

New Series
No 9
January to October
1925

**Algiers Mission Band
Journal**

edited by
I. Lilius Trotter
El Biar, Algiers



It is wonderful to wake up to the New Year's morning, with the joy of last night's telegram, telling that Tlemcen has passed over once more from the sole charge of Islam, & that He who shall divide His spoil with the strong has this bit of land held there by Him & for Him. The very weakness of the venture, as regards any staff in prospect, places it among the "things" where He may win His glory.



A step involving far issues has been taken in to-day's Committee, for the outline of the future of the Band is at last getting cleared through the knocking away of the scaffolding of all former plans - plans that have hitherto hidden the building of God, how manifest we think behind it.

For we have considered in vain every possible means of getting the Government recognition out here, needful towards securing a footing in the land for the time to come. No solution could be found that would not hamper our freedom.

The only alternative is an English status, & this has suddenly grown into shape. We decided on calling to our help two of the oldest of our fellow-workers of past days, Rev. F. C. Brading & his wife. They had stood alongside us in Algiers through difficult times for 3 or 4 years, till malaria & delicate babies made it impossible to risk any longer the unsanitary conditions of the native town, then our only habitation. Their hearts have stayed here ever since.



(15) Si Amar came up from Cherchelle to-day with some camp furniture at which he is working, + working wonderfully well in comparison with the batches + boggles of ordinary native carpentering. "Does Si Ali help you?" I asked. The answer came slowly, with a touch of brotherly pride. "Ali has made himself a bureau at the back of the shop. He is making a concordance to that book from Egypt" (the Lord of Glory) "he says 'This work is very useful to me'". Good in that he is now compiling evidence for the truth, but not much furtherance in gaining a living!

Feb 1. Growing points have been shewing all around in the year's first month. Besides those noted, there has been the incoming of Salvador Lull among us. He is a young Spaniard whom we have known since his boyhood at Colea. His father, a farmer, sets him free to follow his intense sense of call to God's work. He has joined us on a year's probation: Miliana is his first post for language study together with helping in the Dépôt + with the boys.

And now to-day comes the dawn of light on the question of a Home for Shelterless girls that has been on our minds for the last year: an inward call has come to M. Farmer to offer for anything involved in its start.

3. This morning's post brings a joyful "yes" from the Bradings on the matter of taking up our burdens on the English side. They place a room in their house at our service as office, with Mrs Brading as Secretary: + we could have no one more united with us in spirit + in love for the land + its people.

Tolga



has seen the closing down of its winter work, for V. Wood's sister has joined her & they can give Tozeur a turn, M. Farmer & others having helped at Tolga till now. The aloofness of the men has been giving way under the love-touch of medical care for their women & children, & the children run in & out of the Mission House & play to their hearts' content. 993 visits from children, mostly in groups, during 2 months means a good deal of contact, though they have still to go carefully as regards organised classes.

And now comes Tozeur, where, in spite of all the years behind us, the dear elusive girls still steal in & dance out, a few at a time. But the boys are at last getting the club that we have so long hoped for. Mr Theobald holds it 6 nights a week for all such things as are dear to boy-hearts - story telling, games, microscope, & a regular membership.

Feb 14. Are the old ways closing behind us as the new ones open? We find that I. Sheach feels the same drawing as M. Farmer to the Shelter Home thought, & has the same conviction that Delys is the best starting place. . . Together with this comes a seeming determination of the owner of our old Headquarters of 2, Rue du Croissant to sell it - which would mean almost certainly that we must turn out . . . no light matter after 32 years - & we love every bit of it & know that its like will never be found again. But we feel no freedom towards offering to buy it: its tumbledown condition is not so serious a drawback as the increasing iniquity of the streets around: so barefaced

that we have wondered of late whether we ought to bring the boys & girls about our door.

24. Yes, out we must go. "He Himself knew what He would do . . . and Jesus took." But the taking & the breaking meant a multiplying & so it will now. We can almost see it beginning, for on the very day that the old house passed out of our hands, the first little temporary pied à terre was found in Dellys. The problem is the housing of the baby church - our dear crypt had a sense of fitness for its nursery, such as we shall probably never see again, with its groined roof & heavy pillars: & the back street gave the chance for Nicodemus souls to slip in unnoticed.

The other main difficulty will be to find quarters for Mr Smeeton's blind class: it seems sad to disturb it, for after having stood at 5 or 6 for years, the attendance has suddenly doubled. All these things have but one answer. Wait God's sequel.

March 4. M. Groutoff writes of a 2 hours' interview with the "Touil". He is still as great a puzzle & a problem as ever, owning his sin, refusing the Moslem posts which he could easily obtain, yet holding aloof also from the Christians & living as he says unloved & friendless, as one down a well. Yet prayer persists for him & must surely win.

14. Yusef ben Ali, down at Tozeur, (another for whom prayer has long gone up) shews signs of real grace this winter, so writes Mr Theobald: with him the avowal of last year's failure was very frank & contrite & his loneliness is a sore burden. For him too there is the promise "The smoking flax shall He not quench."

27. Today's Friday prayer meeting was a glad one. We were closing our quarter just free of deficit, only with nothing in hand for furloughs, which are many this year. Now

comes a U.S.A. cheque from a friend who takes a very human interest in the human needs of missionaries, & will love to have it earmarked thus. Then Mr Smeeton has decided to fit himself & his many books & papers into 3 or 4 little rooms on the ground floor of this house hitherto relegated mostly to Arab guests. Lastly, he brought up with him two friends from Suffolk, who have long stood behind Mr Buckenham & Mr Theobald in prayer. The land & its needs have so laid hold of them that we believe their visit will mean much.

29. More developments. A. McIlroy & Mlle Butticuz went off "en tournée" 3 weeks ago - on prospecting lines, though counting on taking up Beit Naama work next winter, that being now our only centre in Algiers town. They have returned with a new vista: Bousaada, a centre we have often visited, has sprung into strategic importance from being the half-way halt in a new route connecting Algiers & Tolga by motor bus. With the opening up of this district, it becomes not only a radiating point for the country round, but for reaching the Aurès mountains. These rise like a wall on the northern edge of the desert from Diskra to the Tunisian border, with villages piled tier on tier. The people, Chawia by name, are Berber by race, but familiar now with Arabic, at any rate on their outskirts, & dear to our hearts from the very fact that we were hopelessly boycotted there in 1902.

And now in Bousaada our pair had the offer of a house as fitted to our needs in every detail as all our other houses. Is this a part of God's plan in closing Rue du Croissant behind us?



April 5. Our new friends, Mr Collinson & Mr Johnston have left to-day. Mr Collinson is full of the thought of furthering the start at Bousaada which they also have just visited.

Likewise he has taken on his heart the other dream of a motor van of some sort for evangelistic + colportage work in the interior. This to the great joy of Mr Theobald who is just back from Tozeur.



These days have seen the completing of another hope that has been brooding since the Jerusalem Conference - a little vaulted chamber on a back stair has just been fitted up + dedicated as a prayer room. We have put on the plinth that encircles it the words "We see not yet all things put under Him, but we see Jesus." May that revelation abide there: so will the prayer of faith arise + triumph. It was Elisha's power to see Elijah as he ascended, that sealed the capacity for receiving his master's spirit. "If thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee."



We had been hoping that this month might bring a visit from Mr & Mrs Upson of the Nile Mission Press, + hoping moreover that something might spring from it in the direction of a Book Depot to work in with the Car prospects. At the last they failed to get the hoped for passages from Port Said, so now we look for some solution through Mr Theobald getting an interview with Mr Upson in England. For some months he, Mr Theobald, has felt that he should remove his base from the tough, out-of-the-way corner of Monastir + transfer it over here where co-operation in evangelistic work is still more needed + is becoming possible.

Fresh hope in going forward over Bousanda lies folded in a story that A. Mc Ilroy tells of their stay last month. "We were visiting", she says, "in one of the great bare, burn-like houses, seated on a palm log, singing to a group. Suddenly a tall young woman, distaff in hand, began to speak, her eyes gleaming with joy. "O ye people," she said, "last night I had a dream + saw two European women sitting before me + singing, + lo! here they are!"

We must give heed to what they tell us," & she laughed over & over at the wonder of it, "God told me of their coming." Into the midst came that sweet sense of Christ's care & love & the linking of our souls with that dear woman, & the answer to our question "Does God want us here?"

May 15. Mid-May is here, & has brought the moment for handing over the keys of 2, Rue du Croissant. With full hearts the little Algiers group saw the great nail-studded much dented door close behind them. At that very hour M. Farmer arrived up here with the news of an available house in which to start in Dellys. She & I. Sheach have been there for 2 or 3 weeks in the cubanon - alias shanty, rented for the spring as a look-out. She has gone back with the first month's rent, whereby to secure it.

And this last month of 2, Rue du Croissant's career has also seen the Bousaada house taken & the Tlemcen title deeds signed; so we go on with Him Who makes all things new.

"Tlemcen title deeds signed:" the four words are quickly written, but all that lies behind them since New Year's Eve is another matter - endless complicated business, with many a deadlock, on the earthly side, & in the unseen world many a prayer battle fought through by K. Butler & Mlle Gayral. The latter was released from her Mostaganem post to stand alongside through the varying difficulties with which her French nationality helped in dealing. Now the remodelling of all into the Mission house of K. Butler's thought, can go unhindered.

June 5. Various things are pointing towards letting Si Amar & Si Ali remove themselves, their families & their carpentering to the native quarters here which they inhabited in the early days of their married lives: this time not in Mission pay, but "on their own".

Si Amar has prospects of self-support & we still feel that with a year's training, of which we have hopes through the M.E.C., Si Ali would make a useful worker, for he has a great gift with boys. But just now he is ill & discouraged, & we are anxious about him.

⑥ Good news comes from England as to possible linking with the N.M.P., another bit of God's timings, for things have ripened on their side only within these last weeks, making it feasible. All would have been premature if Mr Upson had been able to call here on his way home.

July 12. The Tunisian brothers, together with V. Wood, are helping in the matter which for long has been uppermost as regards personal work - the framing of a little book for the lay brothers of the Mystic fraternities who hold sway through the desert. Round these brotherhoods our hopes gather more & more, despite their vagaries, as the possible kindling point for the future, for there is among them a dim earnest search for God, very different from the self-satisfied attitude of the ordinary Moslem. These two, Si Amar & Si Ali, were born & bred among them, & are helping very earnestly to get the wording right.

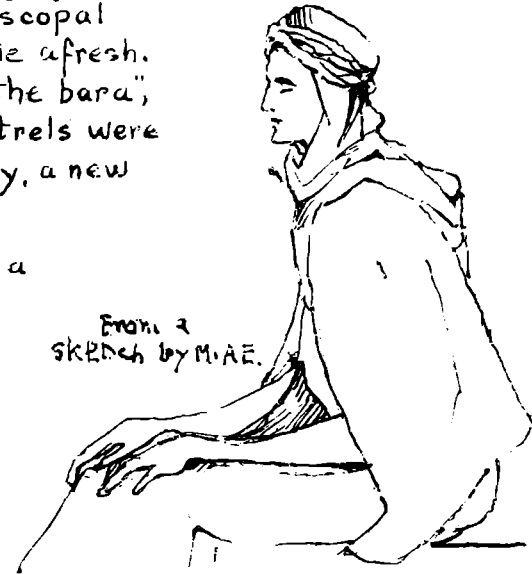
15. The farm at Bou Hanefia has passed this month into the hands of a Christian colonist, who will do his utmost to help on the missionary cause there, while relieving H. Freeman from the heavy responsibility of working it from a distance.

20. We are beginning to see that in spite of our faithless wondering as to the housing of Rue du Croissant work, we had no need to fear; the Sunday meeting has taken root up here, & men, women & children (though a mere handful) attend with as much regularity as can be expected of Arabs. And certainly the atmosphere, physical & moral, is better with God's creation about them, than in the evil surroundings down below.

Then for Mr Smeeton's blind men has come a provision beyond our hopes, in the kind granting of the use of a garage belonging to the Women's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. This will hold them, even if their numbers double afresh. Here is the portrait of one of them whom we named "the bard", for such is his profession. If some of these blind minstrels were brought into Christ's fold, & their gifts into His treasury, a new field of evangelisation would open. Pray for this.

Aug. 18 M. Grautoff writes: "This summer has closed a chapter in Miliana's history, for after years of patiently borne invalid life, our dear blind Hadj has passed to higher service. His witness since his baptism had grown more definite year by year, so definite that the Moslem authorities demurred at burial in their Arab cemetery, & only permitted it on payment of a good sum by his people, whereas a Hadj in ordinary course should have had free, honoured burial.

For us, Miliana has lost its chief worker, for while others slept, he prayed, & regularly on Fridays he kept seven hours in prayer for his people, the converts, & missionaries of the A.M.B. I have seen him weeping 'Oh, Lord Jesus, send more messengers', or his oft-repeated prayer 'Send the Holy Spirit on the converts' - 'Raise up someone to take my place'."



25. A week later, & another has been taken, whom we have looked upon as a pillar in our little church in Algiers. It was 33 years ago since we first found Belaid, a gigantic negro ill with typhoid, & muttering from his bed one of his few English sentences "I love Jesus". It was in England that he had been converted some years before, & he had lived alone with his Arabic Bible since his return. From the time of his baptism a few weeks later, he never failed us. In storm & calm he was our friend, faithful & unafraid.

Again the difficulties of the land with regard to Christian burial for converts obliged us to let his Sudanese friends carry through the funeral in the Moslem burying-ground, but again the witness to Christ was not wanting, for when their rites were over, they listened quietly, in a ring round the grave, while first a missionary & then a native evangelist, spoke of the heavenly city & the way there.

September Into September's happenings comes the story of a soul often prayed for, the Arab girl Louisette, now married & living near M. Watling. She, (M.W.) writes: "Louisette & her baby boy 'Servant of Light' were much on my heart all August. When I got back in Sept. I found L. bubbling over with praise to God. The child had been so ill that she had had to go into hospital with him - a big step for an Arab woman. L. threw herself on the Lord. Then the worst night, after they had told her the child must die, God comforted her by a dream. She says I came to her & said 'Don't be afraid for thy child, the Lord Jesus is holding him he is quite safe.' The sisters & patients were astonished at her bright face next morning as she told them her boy was going to live - God had sent someone to tell her so in a dream. 'We shall see' said the sister. She was led to take the child out of hospital to go

to another doctor who changed the treatment & the little man began to mend from that day. It was delightful to sit & listen to half an hour's praise of God's tender leading, from a native Christian woman & to see how the baby hands had been used to draw her closer to Him."

Colea's story for the months of this Journal is told by Mr Buckenham: "The visiting & villaging were at a standstill by the claims of Edmund" (the new baby boy)," but the girls classes went strong. The boys fell off a bit, partly because the leaders of the first sets seemed suddenly to turn into young men, & took to work in cafés & shops & on the land, & commenced going to prayers in the mosque. Coming to help Mr Smeeton with his blind men & his correspondence, also made an inroad into my time for them. All the while, however, we believe there has been a very definite, silent leaven of the Spirit working in the place, partly owing we believe to extra prayer being made for it & for us through the visualizing of needs by Mr Collinson & Mr Johnston's visit in the Spring, both of these exercising great influence among our Suffolk friends."

Sept 28. To-day has brought the sequel to a troubled time, for Si Ali has been having weeks of suffering & depression brought on, his brother says, by one of the sorcerer's drugs secretly administered to him in Cherchell. He has been sorely tempted to seek the counter spell in which they believe that deliverance lies. Now while lying ill downstairs a real call seems to have come to him by God, in a sort of waking vision of the countless unreached native homes between Tlemcen & Tunisia & the mission stations closed for months together & the native boys knocking vainly at their doors, & only two Arab evan-

gelists free for itinerating work. There was the more a sense of God's touch in it, in that there was no outward impulse to his eager nature, but that it came when he lay alone & weak. . . . And the very next day came a letter from Constantine saying that Mr Lochhead had been able to make all arrangements & he could come into training when he would. .

Oct 8. The counterblow has not been long on its way. An urgent telegram has arrived from Tozeur by which the brothers gather that their old mother is dying or dead. They seem to feel no doubt that it is true, & we do not think we can forbid their going: only there is the sense of a heavy fight ahead



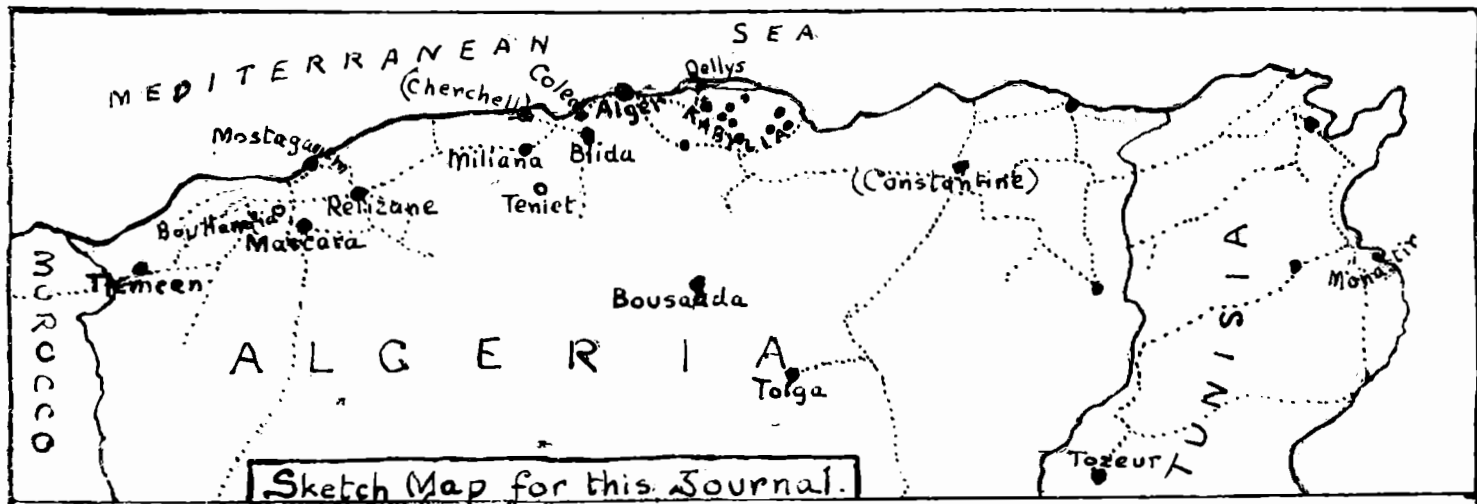
The home of the brothers (District of Sidi el Abid, Tozeur)

Very special help has come from Eastbourne all the summer in intercession for this Tozeur pair, & in intercession likewise over the ever fresh difficulties arising over the start in Tlemcen. It was through K. Butler that this linking with Eastbourne came, & now she has been there herself for some weeks, & has found a marked prayer-impulse for us awake. It looks as if this would develop into prayer groups on more definite lines

than in the past, to be kept in close touch with our needs. If the Spirit of Life breathes on these, they may be the greatest of all the "new things" of the year.

May we on our side "obtain mercy of the Lord to be faithful" in welcoming + using the ripples + waves of grace that break on our shore from afar, for as Mr Smeeton said the other day, "the fact of being much prayed for brings much responsibility."

Here the story must stop, for the next few weeks brought too many fresh happenings to be condensed into its pages.



Key to Map on preceding page.

- A.M.B. Stations (named).
- " Outstations.
- Stations of other Missions (unnamed).
- Railways.

— Location of Workers, Jan, 1925. —

Algiers: Dar Naama, El Biar,	I. L. Trotter.	Colea,	Mr + Mrs Buckenham.
" "	F. H. Freeman.	Miliana,	M. D. Groutoff.
" "	S. E. Perkin.	"	M. H. Drysdale; (S.S.)
" "	I. Nash.	"	Mon. S. Lull.
" "	A. Kemp.	Relizane	E. R. M. Ridley, (on furlough)
" "	M. + Mrs. McNicoud.	Mascara: Bou Hanifia, Sr. + Sra. Soler.	
" 2, Rue du Craissant,	A. Mc Ilroy.	"	F. Hammon, (M.H.)
" "	Mr. Smeeton.	Mostaganem,	A. Gayral.
" "	A. Butticaz.	Tlemcen,	K. Butler
" "	I. Sheach, (S.S.)	Tozeur	A. Krebs, (on furlough).
" Beit Naama	A. M. Farmer.	"	Mr. + Mrs. Theobald
" Belcourt	M. M. Watling.	Tolga,	V. Wood.
Blida,	F. K. Currie.		
"	M. H. Roche.		

Algiers Mission Band.

Headquarters: Dar Naama, El Biar, Algiers.

Gen Sec: - Miss I. L. Trotter,
Dar Naama, El Biar, Algiers.

Gen. Treas: - Miss F. K. Currie
Ouled Sultane, Blida, Algeria.

FIELD COMMITTEE

1888. I. L. Trotter.

1890 F. H. Freeman.

1906. S. E. Perkin.

1907. M. D. Grautoff.

1912. J. H. Smeeton.

1909. F. K. Currie.

1909. A. Krebs.

Office in England: - Mrs Brading (Hon Sec. & Treas), Outram Lodge, 38, Outram Rd, Croydon.
W. Cecil Collinson, 78, Risbygate St, Bury St Eds; Hon. Deputation Sec.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Rev Francis Brading, B.D.

W. Cecil Collinson.

J. C. Govan.

Rev. E. L. Hamilton.

John L. Oliver.

Rev. Charles Inwood, D.D.

John Gordon Logan.

REFEREES, AMERICA.

W. C. Pearce, W. S. S. A., Metropolitan Tower, New York.

Dr. S. D. Price " " " "

Chas. C. Trumbull, 1031, Walnut Street, Philadelphia.

REFEREES FOR FRANCE.

Pastor J. F. Cook, Tizi-Ouzou, Algeria. Pastor Saillens, Nogent sur Marne, Seine.

ALGERIAN MISSION BAND, AMERICA.

Sec., Mrs J. A. Walker,
2500, Dexter Street, Denver, Col.

Treas., Mrs Goodrich,
302, College Court, Michigan.

Secretaries for Prayer Helpers: - J. H. Smeeton & H. W. Buckenham, Dar Naama, El Biar, Algiers.