

New Series: Number

5

Algiers Mission Band  
Journal

Jan.  
10 July 1922

"The thing I ask when God doth bid me pray  
Begins in that same act to come my way."

Jan. 4 The first need of the New Year seems to be for wisdom what to do with our Tozeur brothers. Their year on the land has been good for them, & they have put much grit into it, but beyond its moral training it fails to bring them on mentally & spiritually towards fitness for evangelistic work. On the other hand we are needing more help of many kinds with the week day classes for the town boys, & for our own oncoming students in Arabic.

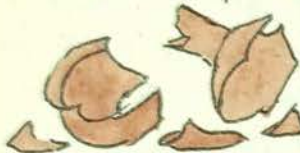
And the upshot has been that at today's Committee we have taken them on, on trial, in a "lay brother" capacity. It was worth anything to see the glow on Si Amar's rugged face when their new duties were explained to them, specially in seeking to win the bigger boys through handicrafts. "Yes, that is the way to reach them" he said. I believe his clever hands & his brother's clever head will be a real asset, & their own best training for the next step.

But to return to the Committee. It was a bit of a venture to take on fresh helpers, for we have never been at such low water; we feel that with this New Year, any extension must mean the launching forth into a deeper tide of faith with much more definite prayer for funds than heretofore. And I cannot but think that these South-land souls, immature as they are as yet, are part of God's answer to our cry of two years ago, for ten Arabic speaking men for the work. Si Amar the 4 hours will soon be adding to our problems, for things do not look as if he would settle down in Tangier.

6 And now the focus is over Aissa's wedding. It is ending satisfactorily considering



The rather rowdy set of ex-friends & neighbours who elected to come. At one time, against our expressed wish, they began one of the usual hum-tummings, which soon swings them off into dancing. Helen Freeman's helper, Fanny Hammon, went in just then & sent up a prayer as to how to stop it. Instantly in passing from hand to hand the earthen turn-fum fell & crashed




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It is the Epiphany, & that almost always brings us some fresh step in Christ's manifestation. This year it is the starting of the Tozew pair in their work among the boys. We dedicated them together to it in the Friday morning prayer-meeting. The next thing was that in marched the "4 hours" back again, calm & gentle & self possessed as ever! He also must be set to definite teaching work & study side by side till we see what next to do.

God's seal to the forward move has not tarried. A gift of £100 for the Men's Fund has come in, setting all afloat again on a strong wave. Glory be to His Name!

 The "4 hours" is our chief care just now. They are making a dead set at him from home, in view of getting him back to marry an orphan girl of his family, who has been set apart for him for some years. Failing his coming to take her she will be married in less than a month to the next of kin, a worthless, drinking fellow. There was a look of dumb anguish on his face as he shewed me the letters. "I know it would be death to me,

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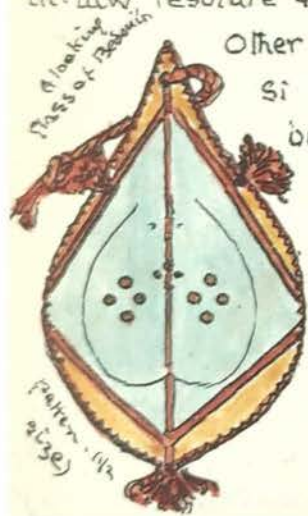
either body or soul if I went back there" he said

The only solution visible has been much prayed over these days. Mabel Grautoff has at Miliana two Christian girls of his station of life, one of whom might be the right wife for him. It was only two or three weeks ago that she asked me if there were any chance of Si Amar for the elder of them, as she had been asked to find them husbands. If he were known to be married here, it would go far to making his people see that his choice is fixed.

He has taken the proposal quietly + seriously + said he would like to put it to the test, + it seemed best to do so, as the letters from his home grow more + more urgent, + he was getting ill under the strain. So finally he has gone off to Miliana, + has returned with a prospective brother-in-law, resolute + fairfaced, come evidently to enquire further into his character + prospects.

Other growing points are coming into life alongside. One of them is the nearing of Si Boualem's freedom. His shoemaking is only enough just now to keep him going, but he is skilled in making little leather goods such as this. Mr Buckenham is finding a ready sale for them on a business footing, + the debt to his elder brother is being steadily worked off.

Then up at Miliana, Miss Drysdale, who came out in the autumn through Mr Goran on "Short Service" is giving good help in practical ways, + she has begun to be able to sing hymns in Arabic (she has a marked gift in song), + to catch enough of the drift of things to be able to help alongside in prayer. Her presence there strengthens Rue du Croissant



By setting M<sup>lle</sup> Butticaz free to do second there, + this gives M<sup>r</sup> Theobald every chance for language study. ... Language study has taken a new departure this winter by the help of our other new Short Servicer Miss M<sup>s</sup> Inery. We are experimenting on launching newcomers straight into the colloquial, without the delay of preliminary French as a medium. This means typewritten sheets of the Franco-Arabic grammar translated into English. To this we are adding "missionary" vocabularies + exercises as it goes along so as to shorten still further the days of dumbness. - for instance supplementing "What hast thou in thy cup, hast thou coffee or milk" by "what hast thou in thy heart, my brother, hast thou light or darkness"! Alice Kemp is helping alongside with the first pages of an English + colloquial dictionary.

18 The wooing of "the 4 hours" has not been long. He went back with the brother of the girl in question, + took our breath away by writing promptly that they had fixed the wedding for that day week! ... It has not been an easy one, for the eldest sister, who came up in charge of the family group, is of the stiffest type of respectable Moslem matrons, + one never knows to the last in these cases, whether they will suddenly "lift themselves" as they express it, + depart bodily. It is safely through now, thank God, + one more little Christian home added to us.

March 6 I think a breath of longing is coming to these 3 South Guntry men towards their vocation. Alma Krebs is settled in at Tozeur + writes how she needs a man for the bookshop. It struck a chord in the heart of both the Si Amars, when I read them yesterday her letter in our morning hour together. The "4 hours" poured out a touching prayer of self-abasement for all his failures despite the wonderful things that God had done for him, + yielding him.



self to his service for wherever he might send him. And today Si Amar the less brought up from the shore & waveworn scraps of marble. One was all black, the next black with a zigzag line or two of white, the third whiteveined through & through, the fourth spotless. He explained that they symbolized the turning men from darkness to light in which God calls us to share. His face glowed, & he suddenly said, "I am ready to go to Tozeur - I could go now - I could sell books - I know I could sell books & I think I could explain." It will be a glad day when that vision comes to earth!

14 The last thing before starting for Tozeur with Alice Kemp, has been the joyful sight of the last end of Si Boualem's debt to his brother paid off, & he stands, for the first time since the outbreak of the war, a free man.

Another thing that we leave behind with thankfulness & hope, is the work among the Alger boys - the expansion of Alice Mc Ilroy's labours among them in the past. Now with the re-inforcement of Mr Buckenham & Mr Theobald & the Tozeur brothers a long-side, they can get & keep afternoon classes numbering 30 to 40 of these older lads, & that with an individual touch that can give a diagnosis of nearly every boy's character - a thing impossible in the transitory contact of old. The Beit Nagma boys - quite another set - have had their share, & now at last, to our joy, Midge Farmer is well enough to return to her post there, with every hope of soon being able to take up full work again.

23 Tozeur again - a shadowed visit this time. We found Albina Cox seriously ill when we stopped at Tebessa on our way, & the news greeted us on the platform here, that

she had won through to her "well done." It is a blow to the Church Militant in the land she was so full of courage + hopefulness + patient love.

The new side of the house, left for completion last spring under Mr. Olley's care, more than carries out our hopes. It needs but a few last jobs of a small order, to get all in readiness for full work we cannot but think that while we are doing these small bits of preparation that fall to our share, the needful staff is being got ready by Him whose part that is. If there is one thing clearly commanded us, in prayer, it is the cry for labourers in His harvest, + of all the lands out here, this Djerid country seems the nearest harvesting.

A fresh group is under teaching this winter. The eldest is an earnest strong-faced man of 28 or 30. "The Slave of the Keeper" by name. Then there is a young blind taleb "The Blessed" who has just left to go teaching the nomad tribes, with the 1<sup>st</sup> ray of dawn in his heart + on his face. Another "The Bearer of Good Tidings," is a typical Djeridi, lank + high featured, thinking many thoughts in that big young brain of his.

Those are the leaders just now among the student set. It was good to be with them today + to watch their keen nutbrown faces + wide awake dark eyes as they crouched on the reading-room dais, + to get into touch with them before Alma Krebs has to leave for Tébessa.

Then among the younger lads of the college near by there is a pair of cousins, 14 + 16 in

The staircase up to the new  
roof room  
+  
Magaddsha





age, who are keen to hear, specially the younger one, "Dimples" we call him. (How so many of them can tuck themselves into his thin face would not be believed.) Already with his swift clear reasoning he sees the clashing point between the old faith + the new with a sense of dismay, + yet there is an "attrait" + he cannot keep away from us. Another of the old-time lads, Ibrahim by name, with incipient moustache + beard now, holds true to the ray of light that came to him through a dream three or four years back. He takes persistently every chance of hearing, crouching down even among the small urchins to share their elementary lessons. Our poor Yusef still holds away for the most part, paralysed by his fears. The one we dubbed "St. Augustine" last winter from his likeness to that saint in Ary Schaeffer's picture, has been coming regularly to give Arabic lessons to Violet Wood. He has just told her spontaneously, that he has come over the line to Christ. We tell of these hoping that one + another will find intercessors.

For all ~~the~~ them + the un-numbered men + boys around, Alma Krebs' hopes for next winter centre on finding a man worker who could open the bookshop, + start a club for the lads. It looks to us as if, under her guiding, Mr Theobald might by then be ready for this post, alongside his language study, which would have every chance down here. His special longingspoint that way.

Violet Wood is finding more openings among the houses than she has had time to follow + there has been none of the open hostility which we thought might result from the "4 hours" having come away to us. The bright friendly spirit of Miss Ryll, who has again been doing "Short Service" here, has also brought fresh links with the handful of French inhabitants.

The last sight of the  
shott, with colour notes

mauve sky



How the  
Tozeur babies  
go out riding

The 3 weeks have gone quickly, for Alma Krebs had to go to Tebessa, + between people + workmen the days have been full. And one's goodbye is always full of hope. For the certainty never wanes that God has much people in this city. Alger again, + puzzles ahead, chief among them the approach of Ramadhan. For the Cherchell families into which the Tozeur brothers have married, have solidly made up their minds for months past, that the two daughters shall come + keep Ramadhan at home, under threat of divorce if it is refused. - + that can ~~not~~ easily be carried through. That a man has become a Christian over-rides all appeal under Moslem law. Worse still, the men feel that if the women are swept off they must go too to look after them. The same storm seems lowering on the horizon at Milliana. Already one of the brothers of the bride has been up to get the three back there. Three because the other Christian sister is here on a visit. - a wonderful girl she is, this younger sister in her intelligence + powers of memory. They are both of <sup>them</sup> very unlike the generality of Arab women. tall + dignified, + full of quiet self-possession - a beautiful fruitage of Ida Nash's reading girls. They hold out against returning, hitherto. Meanwhile we have been urging the brothers to take the way of faith + stand on their right to keep their wives here. "The way of faith will lead to divorce"! said



Si Amar grimly, + it may be we shall have to let them go + learn their lessons, keeping hold of the ropes on our side, that it may not lead to spiritual disaster.

④ A fortnight + more without an entry, for I collapsed + am still "hors de combat"... And a "combat" it has been... for a few days before Ramadhan began, the relations swooped down for the women of all three families, + with heavy hearts the men went too! It is a bad set-back for them all: for themselves + for the work in Cherchelle + Miliana as well as here. They are all doubtless breaking the fast secretly, but that is no witness. It appears that the Moslem authorities are much roused this year in insistence on its observance + that many converts are taking cover. Nothing will cause their heads to "be lifted up above their enemies round about" but the outpouring of the Spirit of Pentecost.

⑤ A bit of gladness in the Ramadan gloom has been the wedding of Pierre Nicoud, celebrated in the central Court by a concourse of Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., Girl guides + boy scouts, down to the diminutive wolf-cubs, with all of whom he + his dear little bride are closely linked. It all seems to have been something unique in its free joyfulness.

In all the stations too the yearly counterblow has been vigorously given in the way of evening lantern services in the Mission houses + the homes around, for it is the one month in the year when women may go out at night. In Blida they had a congregation of nearly 100 the last night under the great vine that covers the court.

Another ray of light is that blind Abdelkader tells us that he is over the line, + there is no reason to doubt him, for he has already followed his light in two

directions - breaking Ramadhan + asking Aisa's forgiveness for the many bad turns he has done him. Aisa has borne them patiently + hopefully, so the joy of harvest comes to him as well as to Mr. Smeeton, whose first pupil he was in old days.

12 Another bit of the spring's cheer is over Mary Waking's baby out-post at Belcourt - cheer in that it has held on its way without being up-rooted as has been threatened now + again + that links are slowly forging + that our dear Luizette + her husband have established themselves close by: her loving impetuous spirit + true loyalty to Christ make a glow in that dark Moslem atmosphere alongside the other glow of the little Mission "diggings".



Salim  
Abdelkader.

15 For our absentees the month lags heavily + they are all pretty miserable in their self-made prisons. Mabel Grautoff can more or less see after "the four hours". He spends the whole of his days reading his Bible, + speaks fairly openly before the family. Still their presence at home belies in every case their profession, + they are risking losing the visit of Dr Zwemer, which is fixed for the last week of the fast.

20 All the more we rejoice over yet another of the heavenly love touches that so often come when things look dim. We have been feeling that Mimoun's oft-repeated request <sup>for baptism</sup> ought to be granted + that he should be admitted to the Whitsuntide communion + that as 2 or 3 others are hoping to follow before long, we should make a proper baptistry up here to replace the present make-shift. In the early hours a few days ago the "go forward" seemed to come; - 3 or 4 hours later the post brought an unofficial sending (i.e. for private disposal for any special need). The house



contained marble tiles + slabs for lining without having anything to buy, + digging in what appeared the best place in the Central Court revealed an unknown waste water pipe ready to hand!

The Spring Committee shews new possible horizons, specially at Miliana, which longs for a new substation at <sup>Teniet</sup> Taret, on its southern hillcrest, + brings an earnest request from the Hadj for a little house where enquirers could come + hear. In looking back to the winter Committee we see the marked way in which God has come to our help on the financial side, largely by gifts from America through our dear Mrs Walker... "Lacked ye anything"? and they said "Nothing"

**18** And finally our battle month has brought us Dr Zwemer's visit + all it has meant of fresh inspiration the more that we have had him in the house. The Conference aimed at 3-fold advance - literature, Sunday school developement + preparation for Dr Mott's visit next year. Through all statistics + arrangements there glowed the fire from the altar, <sup>specially in</sup> + two of Dr Zwemer's addresses, one on the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, the other on the blinding as well as the vision that comes from the Revelation of the Risen Lord as on the road to Damascus

His 2 meetings for educated Arabs in Alger woke a response beyond all our hopes. M. Cook goes on with him to Central Morocco.

Our 3 infants turned up at the first possible moment after the close of Ramadhan without waiting for the feast that follows; They have had a stiff time + return with the cleavage between them + Islam the greater instead of being bridged over, thank God. The brothers arrived just 3 or 4 hours before Mimoun's baptism - Si Amar et Touil - (the tall one) as we have begun to call "the 4 hours" for distinction, was already there. Dear Mimoun, he walked into the prayercourt in his baptismal gandoura, with his face stedfast + shining. "I should like to die for Jesus" he said the other day in his

simple fashion, + there was a reflection of that in his expression.

M<sup>r</sup> Buckenham is off to spend the summer weeks with his wife + boy <sup>in England</sup>, where the former has been recuperating after a sharp illness. He has been preparing for work rather than rest, by making a series of wall-sheets showing every aspect of evangelisation + its conditions out here. M<sup>r</sup> + M<sup>rs</sup> Theobald have come for the summer to the Buckenham's former quarters here, to give themselves to language study. They both rose with joy to the thought of Tozeur for next winter.

Another of God's plans for our help has come to light in the person of Si Abd-el-Ouahad, a native helper of the M.E.C. in Constantine. Tebessa, his home, is too sad for him this year, + he has asked to come for his holiday with his wife + baby. They are installed in the Garden Room which Helen Freeman, among many other joyful surprises, had made habitable while I was down south. He is a fearless + practical man, + his influence just now is most valuable, for Si Amar et Touil + Si Ahi have been getting befogged through studying a subversive book, nominally because its knotty points are sure to be brought up against them, later on. . . .



A jumping frog from a penny bazaar makes a delightful sensation of mingled joy + fear.

Down for the Balida fetes + a few quiet days with the dear help of Miss M<sup>r</sup> Inery. Balida is our next problem now that Tozeur has begun to get its staff. The present classes are badly overcrowded - the number of shut-in girls that should be followed up increases by leaps + bounds every year - the boys have to be left unreached for want of a room in one of the Moslem quarters where




They can be gathered - the ninety-odd villages that lie within a days' itinerating have, most of them, to wait years without a message from God ... all these things mean that there must be an increasing of the staff + an enlarging of accomodation. We have started a compact of faith over this.

Relizane also longs for a man + his wife for following up the boys who crowd in as eagerly as ever to the classes, + also the colportage openings - for these have come into more vivid focus in these early summer weeks spent at their new outpost in Tiaret. They have been making their first happy ventures at selling books in the weekly market there. + last week found a quiet corner near its entrance which proved the chance that lies to hand.

At Mascara too, colportage is the fresh growing point. Till lately it has been under the ban. Now it is free + Helen Freeman's Spanish helper Senor Soler, has been getting really remarkable sales, + better still has been gathering fruit unto life eternal among the Spaniards of the farms around, who should in their turn bring life within reach of their Arab workpeople.

The native classes + visiting have been at a standstill, for the other helper, Fanny Hamman was taken seriously ill from a chill on her journey up to Algiers with two small girls, whom she was bringing away from dangerous surroundings. She lay for weeks in the early spring in a grave condition. in fact 2 or 3 days before Si Amar's wedding it was pronounced hopeless + we think it was the earnest prayer of the native men together that night, unknown to us, which turned the scale. Meantime the temporary closing of the Mascara work has set Helen Freeman at liberty for taking the greater part of the spring work off my hands at Dar Naama.

 I have been thinking with regard to the difficulties around us, of the word in Is. 50. 10. to those

who, though living in obedience, are yet "for a season walking in darkness + having no light - it comes with a fresh beauty how there are two kinds of darkness in the world - cloudy darkness & cloudless darkness. The heaviness of a beclouded night sky is never meant to be ours, but there is such a thing, as we know well out here, as a radiantly clear night - the brilliancy of the daylight is not there, but the shutting off on the earthly side means visions of the heavenly. -

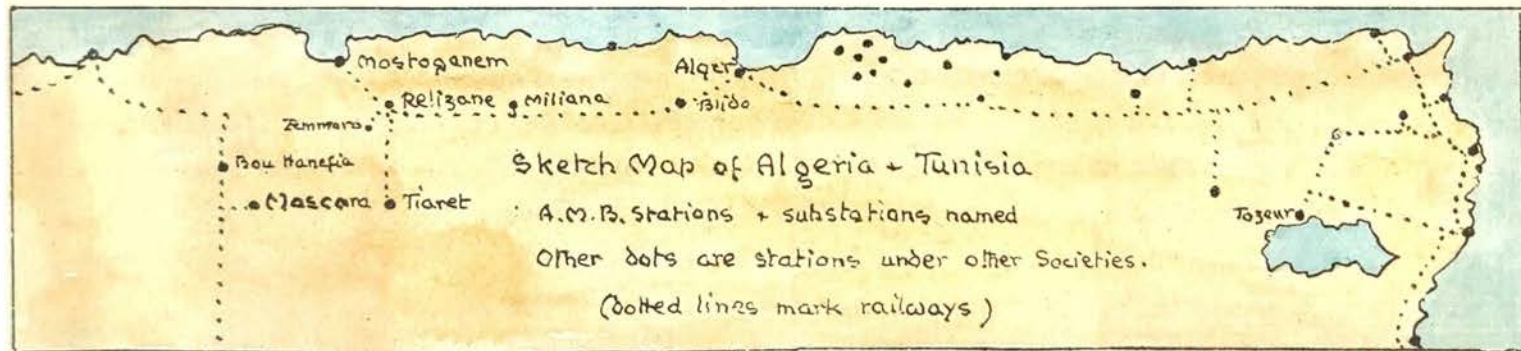
"Who could have dreamt such darkness lay concealed

Within thy beams, O Sun, or who could find

White tree + leaf + insect lay revealed

That to these countless worlds Thou madst us blind!"

So in the hours of temptation + perplexity, of hope deferred or seemingly blighted, the one thing is to have the cloudless darkness that lends itself to vision instead of the cloudy darkness that shuts it out. And these starlit skies - these "Treasures of Darkness" are ours by the Precious Blood.





# Algiers Mission Band

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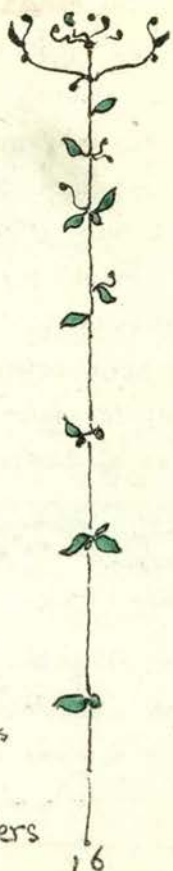
## Sec. for Prayer Helpers

Mrs J. H. Smeeton. 2 Rue du Croissant  
 Algiers

.....

## Treasurer

Miss Currie. Dar Naama. El Biar. Algiers



Location of workers. Spring 1925

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