara.
	1913.		Touzer.
	1917.		Monastir.
	***	***	***

Sec. for Prayer-helpers, Mr J.H. Smeeton, 2, Rue du Croissant, Algiers.

Council of Reference. London.

Mr & Mrs Stuart Trotter.	Broomfield Lodge, Chelmsford.
Sir H. & Lady Procter.	High House, Brentwood.
Rev. S.W. & Mrs Howe.	St. Luke's Vicarage, C.E. Finchley.

* * * * *

Algerian Women's Mission Band, America.

Mrs T.A. Walker, S.S. Asso. 2300 Dexter Street, Denver, Colorado, U.S.A.

* * * * *

ALGIERS MISSION BAND.

Members on the Field. - Winter 1917-18

Date of arrival.

1888	I. Liliias Trotter	1909-	Alice McIlroy.
"	B.G.L. Haworth.	1911	Ida Nash.
1890	F. Helen Freeman.	"	*Mary Freeman.
1903	Sascha Perkin.	1912	J.H. Smeeton.
"	Alexandrine Gayral.	"	Nellie Smeeton.
1907	Mabel Grautoff.	"	S. Soler.
"	May Ridley.	"	*Grace Russell.
1909	F.K. Currie.	1914	Mme Arnaud.
"	Millicent Roche.	"	A.M. Farmer.
"	*Mary Watling.	1916	Kathleen Butler.
"	Alma Krebs	"	Mme Pelicier. (pro.tem.)

* on long furlough.

* * * * *

Short Service Hostel.

Kathleen Butler (1916) in charge. Frances Brittle.

* * * * *

Oct. 15. 1917

The Rally has come and gone, and our poor little fighting line has now stretched out its thin length for the winter's conflict. Alma Krebs and Habel Grautoff will hold on at Monastir together till after Christmas, and Alice Mc Ilroy and Ida Nash are promoted to the joint charge pro. tem. of Miliana. Madge Farmer thus remains singlehanded at Beit Naama, with any help that she can glean around. It is with fresh cheer that we once more go up to our seemingly "forlorn hope": for the months as they pass, show great movings in God's ways. His heavenly reinforcing is beginning far back; and who knows when it may surge up behind us!

For the promise is sure "Every house divided against itself falleth". Islam is at last, after all these centuries, divided against itself on the battlefields of the East: we can surely echo "How shall its kingdom stand"! Surely a rift is coming in the Jericho walls.... a fresh impact of faith and it may be that "their breaking cometh suddenly in an instant".

Oct. 23rd.

Last Wednesday saw the settling into our new premises in Monastir. The sequel would be disquieting if we were ignorant of the devices of the devil, for it seems that during the months' absence of our two in Tunis, all manners of rumours have been floating, including the theory that they were being detained in prison there as German spies.

It is not to be wondered at: it was one thing for their neighbours to receive them in Monastir for the summer as rather erratic tourists; quite another to endure their slipping into the rôle of inhabitants.

Oct. 26th.

Blind Aissa has brought another waif along. He has, as Sascha Perkin says, the makings of a social worker some day, and he spares no pains in running his

quarry to earth.

This time it is a small girl of 10 or 11, clad in a single garment of rusty black, and named, most unfitly, "El Alamiya"-the "learned one". She used to appear sometimes last spring among other beggar children; she was more or less protected then.--Now she is living with three brothers in a so called "Hotel" (i-e common lodging house) for Arab customs forbid lads to rent a room in any decent dwelling house except with their women kind. It seems inevitable ruin for the child before long, and her elder brother, who looks about 17, refuses to give her up. The compromise is to let her come for a few hours a day, and she spends them playing contentedly on the mat in the childrens' corner of the court, with a selection of small street girls whom she brings in. Give them a few bits of tiles and picture cards and odds and ends of stuff, and they build untiringly their inimitable native doll-houses producing mattresses, beds, feast-tables and many other accessories out of the most unlikely materials.

Nov. 6th.

I have come for a few days quiet at the Olivage. The November skies up here are a thing to be wondered at. Two days ago the sunrise was in burnt sienna clouds with torn edges of amber. Next day they lay in creamy swathes on a sky of dusky blue-green, the mountains below of Delft, were blue, a sea of mist at their feet. Today's dawn was in flakes of deepest crimson on an ashy white background. It seems almost painful in its beauty when all these tragedies are going on around: 40 nations have declared war, so say the French-papers, since the first clash of arms in August 1914.

Those battlefronts still give one lesson after for the spiritual conflict. The one that seems underlined just now is the struggle for the hill-crests. For, while the devil's tactics with low souls, is to appeal to the lowest of

in them, he goes the contrary way when he has high ideals and aspirations to deal with. Satan wrestled with our Lord along the snowy mountain tops of His walk with GCD. His longing to manifest the power and the glory of the Father - his spirit-thirst to win the devil-oppressed world kingdoms under His control. And even though the skyline of our highest is but a poor little hill that crest-marks the hottest place of conflict for us: a few feet below the best that we know, spells defeat. "He will make me to walk upon mine high places" is a promise with a new meaning now-a-days.

Nov. 25th.

Our two of Monastir are holding bravely on through wave after wave of opposition: -between the waves the lads and the boys dare to venture in once more, only to be swept off again. Women and girls find it still more difficult to venture, doors that seemed opening have shut fast, and even in the streets the dislike to their presence is very evident. It is a hard hard bit for them after the welcome of those early weeks - a city full of people around them, and yet enforced silence for days together.

Even here in Algiers, with all the years that lie behind us, there is a deal of aloofness, and the Sunday meetings have dwindled sorrowfully. Fear of the future complications if things went badly with the Allied cause seems at the root of it. We have not struck on the vein of heroes yet!

The children's "insouciance" is refreshing after the cautious ways of their elders. the little maidens at Darel Fedjr have more than doubled in attendancy and at Rue du Croissant we have ventured, with some unbelieving misgivings, to let the Sunday boys in again. Our faithlessness in demurring over this without Alma Krebs to help, has been rebuked. They sit in quiet rows, with never a clamour at the door at the beginning and hardly ever a theft at the end, of one of the precious coloured chalks wherewith they do

"expression work". And sometimes there is a real hush of God's power for a few moments on the dear wild spirits and that is worth everything.

At Beit Naama the shorthandness has wrought blessing in another way: for Fatima and Yamina, of that household, have taken on with grave responsibility the work of seconding Madge Farmer, and Yamina, now a tall slip of a girl, takes her own little class and keeps it in thorough order.

Dec. 1.

Two or three happy days at Miliana: our pair there have done well in their new responsibility. They were not special class-days, but 18 vigorous "babies" came the first morning, collected promiscuously from the regular group, which numbers twice as many. They are Alice Mc Ilroy's special charge and went through with her some of their latest achievements. A little door of red cardboard, that opened and shut, instantly started them, when it was held up on repeating St. John 10:9. A yellow cardboard ladder was shewn next, and there came simultaneously a shout of the chorus "Climbing up the golden stair" and so on. Next day came Ida Nash's girls of the Red Cross knitting class. Three of the seniors, who have been for long under teaching, listened with their souls and their eyes. Prayer-forces should be rallied round these, for they are full old, according to native etiquette, to be allowed to come out regularly and their freedom may be reckoned now by weeks rather than months. After that they will be shut up into the Moslem atmosphere of their houses, or married away, it may be, into distant places.

Of the three little brides specially dear to the workers here, from being class children of the past, one has been sent back by her husband because she was ill and is now dying of consumption in a reed-hut through which the snow drifts: another has been divorced because she was homesick: the third as yet is prosperous, having a mother-in-law who is abnormally kind to her.

Blida. Dec. 18

Here too, the child problems are uppermost: first and foremost that of the two housechildren. As they grow older the complications due to a home a store[•] threw off, and an unsatisfactory mother there, grow more intricate. If only she will let them go to the Girls' Home of the American Mission at El Biar! so much love and prayer has been spent on them in these last years we long it should come to its fruitage.

The rank and file of the children are coming freely and joyously as ever, with an ever-varying programme from Millicent Roche's ~~Fertile~~ brain. I came in for the morning play-day, to which the big sisters bring the little ones. Games to their hearts' content is the order of that day and then a bit of talk and singing. "Climbing up the Golden stair" is in vogue here too. I watched "The Light of Religion" aged not quite to, making his baby hands into the step one after the other, while his lips held the little mandarin that the hands had clutched till then.

Dec. 21.

Monastir's news is still on much the same lines -now a bit of fresh hope over a batch of boys -then again the sequel that they have been again swept off; Mabel writes to-day,-

"The little reader boys who came yesterday take my breath away, they read so accurately and quickly. We hope it may form into a regular class, and then it is just the kind for Miss Krebs, for these little fellows of fourteen can quote their Koran and ask their questions in the most classical Arabic phrasing: it is almost amusing to hear them -poor boys, they read Arabic seven hours a day, and study "Religion". In a few minutes they have galloped through a tract or a chapter from the Bible, and understood every word -far on in advance of the boy readers of the same age at Touzer.

Jan. 1. 1918

It is a wonderful New Year's Day -The news of the freeing of Jerusalem seems to bring the sound of the Lord's feet almost to the threshold of earth's door -where will its ending takes us!

Jan. 9th

There is a heavy fight going on over blind Aissa in his new workshop, in the form of a combined effort from the other workmen and the women super-intendent, to make him drink. Sascha Perkin writes to day "Pray for Aissa: he has again been coerced by Madame V. into taking some anisette. I am glad he told me. He said he was ashamed to throw it in her face when she pressed him; and he was told he was a "sauvage" not to drink".

Jan. 12th.

A crisis has come over Alamiya. Her brother has again taken from her the clothing that Sascha Perkin had given her. On Sascha's remonstrance, he has sent her back with the missing garment and a message that she is to come no more -that if she does, he will kill her! -that of course is a "façon de parler". - We had had special prayer for her at the weekly prayer-meeting yesterday, and this fresh onset of the opposing forces is, as so often happens, the next step.

Jan. 12th.

The next step....and the next step but one has been an intervention from God. Only a few hours after that ultimatum of Ben Allal, came the news that he had been taken by the recruiting officer on the ground that he is without an identification card, and has been put to mind the mules in one of the barracks of the suburbs.

What should be our next step in the question? We should have every right to take her and her two small brothers from that common lodging house. Yet we

feel it is better to trust them to God's care there for a few days-till the lad Ben Allal is forced by circumstances to relinquish them to us voluntarily.

Jan. 16th.

With Kathleen Butler today to see a new house of another kind than the usual "poor" to whom the "Gospel is preached". The listeners are a young married woman from Tunis, refined, well educated, and very intelligent, and a 16-year-old sister-in-law, like a flower for beauty and expansiveness of heart and mind. Both want to learn to read Arabic, which makes a reason for regular visiting. There was a wistfulness and soul hunger about them today. The husband, a lawyer, seems to make no objection to their being taught.

Jan. 17th.

Yes, God is working for little Alamiya as we wait on Him. Yesterday the five men and boy lodgers who have been sharing the children's room, decamped, leaving them alone there. Sascha took them to see their brother and he himself asked her to house them: a lovely turning of the tide that seemed to have run out so far on Saturday.

So here they are - a rag, tag, and bobtail in their dilapidation, just such as Sascha's dear motherly heart loves to bring into cleanliness and comfort. Alamiya is sleeping in the children's cubbyhole on the gallery, and the boys on one of the raised platforms of the crypt, within call, through the grating, of blind Aissa next door. It is a reward to Sascha's faith in keeping a loose rein on them in these intervening days.

The elder of the boys is a chronic invalid, and must be got into the Hospital he has a curious immobile face, index to a stubborn nature behind. Alamiya's is such a contrast - all a ripple and a sparkle like a summer sea with intelligence and fun. Little Amar's as yet shows only the round-eyed interest of six years old in the world where ~~em~~ he finds himself. Aissa is taking an elder brother's

rôle with the boys and got them this evening to the baths where he bathed them himself and arrayed them in the clean garments that Sascha and Miss Smeeton have concocted. Miss Smeeton and her machine turn out wonderful achievements in that direction from the scantiest of materials.

Jan. 21.

Another joy came yesterday. Belaid comes to tea now, most Sundays, with Sidi el Yazid - it is a break in their lonely lives, for both are childless widowers. I asked Belaid what he does with the tracts that we give him week by week. "I take them to Boualem's shop," he answered, and read them aloud to him - and then to Sidi el Yazid's shop." It is such gladness that this proves that Boualem is throwing off his fetters a bit and is not ashamed of Christ and of His Word, - only afraid to come to us: not very heroic, but not coming under the same condemnation.

Prayer is needed again for the house-children: their aunt, an old woman of bad repute as a sorceress, has scented out a possible allowance for Ben Allal if he is drafted into the Army, and is intending to get it made out to her on the ground that she will take off the children to the mountains - she must be circumvented by prayer, - for she has planned to get all through and be off on Monday.

Jan. 26.

Once more

" I love to see Thee bring to nought
The wily thoughts of men "

For in the middle of the morning appeared Ben Allal, cheerful and boyish as ever, having got his release by a backing from the mayor of his town, and after eating bread and dates, consented without hesitation to leave the children in our hands. So here they are, indefinitely in a quite delightful way

say -and they are for the most part irreproachable: the only exception I know is that Alamiya spat at the milk boy from the roof on one occasion!

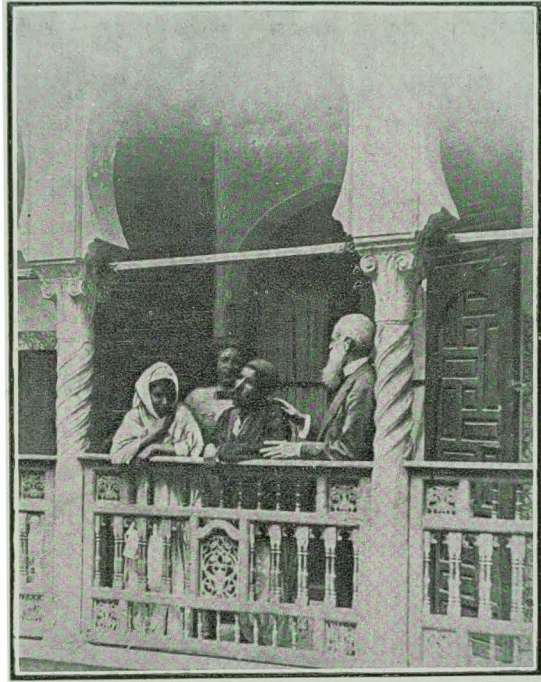
Another of the little tokens for good whereby God lightens these dim months, comes in frequent words from Mohammed Ouagenouni -the most unspiritual, so it seemed to us, of the trio of Bads who under the joint care of Mr. Smeeton and Elsie Thorpe, 4 years ago. The other two have proved among the multitude of hopes deferred. Mahfoud has behaved like a true scamp: we hope he has found his masters in the Auxiliary Camp in France. Laradji, who went home on leave last year from his barracks at Niliiana, returned a bigoted Moslem, instead of the open hearted student of old: one wonders if drugging lay at the bottom of it, for he was only away a few days.

Ouagenouni a spoilt, self-indulgent lad when with us, is "somewhere" on the Eastern front, bearing bravely his lonely life, and making light of his two months in the hospital with frost-bitten feet. There is a breath of personal love and loyalty to our Lord in his quaintly expressed letters, that makes us believe that all is well with him.

Feb. 4th.

The centre of thoughts of late has been round Monastir. The refusal to hear any more at present became so determined, that we felt to stay on now, was forcing the situation. We have found again and again in days past that the best way in like cases, is to drop out of sight for a bit, and then return as if nothing had happened and start afresh. -A few months at a time is often as much as a stiff Moslem town will stand.

So last month they shut up the little flat, and Alma Krebs went to Kairouan to await developments-our thought is that Blanche Haworth and I may go off there for a little, when they have had a break, and then she could join us there --Touzer of course is the ultimate dream-though Habel Grautoff-who has just



arrived West en route for Miliana, says that the missionaries in Tunisia strongly doubt the wisdom of the attempt.

And for all our longing to be off East, were it to Monastir only, there is a curious sense of withholding when it comes to the point of decision: and one has learned that to press one's way against that sense of withholding, means disaster.

Feb. 16th.

Mr Smeeton is very happy over several new blind men coming into touch... Whether any of them will persevere to the point of mastering the Braille reading and writing, remains to be proved... The one of them all who has got to the point of reading and writing with ease, is Ali - Mr. Smeeton has just given me a "snap" taken on the gallery of 2, Rue du Croissant, which shows him and his blind wife, together with Mr. Smeeton and Sascha Perlin. He is foremost too in his powers of repeating as we see Sunday after Sunday, for Mr. Smeeton is getting all who come regularly to the morning meeting to memorise St. John 1; as being a chapter containing all things necessary to salvation. Ali does his part faultlessly - he is an intelligent man, and not far from the kingdom of God.

Dar Naama Feb. 22.

I came up here on Tuesday, by long promise, so as to secure, if we do not succeed in getting away, some unbroken weeks before Easter for writing for the N.H.P., such writing having come off badly for some time past.

Yesterday one more letter arrived that seemed to re-open the question. It was from Disegui, the Touzer landlord, saying all was quiet there, and the necessaries of life procurable through Metlaoui. I took it to Blanche, who has been ill with fever this last day or two. She said "If you say so I'll get up and we'll go at once", but as we talked it over we still felt that withholding

"no", though our hearts leapt to this one more ray of hope.

Blida. Feb. 24th.

Ritty writes from Blida: "Fatima's baby arrived yesterday - a little son, they have called him Abdelkader. We are so glad it is not Mohammed. When Millicent came back, she told the children that Houria had a little brother, I was in and out of the room, and as I came back they were just finishing up singing "Jesus loves the little children" but had changed it to "Jesus loves Houria's brother" - rather sweet, was not it, that they had realized that much".

Blanche is still ill - the hope continues that it may be influenza, but a curious feeling hangs over it - it gathered in a strange way a day or two ago; - "You came up to write for the natives" - it came almost like a voice - "but instead of that you have to write a chapter of faith to be read up in Heaven". Linked with that comes the fact that we are close on the early days of March that have been almost invariably marked by some contest, ever since the March "1888" when we first landed here.

March 12th

These pages have all been left blank - perhaps their story has meant and will still mean something up in Heaven - for His way is in the storm - but I will go back and put down the earthly side in part.

We called in the doctor the day after the last entry. He did not think gravely of the case at first, but the fever would not yield and delirium began - always quiet and gentle, but hardly ever clearing. We believe this veiled much

of the suffering, and it shielded her from troubled thoughts, as far as we can tell, over the leaving us. Only once, I think it was Wednesday, as a shaft of sunset fell across her bed, she looked up and said, with a ring in her voice "A great light is breaking" - but whether she meant light visible or invisible I could not be sure, and beyond that she gave no sign that she knew that the river

might be near. -We knew it of course by then, for though the doctor still spoke with hope, he warned us of the danger of heart-failure before the fever had run its course.

On Friday evening she roused from the quiet in which she had been lying and evidently thought that she was talking to the people -her voice was clear and strong and sustained, though the words were hardly distinguishable -a stream of English, French and Arabic mingled, going on unbrokenly for more than two hours -then it died down gradually and she lay again as if in sleep, only rousing once to ask if I had looked up the trains for starting for Monastir next morning.

We thought the worst of the night was over, and Miss Smeton who was helping had gone for an hour's rest and we were alone together, we and the Lord, when suddenly with no premonitory change, there was a little sobbing breath, and then silence -she had crossed to the other side all unknowing. It was just before daybreak on the morning of the 30th anniversary of our landing here.

All that day and the next she lay on her little bed under a shower of spring flowers, and one after another came: helpers, fellowmissionaries and native women and girls, for their last look. On Monday morning the inner circle of friends gathered in the central court where the conferences of past years have been held, and the place was full once more of God's presence and peace, as she lay there among us in her last resting place. And the same overshadowing was in the Church and at the grave, where from far and near others had come to be with us. One after another spoke of the quiet beauty of every-thing, saying "It was just as she would have had it".

We got back to find Helen Freeman there -the news had only reached her in her out-of-the-way farm the day before -and the night train had brought her. All around has been full of God's goodness and mercy all the way

The promise "their works do follow them" has come to me these last days

with a wonderful power. There are many things that may yet unfold from beginnings that have been prepared -but chiefly faith centres round the stories for the natives that have come to His servant so unexpectedly in these last 3 years many published -others still coming out. If a dynamic power of the Spirit floods into them they may bring in a beautiful harvest out of those 30 years -though never known, it may be, till reaped and garnered.

March 24th.

A letter came during that time at Dar Naama, telling of one ray of brightness in the closing down of Monastir for the Summer. Alma Krebs had gone there for a few hours to see that all was safe before leaving for Tebessa. She writes: "I had a strong feeling that I ought to go back once more in case the "Shorts do not go there in the Summer. It was with very tender feelings that I saw the place again. Quite a lot of little boys came, among them a few bigger ones -the dear Mohammed from the mulberry garden as serious-looking as usual. "I gave him a Tunisian St. Luke. Some of the little fellows said "You will come back again in the Summer -and Mohammed said "We have missed you so". I saw no grown-ups, except Nathanael, with whom I had a few words in the street.

April 8.

Albina Cox wrote a week or two ago that she had hopes of trying for a fortnight at Touzer next month -now we hear that typhus is as raging there that it is doubtful if any European would be let in. I wonder if some of those dear baby souls of last spring are going home in it...-if so I think they would be given to Blanche, to look after...-what it would be to her to welcome them in and lead them on!

April 13th.

Helen Freeman writes from Mascara "Poor Sabroui has been sorcerised by a woman who was determined to have him, and has married her as his second wife.

"He is very miserable, and because he has let us a room in his house for the "boys' class (the second wife lives elsewhere) a rich Arab man is following him "round and hindering all he undertakes. I think it is very good of God in "spite of his fall to let him be suffering for Christ's sake! but he, poor "man, is naturally very puzzled and very discouraged .

April 14th.

Alas, the episode with the milk boy proved only to be the budding horns in the case of little Alamiya, and she and her small brother are proving to be as much of a handful for Sascha Perkin as their antecedents would lead one to expect. Only they have come so wonderfully into her care that they are well worth all the patience she expends over them.

April 16th.

Again a storm is round us. It was a week ago to-day that news came that Miss Smeeton, who had gone to Dar Naama on Saturday week for a few days rest, was taken ill. Just the day she went up there -strangely tired, it seemed to us -we heard that small-pox had appeared in a bad form, and from the first the symptoms gave rise to fear that she had taken it.

No nurse, or even doctor, was to be had until Friday night, but once officially diagnosed, we were able to get the use of the isolation ward at the English Hospital. May Ridley, who had it some years ago, volunteered to nurse her under telephone instructions from the matron, and they went off together, a brave phary pair of them in an ambulance on Sunday. How our hearts are with them, for it has been from the outset a severe case.

April 27.

Yes -once more the shadows of the valley of death have fallen leaving only the light at the further end, where another has gone out into the Eternal Day.

All went well at the Hospital till Sunday. -Then came with the secondary

fever, a turn for the worse, and this afternoon the call came, not reaching, so it seemed, the earthly consciousness - so again all the sorrow of goodbye was effaced.

We can hardly believe it, yet, for till yesterday afternoon we were in no real anxiety; and now the course of faithful loving service is over, and its crown has come.

We laid her to sleep this afternoon close beside that other resting place after an open-air service in the Hospital garden, in which Mr. Smeeton took the lead. A little band of the household natives were with us at the cemetery - Blind Aissa and Ali and 4 or 5 of the women and children, with Belaid towering over them all. And again came down on us that brooding stillness of God's unfathomable peace.

"He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still: then are they glad because they be quiet, and so He bringeth them into the desired haven"

I must close this journal for it has over-stepped its bounds, only I felt the spring's story should be told to its end - its earthly end, that is. For the heavenly end, "the end of the Lord" is yet to come.

Year by year (oftener in past days before paper grew scarce) Blanche Haworth used to collect and issue a type-written volume, for private circulation of A.M.B. contributions and happenings, and many other things to help us on our way mentally and spiritually. The volume for 1917 ends with these . . .

lines, sent her by Helen Freeman, and specially treasured, little thinking of the meaning they have for us now, standing as they do on the last page of the last "Couffa"

Men speak of four Last Things:
Death and the Judgement Hall,
Hell and the Heavens so fair,
But Thou, O Lord, art there
Beyond them all.

There is no last with Thee,
But only our last sins,
Last sorrows and last fears,
Last sicknesses, last tears,
Then joy begins.

Joy without bound or end,
Concentric circles bright
Flowing from round Thy Throne
Flowing to Thee alone,
O Love! O Light!

And "in Thy Light" -the Light of Love"-we shall see Light" upon all this spring's pathway.

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Miss S. Saunders. J. & C. Westminster Bank. 172 Victoria St. W.

Mrs Constantine 36 Limehill Rd. Tunbridge Wells

J. H. Oliver Esq. N.M.P. 22 Culverden Park Rd. Tunbridge Wells

Percy Allen Esq. Culverdale. Tunbridge Wells

~~Mrs Copley Sumpston, Rock Villas. Tunbridge Wells~~

Miss F. Knight - Raelin Cottage. Tunbridge Wells

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