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*Challenge*  
*and*  
*Counter*  
*Challenge*



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## CHALLENGE AND COUNTER-CHALLENGE

A Missionary Magazine for Young People desirous of learning more about the challenge of Islam, and of helping to counter it by the proclamation of the Gospel.

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## Catching Up?

It was a very hot day and I was in the garden once again, doing the dulllest of dull jobs, trimming ragged grass edges, clipping off dead flowers and forking up dusty beds. I was absolutely fed-up, browned off or whatever the current slang expression is for feeling very, very sorry for myself for having to do such an uninteresting job. Suddenly the gate clicked: it was only the milkman and he only spoke two words, but they worked a miracle. He just said "Catching up"? Somehow or other these two words brought before my mind another very hot day about a fortnight before. I had gone to Cambridge to watch the "May Bumps", which are races where boats from all the Colleges start off at brief intervals and try to bump the boat which has started off before them. I remembered these young men, all very hot and working harder than I had ever done, yet not thinking at all about the heat or how tired they were, but straining every nerve to catch up on the boat in front. Why were they not feeling as miserable as I was? Because it was a race: all along the banks of the river there were crowds of people, cheering on the winners, sympathising with the boats who were "bumped" and every oarsman was conscious of their presence.

I wonder whether you do these dull everyday jobs as I did mine in the garden that day—reluctantly, feeling very sorry for yourself and sure that everyone else is having a better time than you are—or if you are like the men in the boats, keen and excited and so thrilled with your job that you would not change places with anyone, unless it were with someone in the higher up boats where you would need to work still harder? It all depends, doesn't it, on how you look at your job. In a race there is all the excitement of an audience, of the chance of winning and of proving yourself strong enough to do something better than you have ever done it before. But in doing jobs at home there isn't any thrill; probably no one will notice that they are done, though they will be quick enough to scold if they are not

done, and tomorrow or next week we shall have to do the same old job all over again.

But if we are Christians then all we do is part of a race, and a race where there are crowds of spectators all intensely interested in how we are doing. You can read about it in Hebrews chapter 12, verses 1 and 2. Yes, we are all in this race and the best thing about it is that we can *all* win the prize, because we are not trying to do better than somebody else: we are trying to reach up to the standard which is set before us by the Lord Jesus Christ. No one can ever break the record in this race, but if we keep on to the end, we shall receive the crown of life, and better still, we shall be made like Him, who is Himself the image of God.

By the time I had thought about all this I had forgotten all about the heat and the dust and the tired back, and my mind went on to another picture suggested by the words "Catching up?"

Once again it was a very hot day and this time I was in a hot country. I was travelling in a car across the central plain of Morocco. Mile after mile, the road stretched before us, white and glaring in the sunshine, with never a tree to give us some shade. Suddenly there was a bang. What was that? A burst tyre, something broken in the engine?



*"Only a big stone"*

No it was only a big stone, thrown up by one of the wheels striking some part of the body of the car. So we relaxed again and travelled on. But surely it was getting hotter and hotter, it could not all be coming from the sun, for now we could smell hot metal and presently clouds of steam began to pour out of the radiator. Yes, it was only a stone, but it had punctured the radiator and now there was

no water circulating to cool the engine. We had many miles to go and there was no one en route who could repair the damage, so we had to slow down and crawl along at about 10 miles per hour, stopping at every place where we could get water to fill up.

This was very trying of course, but what made it serious was that we were making for Fez and we had to get there before nightfall. You see Fez is a walled city and even today the gates are closed at dusk and no one can enter the city after the gates are shut. So you can imagine as the sun began to set and the road began to climb (for Fez is set among hills) making the strain on the engine greater, our spirits fell lower and lower, as we faced the prospect of a night in the open. Still the driver kept going on for there was nothing else to do, and we all were praying that somehow or other the gate would be open when we got there.

And it was. It was quite dark and the hour for closing had come and gone, but as we crawled up to the walls, we could see by the light of our headlamps two figures standing out in the road, anxiously watching our approach. It was the gatekeeper and a missionary friend who knew we were arriving and who had persuaded the gatekeeper to wait just a little longer, then a little longer, and a little longer still, until our lights appeared and he knew we had arrived.

Today, all over the world and especially in the Moslem world doors are closing, doors that have stood wide open during the long hours of the Day, waiting for the messengers of the Cross. Now it seems to many of us that the Night is approaching, when the gates will be shut. Do you remember what the Lord Jesus said, "I must work . . . while it is day, the night cometh when no man can work", John 9.4. So it is very important that we should get in through these open doors with the message of the Gospel, before they shut.

What can you do about it? Most of you are too young to go out as missionaries yourselves. Remember our friend who kept the gate open for us. Your part may be like his—to keep the gate open by your prayers until the gospel messengers arrive.

B. H. COLLINSON,  
*Fellowship of Faith to the Moslems.*

## The Bible and Islam

### No. 5. RESURRECTION AND THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT.

Our fifth study has to consider Resurrection and the Day of Judgement. When you have considered Muhammad's teaching on this theme, I expect you will say "What a mixture!" His ideas seem to be gathered from Jewish, Persian and christian sources with a resulting hotch-potch which should make us turn with relief to the simple grandeur of Holy Scripture.

Well Muhammad starts his day of Judgement with the sounding of trumpets which may be an echo of *Matt. 24.31*, *1 Cor. 15.52*, *1 Thess. 4.16*. Look them up.

Muhammad is the first to rise and enter Paradise!

Others will have their deeds weighed in scales to see if the good outweigh the bad and each man has his record tied about his neck and faces the obligation of having to read it out!

The last ordeal the Qur'an promises is that each has to cross a narrow bridge from which the unbelievers will fall into hell. This place is fearsomely described as a place of torture with special compartments for Muslims, Christians, Jews, Sabaeans, Magi and a specially hot section for idol worshippers!

The "Jesus" or "Sidna Aisa" of the Mohammadans (another Jesus surely than our Lord Jesus Christ *2 Cor. 11.4*) is to reappear, destroy Antichrist, reign for 40 years and then die! forsooth and be buried! near Muhammad at Medina.

Paradise, the Muhammedan heaven, is just a place of fleshly pleasures, very different from the spiritual joys of the Father's House. (*John 14.1*.)

Now let us see "what saith the Scripture" about resurrection and judgement. In each case the theme becomes alive, for He, the Lord Jesus, is the Resurrection (*John 11.25*) and He is the Judge of all men (*Matt. 7.21.23* and *Acts 17.31*).

His bodily resurrection is clearly taught in Holy Writ. That Holy Body which suffered the full penalty of death for us "was buried" and rose the third day (*1 Cor. 15.4*).

Those two little words "was buried" imply forcibly that what was buried, rose, not a Spirit for "a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have" (*Luke 24.39*).

He was handled (*1 John 1.1*) and ate fish and honey (*Luke 24.43*) and with that live body ascended into Heaven and now is seated somewhere in the heavens, and one day "This same Jesus" shall rise up and come forth as Judge—not to die—for He is alive for evermore (*Rev. 1.18*) but to settle the final destiny of all.

Our Lord speaks of an hour when all in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the Resurrection of Life; and they that have done evil unto the Resurrection of damnation (*John 5.28-29*).

Paul's word in *Romans 2.5-10* gives the same picture (8). See also *Rom. 14.9-12* and *2 Cor. 5.10,11*. GOD's word plainly teaches a Day of Judgement (*Heb. 9.27*).

As we think of this solemn stirring event let us finally rest on the Scripture *Acts 17.31*. "He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance to all men in that He hath raised Him from the dead".

HALLELUJAH!





## In a Corner

In the corner of a large city in the Valley of the Nile is a patch of pasture land not yet built over, and if you had walked across these fields with us the other day you would have come across a very little hamlet, consisting of five or six mud houses tucked away in the far corner of those fields. As we drew near, you would have seen a little girl come round the corner of one house, carrying a heavy tin of water on her head, and walking with great care for there had been heavy showers of rain in the night and the ground was very slippery. She clapped her hands crying "Iblity Hummusa, Iblity Hummusa (the best she could do with my name, prefacing it with the polite expression Elder Sister), so you have been able to come. I am so glad the rain hasn't kept you away". Then with exquisite courtesy she puts her heavy tin on the ground, though she would have to return for it, and helped us to balance along the top of a slippery slithery mud wall so as to avoid the slough in the yard.

In the corner of the yard we clear off as much mud as we can before entering the room where a corner is hastily being swept, a straw mat put down, and then father's brown blanket arranged for us to sit on. By the time we have kicked off our shoes (we cannot carry all that mud in) and our eyes have become accustomed to the dim light, we can recognise our pupils, and their mothers, all getting ready for their class. Ateyat, a big bouncing girl of eighteen or so, her sister Suaad, a little younger, quiet and shy, gay Rateeba, a third sister, the pretty one of the family, and the large stout woman who is their mother. Then there are Awatif and her sister, smaller girls from next door, little Aida and her mother and another woman who hasn't got a daughter so comes and brings her baby son. We all crowd on to the blanket and open the suitcase we have brought, each one eagerly grabs her piece of work, and soon all are supplied with needles, threads, etc., and are happily at work, while the chickens run in and out and have to be continually shooed away. One woman is cooking on a primus in the inner corner of the room, and there are various comings and goings.

After chatting for a while we begin to sing choruses which they are enchanted with, and we try to explain what they mean and thus the way is prepared for the Bible lesson to which they listen with interest, especially the mother of Ateyat who emphasises all the points which impress her and calls the girl's attention to them.

After the class and a little more friendly chat we make our way home across the fields again after putting our heads into most of the other doorways with a greeting for anyone



*An Egyptian Doorway*

who hasn't been at the class. The wind has dried the paths a little, but even as we slip and slither our shoes seem to have added pounds to their normal weight.

Such a very small hamlet and such a tiny class, but a light we pray is being lit in that dim corner, and who can tell how far its rays will penetrate into the outer gloom. Ateyat hopes to be married soon, she is busy sewing for her new home, and she may carry the light to another corner and so on. But they will only be like small rush

lights, and the draughts they encounter may be very strong so they must be "cupped" with care lest they be blown out. That "cupping" can be done by *prayer and caring* so don't forget this little corner of the field. *Think* about them until you begin to long that the light may be kindled in each single heart of that little group and when you care enough then prayer can bring the answer and the Light of the Glorious Gospel will shine out and others come too, led from afar by the gleam. All things are possible, *if ye believe*.

H. L. HOMES,

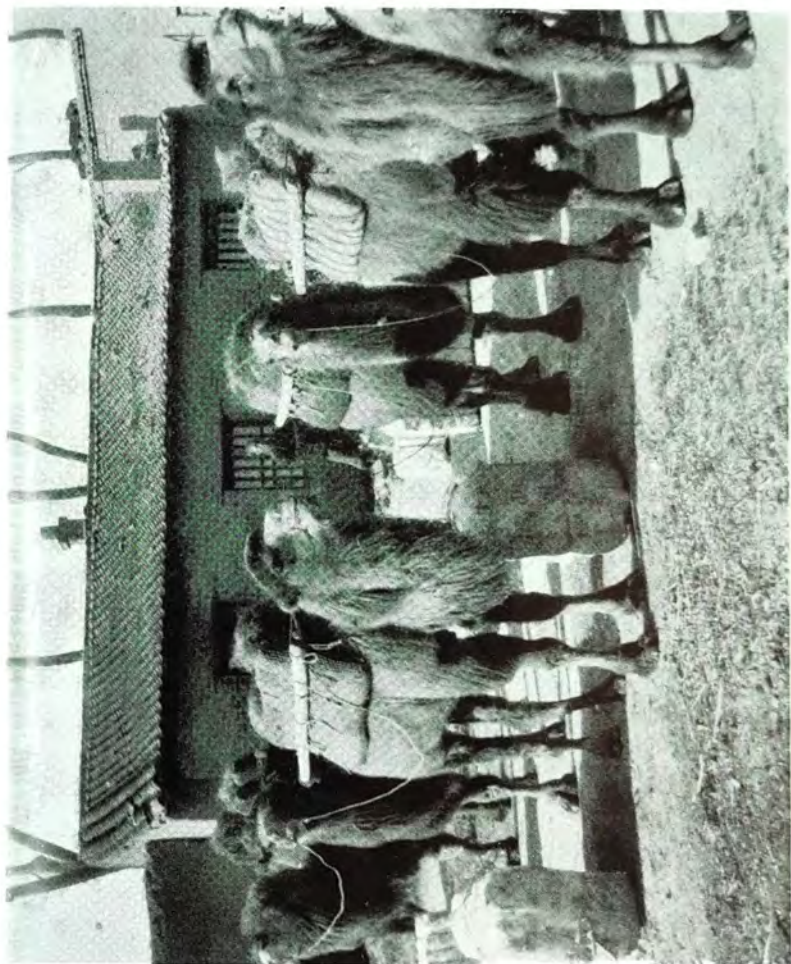
*Egypt General Mission.*

## **Humps**

Did you see the camel with two of them when you were at the Zoo? I mean two humps, of course. One boy liked it so much that, when he had said all the things he usually said to the Lord at night, he added "Thank God for the camel with two humps". It seems interesting to see two if you have always seen pictures of Camels with one, but they are quite ordinary in Bactria. Where's that? Well, Ahasuerus, the King in the Book of Esther, ruled over 127 Provinces; Bactria was one of the farthest eastern ones. Now the North part of what was called Bactria is in Turkistan the South in Afghanistan.

Bactrian Camels travel across Turkistan, the Gobi, Mongolia and North China. The Mother-camels tell their children—at least they might perhaps—"It's all very well for the camels in North Africa, Egypt, Syria, Persia and all those Muslim countries to have only one hump to store up food, they never meet Buddhists. Now we have to be careful not to offend anyone; when you are in the West and South of our district tell the Muslims that you only eat *their* food, and store up as much as you can in the front hump: when you go to Tibetan places, or to Mongolia, say you never worry about Muslims, and wouldn't kill a fly or a flea (Buddhists are not supposed to take life) and only eat *their* food, which you store in the back hump".

That's only a story about the camels but it is, truly, hard for Christian people in Muslim places, especially in Muslim families to say, boldly "I trust in the Lord Jesus



*Bactrian Camels*

Christ—'only in the Lord'—not in Muhammad's teaching".

Some people think dromedaries are ordinary two humped camels! Actually they are very fast thoroughbred camels, they can run faster than the fastest horse. We read about "laying aside every weight" for the race, and two humps might be too much weight, mightn't they? "Young dromedaries" helped to carry the message, "You are saved" to the Jews in Esther's day—it would be glorious to carry the message from the King of Kings that Muslims can be saved, wouldn't it?

The little boy who thanked God for the camel with two humps went, when he was grown-up, to be a "domedary" to tell the Good News to Muslims in North China. He wrote about the camels (who only travel at night there, so as not to frighten the mules and horses who travel by day).

... the tough cameleer in his sheepskin coat  
Sings the long song he has learned by rote,  
Plods on, come shine, come snow, come wind,  
From the railway's end to the north of Ind.

He treads alone in the pale moonlight,  
The desert sands his lordly right,  
On the long, long road that leads you  
From Peking to Kashgar.

He tried to tell the cameleers and other Muslims, how they could get Sunlight—from the Sun of Righteousness—instead of the "pale moonlight" of the Crescent of Islam: how they can leave the desert, or find it to "blossom as a rose". Most of them wouldn't listen then, but now some people are reaping the desert roses he sowed.

O. BOTHAM,

*Friends of the Moslems in China.*

## An Algerian Love-feast

In the Methodist Church they used to celebrate what were known as "love-feasts" and the other day we had one here in this Arab town of Relizane. It was an unusual one and it may have been unorthodox, but it was very sweet and this is how it came about.

One Sunday afternoon as I was going to my room, I encountered two little dancing figures in pale green, with



sparkling eyes, who seized me by the hand and said, "Come along, we want to talk to you". So I came along and when we had settled down they began. "We are so full of joy today that we just don't know what to do. Our hearts are all melted and running over and we must do something to show it, so tomorrow we want to have a little "feast". We have been praying about it in Mademoiselle May's room and she too is full of joy. We



*"Two little Arab Girls" (see page 14)*

think we would like to buy some little presents for our big sisters for they have been so good to us, and we must give Mademoiselle May something too because she has been so kind and loving and has taught us the way of Christ until now we do understand and we do really belong to Him and He has given us all this joy. Then there's Rosebud, she must have something too, for she's such a good little thing and does just what we tell her (this with the air of grandmothers!) and isn't a bit disobedient. Perhaps we will get her a hankie for her nose, because you know, she needs it sometimes. (It is a failing of Rosebud's to lose every hankie she possesses.) "But", I protested, "You know that Christmas is coming, hadn't you better wait. . ." "Oh, no", they said, "it must be tomorrow. You see we are so full of joy we must do something soon". What could one do but hug them and give in. "So tomorrow", they went on, "we will go to the Big Bazaar and choose our presents". (They were of course to come out of their own money.) So we decided that we would on the coming day celebrate the "spiritual birthdays" of those two dear little people who "really belong" to Him and whose own birthdays we do not know.

The visit to the Big Bazaar the next day was a great excitement and the shop assistants were very much amused over the little purchasers with their anxious and whispered consultations over the merits of the wonders displayed before them. The children themselves were so impressed by the kindness shown them that they insisted on shaking hands with the man at the desk before they left the shop. Then later the presents had to be wrapped up in coloured papers and suitable labels attached to each. "What shall I write?" asked Mademoiselle May. "Please put—To Rosebud from her little sisters—to show the love of Christ". And similar labels were put on each parcel. Then in great secrecy we prepared the Women's Room, putting cushions on the floor and placing two little low tables trimmed with pomegranates and leaves, for the gifts. Then after supper we all collected there and were regaled on Arab tea out of dainty glass tumblers, with biscuits and sweets. What an overflowing of joy at the opening of the little parcels, what surprises for the "big sisters" who knew nothing of all this and what hugging all round, with the added joy of knowing that it



was nothing but the love of Christ, Lover of the children, that had made this possible. Then we sat on the floor in a circle and sang all the joyful things we knew, beginning with "Oh happy day" in Arabic.

Two little Arab girls, full of His love and wanting to show it—and they gave . . . Isn't that just His way? "God so loved the world that He gave. . ." What are we who know so much of His love giving Him in response?

J. C. STALLEY,

*Algiers Mission Band.*

## Abraham and Mary

ABRAHAM was a Moslem schoolboy. In Arabic his name is pronounced Ib-ra-heem. MARY was a tiny Turkish girl. Her name in Arabic is pronounced Ma-ri-yam. Abraham's ancestors were Arabian, Persian and Afghan. He did not look like a Chinese boy. He walked with a swagger, held his head erect, and was full of fun. He was proud that he could attend the mosque school where he was taught about God, and the religion of his people. Mary's ancestors came into China hundreds of years before Columbus discovered America, and settled along a bend of the upper Yellow River.

Boys and girls in the homeland do not use slates in school as much as they formerly did. Abraham and Mary used slates of the queerest kind. Mary's slate was a piece of smoothed-off thin, carved board, with a handle at its base. Abraham's was just the bleached shoulder blade of a two-humped camel. So Mary's slate was wood, and Abraham's was bone.

The mosque school, being old-fashioned, had no desks. The teacher sat on a chair or bench, and the boys and little girls squatted about in the yard. Every day the teacher erased from the wooden pallet and bone slab what he had written the day before—Arabic letters or words from the Moslem's Bible which is called the Koran. All day long the pupil memorised the same letters or phrases saying them over thousands of times. If the previous day's lesson had not been learned, Abraham or Mary found that a whipping

was in store : so each tried hard to learn what was written. The teacher next dipped his brush in some red earth ink, and wrote a new lesson on the bone or wood.

My! what a din in the school! About eighty children—each chanting his own lesson at the top of his voice.



*Chinese Slates*

No two lessons were the same. Sometimes they found it hard to give entire attention to the lesson. One little girl was saying her words over as fast as she could with her hand on her forehead covering her eyes. Some seem to find it easy to learn in such a din.

One day Abraham's father gave him some old, ragged sheets of paper, yellow with age, to take to school. From them he was to learn verses which were in the Koran. He did not know that some of the sheets were more than five hundred years old, and the Arabic was written with a beautiful hand. Abraham's father did not want to lose the precious sheets, so he placed them between two boards, and tied them together with a piece of cord. His great ambition was to have a copy of the whole Koran with a wide flap, or a large book printed in western style.

Abraham and Mary think that our English method of reading is queer. We begin at the left cover of a book and read from left to right. They had never seen a book that

was not read from right to left until they saw us reading in English.

Both Abraham and Mary have one great lack. They have often heard about the great Prophet named Jesus, but no one has ever told them that Jesus, who is now alive in heaven, died on the cross for their sins. Our Bible says, "God so loved the world". That world includes Abraham and Mary, and millions and millions of other Moslem boys who are waiting in darkness for someone to go and tell them of the Saviour of the world.

REV. GEORGE K. HARRIS,

*By kind permission of the China Inland Mission.*

## Missionary Mould

### PART 5—THE STANDARD

It was a truly magnificent thing involving hours of work—that standard. Eleanore was making it for her Guide Company. It was six feet long and two feet wide, made of satin and the four various emblems applied or embroidered on both sides. There was the trefoil representing the Guide movement as a whole, the red dragon of the County of Somerset, a Golden Cherub's head which was the Divisional emblem and finally small ivy leaves and red crosses typifying the motto of St. Michael, the patron saint of the Company. Eleanore had spent many months over it and was now anxious to get it finished before Michaelmas that it might be presented that day to the Company and dedicated. There was still much to be done and every spare minute was devoted to it. This standard even went to Keswick with her! Morning by morning as the other spiritually hungry folk flocked to the tents Eleanore made her way down to the lake side and sat there stitching for dear life. It wasn't so much that she had lost all desire for spiritual things as a half unconscious rebellion against her Lord. She was filled with self pity and hurt pride. For by this time her two younger sisters were in training for the mission field and Eleanore felt it wasn't fair of God. She had offered herself to Him for His service abroad years ago. And yet apparently she had been rejected and others

chosen. Then with the inconsistency of human nature her thoughts flew to the other extreme. Suppose He still wanted her? Well that wouldn't be fair either. How could she leave her beloved mother whose health had not greatly improved with the passing years and whose heart at this time was in a very weak state? How could she be expected to drop all her Guide work into which she had put so much labour and toil? Above all how could she part with this standard? No, it was too late to permit of any violent changes in her life and she knew well enough that if one made too close contact with God some such upheaval might be the result. So it was better to steer clear of danger and not attend any of the tent meetings.

"Are you coming to the Missionary Meeting?" a friend asked Eleanore. "I don't know. It depends on how much work I've still got left to do on the standard", she replied.

"Oh you'd better not. If you do you're bound to be a missionary. They say no one can resist the speakers' appeal".

"How very absurd!" said Eleanore. "Of course one can resist. It's only a matter of controlling one's emotions; it's a sign of weakness just to be influenced by harrowing tales of heathendom. That doesn't constitute a call. I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll go to the meeting and sit in the very front row right under the speakers' noses and prove how little effect their words can have on me".

Her friend was a bit shocked at Eleanore's reaction to her question but felt it was better not to add fuel to the fire. So she did not pursue the matter any further. Actually her bravado shocked even Eleanore herself. Her conscience told her that even if she didn't want to be a missionary herself she ought not to put a stumbling block in any one else's way. But she wasn't going back on her word now—and presently she announced to her family her intention of being present at the meeting. One of the younger sisters was there and quietly slipped away to collect a few close friends and together they besought the Lord of Glory to step in now and save His blood-bought property from her own wilful self.

The missionary meeting began and, true to her word, Eleanore had established herself in the front row, but beside

her was the praying sister holding on to the Lord for a manifestation of His Power. There were four speakers that particular day and each one used an illustrative story in which the principal figure was a mother. Four mothers—ignorant, uncared for, unhappy, hopeless—Eleanore couldn't help contrasting them with her own mother's condition and all the love which surrounded her, coupled with the assurance of a full and free salvation which she possessed through a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. She was still pursuing these thoughts to their logical conclusion when a hymn was announced and she found herself singing "He expecteth, He expecteth. . . Watching till His royal banner floateth far and wide. . . "Eleanore which is it to be? Your mother or My mothers, bound in Islam's sway? Your standard or My banner, which shall your hands unfurl?" The unmistakable Voice of her Dearworthy Lord spoke direct to her heart. With a rush she capitulated unconditionally. "Thine Lord, only thine", and a flood of joy and gladness filled her whole being. Even the thought of facing up to her friends' teasing at the complete failure of her test only caused a happy laughter, after all she was not in a sense responding to the speakers' appeal. The Lord had spoken and how could she say Him nay? He had made her and loved her, redeemed her and sanctified her. She was His by every right, and oh! the delight of finding out that He still wanted her. She began dimly to realise that He had accepted her offer when it had been given years ago, but without a word—all through these silent years He had been patiently moulding the vessel till it was more adaptable to His use. This wasn't a new call to service or even a re-call but just her Lord's way of letting her know that His work on her in England was finished and He was ready for her co-operation in being sent abroad. That it was truly His time was very manifest when Eleanore reached the house where she and her mother were staying. She found that this Divine "posting abroad" had been revealed to Mrs. Thomson a whole month previously, and that she also had willingly acquiesced to the Lord's Will. And so out from the works went the new and, as yet, untried missionary, but confident that HE which had begun a good work would perform it until the Day of Jesus Christ.