

LEBANON AT THE CROSSROADS

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Ed. Note – Some of the photographs from the book are reproduced but many were of too poor a quality.

The - CROSS-ROADS of the CONTINENTS

Les De Smidt.

How shall we demarcate the Middle East? There are several cords, such as geography, religion and language, binding its parts together but they do not all follow the same lines. There are several angles from which to view it, such as politics, economics or mission, but it does not look the same from each angle.

Consider it geographically. At its centre is the large land mass of the Arabian Peninsula. Its left arm, Turkey, is short but its right arm reaches out as far as one desires. Its left and only leg stretches into Africa by means of its connecting sinew across the Suez Canal and through Egypt. Along these limbs empire has moved for milleniums and in spite of the nuclear age they remain significant. Russia sees them as still the road to Africa and the Christian Church has 'imperial' business for the King of Kings along these same routes.

Consider it religiously. The centre now moves to Mecca in so far as the vast majority of the inhabitants, however the boundaries are drawn, is Muslim. From Mecca the lines run North-West to Turkey and North and East to Afghanistan and beyond again, and South into the vastness of Africa and also South East to encompass the whole of the Arabian Peninsula. Yet there are two significant Christian centres or vantage points in this same area, namely, Lebanon in the North and Ethiopia in the South. It could be significant that L.E.M.¹ with A.L.M.² are placed in this Northern centre and M.E.G.M.³ in the South, as we think of the future.

Consider it language-wise. The centre moves again, this time to Egypt, home of the most articulate and fluent users of the Arabic language as well as home of the famous Azhar University. Arabic is the lingua franca as far West as Morocco, Southwards to the Sudan, and through the whole Arabian Peninsula—the language of about 70 million people. But Arabic as a medium of communication excludes several important areas in the Middle East, notably Turkey and Iran in the North and Ethiopia (including Eritrea) in the South. Language is our vital tool in the communication of the Gospel of Christ and since Islam also extends beyond the Arabic language area, any Middle East strategy must provide for a multi-language situation and, must not allow smaller language areas to be neglected.

Consider it politically. Even though success has been elusive, their war has given the Arab people a 'uniting' "Cause". But this drive towards unity, bringing even its extreme Eastern and Westernwings together in the Arab League, is Muslim in essence by reason of their majority. Thus Christians in this Arab World inevitably suffer from a kind of schizophrenia. The power politics of the great nations and their partisanship have only aggravated the situation.

As a result expatriates are regarded with increased suspicion what-ever the purpose may be for their being in the Middle East. Western politics have played into the hands of the Russians and

¹ L.E.M. is the Lebanon Evangelical Mission.

² A.L.M. is the Arabic Literature Mission.

³ M.E.G.M. is the Middle East General Mission

their influence is now a permanent factor in the Mediterranean and in the Eastern part of the Arab World in particular. This means that the Middle East is now a political arena for conflict between the great powers. Since 1958 the position of Christians has become more precarious in Lebanon and Lebanese Christians traditionally look to the West and especially France for support. The resurgence of Islam with political implications is a big factor in the relation of Islam to the Christian minorities within the Arab countries. In a number of them Christians are excluded from government service, relegating them, in effect, to second class citizenship.

Consider it economically. The oil rich countries are buying time politically with spectacular expenditure on social services and welfare. But one wonders what the effect will be in these countries, becoming so easily accustomed to every amenity, if the wealth of these oil reserves is not converted into industrial potential. For the day is coming when these expensive services will have to be maintained by the industry of the people themselves. Those countries without oil, living in the midst of their affluent neighbours, cannot but be precariously placed economically, and so politically, in comparison. These factors bear on their openness to missionary endeavour in the days ahead.

Consider it mission-wise. Because of the fragmented nature of the area in the past, evangelical missions have been almost entirely parochial in their approach to mission. The L.E.M. thought in terms of Lebanon, the N.A.M.⁴ of North Africa, the E.G.M.⁵ of Egypt and then Eritrea, R.S.M.T.⁶ of the Red Sea area etc. Therefore no concerted strategy of mission, no overall co-ordination and planning has ensured the best use of opportunities, personnel and resources. This parochial concern and outlook is being transmitted to the National churches in the Middle East and they therefore lack impetus to accept responsibility for mission in their turn. Missions must now themselves set the example to the local Christians by helping them to look beyond their own borders, going before or with them to areas outside their homelands.

The basic fact with which we have to do in the Middle East as a whole is that THE CHURCH EXISTS (in the evangelical sense!). It is here—new born in parts, anaemic in others, rashly zealous at times, emotionally unstable at others, stable and mature in many aspects. But it is here. Praise God for this fact. It is here in a world changing so rapidly that many a missionary is bewildered. Nationalism has been one of the troublesome causes of this change and yet when this very nationalism was channelled into the assumption of responsibility for their own people and even for those beyond their own country, then it has worked as a positive and productive force in the hearts of the local Christians. One manifestation of this sense of responsibility has been the formation, on National initiative, of an inter-church and inter-society committee to care for Muslim converts. It has the names of over 50 on its lists and its interest extends out into the whole Arabian Peninsula. The Church is here. This fact must be the starting point of any strategic thinking that we may do.

With the establishment of the National Society and the final handing over of the Tyre Church and evangelistic work to the care of the Synod of Syria and Lebanon, the L.E.M. has now become what has been termed 'a service mission'. This means that it has no direct responsibility for churches or institutions which have now become, in the fullest sense, the responsibility of the indigenous churches and the National Society respectively. This also means that the L.E.M. is now involved in

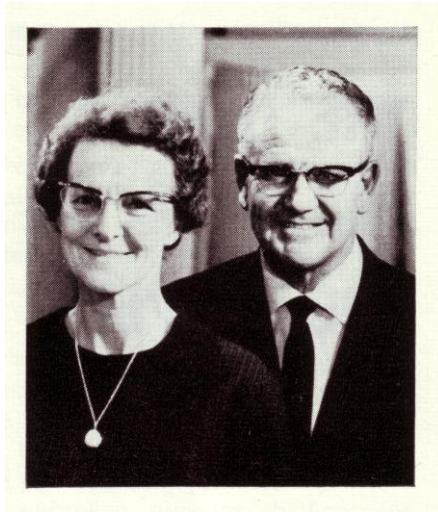
⁴ N.A.M. = North Africa Mission.

⁵ E.G.M. = Egypt Gospel Mission

⁶ R.S.M.T. = Red Sea Mission Team

various 'ministries' here in the Middle East — providing missionaries who are able to make specific contributions to the churches, institutions and agencies which are the special concern of the nationals, training them in their skills. The L.E.M. is also now freed to stimulate the interest and concern of the indigenous churches to reach out beyond the borders of Lebanon by planning for this with them and going with their 'pioneers' or, if necessary, being their 'forerunners' for a while. This was one of the stated purposes of the formation of the L.E.M. from the outset and it remains our purpose still.

LES DE SMIDT.



Mission work can easily settle down into routine, without an over-all policy or direction. To be able to assess a situation, to envisage future possibilities, to learn by evaluating the results of others' experiments —these are statesmanlike qualities necessary for leadership. These qualities have been God's gift to L.E.M. in the person of Leslie de Smidt.

His first contact with the field was as a South African soldier during World War II, when he heard a clear call from God to serve in the Middle East. On his arrival in Lebanon in 1947, he married Agnes Mathew, and in 1952 re-opened the Lebanon Bible Institute, and continued as principal and teacher until 1964.

In 1965, he was appointed Field Leader, a title which merely confirmed what he was already doing, and it is largely due, humanly speaking, to his vision and initiative, that the L.E.M. has moved steadily towards the goal of putting responsibility for the work into the hands of nationals, and of co-operating with the Churches.

As a Bible teacher, Les has a wide ministry, and his interpretation is always thought-provoking. Les has many friends, both national and expatriate, who appreciate his counsel, his sincerity and hearty laugh. His natural tendency to impatience and severity has been mellowed by experience into a deeper sympathy and understanding.

Agnes and the family of five have made a fine contribution, and the two eldest, Brian and Brenda, at university in Beirut, are taking a lead in Christian Youth activities.

The Land and the People

Mollie Harries.

WHAT IS LEBANON?

A coast-line of reddish-orange sand, creeping round the jutting headlands, on which lie the cities of Beirut, Sidon and Tripoli—a vivid contrast to the intense blue of the Mediterranean, basking in brilliant sunshine—THAT IS LEBANON.

Snow-capped mountains rising steeply from the narrow coastal plain to a height of 10,000 feet with an endless stream of motor-traffic winding up the well-graded road to the pass at the top, and down the other side towards Damascus and Jordan—THAT IS LEBANON.

The wind-swept Bekaa plain, or rather plateau, in the heart of the land, between the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon ranges, with Mt. Hermon ("Old Man Mountain" in Arabic, because of his snowy head), standing a majestic sentinel at its southern end, on the border of Syria—the fertile richly-cultivated Bekaa, looking like a patchwork quilt of varied greens and browns—in contrast to the barren mountain barrier beyond—THAT IS LEBANON.

The warm, resinous smell of sun-drenched pines, the hot spiciness of wild thyme, the fresh fragrance of orange-blossom—this is the smell of Lebanon.

The gnarled old trunks and grey-green leaves of olive trees—Green vineyards creeping up the rocky hillside-

Bunches of pale new leaves on the tips of the bare branches of fig-trees-

Scarlet pomegranate blossom half hidden among its glossy dark green foliage—this is the beauty of Lebanon.

A stony land—stone houses the colour of honey—stone-retaining walls on the terraced mountain-sides and great rocks with fantastic shapes—piles of stones as land-marks—red-roofed villages clustered often perilously, but picturesquely on slopes of the mountains —all this is typically Lebanon.

THE CLIMATE

The climate is Mediterranean—roughly divided into two seasons —wet and dry. In winter there are intermittent rain-storms with snow on the higher levels, while summer is dry, when the weather ceases to be a talking point, the only conjecture being as to whether today will be hotter and more humid than yesterday. However, campers rejoice in the unbroken sunshine, bathers are brownd to a turn in no time, and photographers revel in strong light and superb scenery.

Mountain and plain have almost two distinct climates. The mountain air, which is cold. and bracing in winter, is pleasantly cool in summer, and attracts thousands of visitors from hotter climes such as Iraq and the Arabian (Persian) Gulf to relax in the shade of the umbrella-shaped pines, lulled by the drowsy song of the cicadas. At the same time, the plain stews in a steamy heat

made bearable by the constant sea-breeze.

BEAUTY AND FRUITFULNESS

"The Switzerland of the Middle East" is a favourite tourist caption for Lebanon. But the scenic beauty of Lebanon is unique in that the mountains, usually snow-capped, seem to rise straight up from the edge of a tranquil blue sea, so that holiday-makers in spring, can swim in the Mediterranean in the morning and ski at a height of 6000 feet in the afternoon.

"The fruit ... shall shake like Lebanon" says the Psalm. Adequate rainfall, melting snows, heavy dew, and irrigation make Lebanon a land of abundant fruit. The coast road runs between groves of orange, lemon, grapefruit, banana and olive trees. The pale green of the olives mingles with the deeper shades of figs and pines whose cones yield the "snowbar" (soft nuts) used in many Lebanese dishes. Every man sitting under his own vine and fig-tree luscious bunches hanging down like . . . chandeliers ..." is the Biblical picture of peace and security, and while large vineyards supply the quantities required for wine-making, almost every house in the village has its own vine trained over a frame—a shady meeting-place for family and neighbours, as well as supplying luscious bunches, "hanging down like golden chandeliers" as one Arabic song has it.

A LAND OF HISTORY AND LEGEND

Lebanon (ancient Phoenicia) has a long history closely linked with her geographical position, situated as she is, at a natural crossroads. Records in the rocks at the mouth of the Dog River, about eight miles north of Beirut are the marks left by every conqueror who ruled, or merely passed through, the country. There are nineteen of these inscriptions the last being a plaque in Arabic commemorating the final evacuation of foreign troops in 1946.

The archaeological remains in Tyre, Byblos and Baalbek record the history of worship and commerce from the days when Tyre was the queen city of Phoenicia, up to the Crusades. Remains of fortresses built by the Crusaders at strategic points on coast and mountain are still standing.

THE PEOPLE

The Lebanese are a mixed race, the product of centuries of foreign rule. They belong to the group of Arab nations, and speak the Arabic language. But in Beirut, the cosmopolitan capital, many races and colours mingle, and various languages are heard, the chief being French and English. Educated Lebanese speak at least three languages. Like their Phoenician ancestors, Lebanese are born traders. The economy depends on trade, and Beirut has become the banking and commercial centre for the whole of the Middle East.

Education has become a priority, and since State schools are inadequate, private schools abound. Parents are prepared to make great sacrifices to meet school fees, and during the winter, the population of Beirut swells as whole families come from the villages, rent flats and stay for the eight months of the school year. Of the four universities the American is the largest, in its beautiful spacious grounds by the sea. Most doctors and engineers specialise abroad, and thousands of professional men and others emigrate every year, because there is neither scope nor security in this small country.

RELIGION

The religious set-up is perhaps the most complex in the world. There are seven principal sects—two Islamic, four Christian (including a Protestant minority known as "Injiliyeen" and one Druze.

These religions are the basis of political life. A sect is allotted seats in parliament in proportion to its size. The Constitution provides for "absolute freedom of conscience", and "free exercise of all religious rites". An unwritten law that has become customary is that the President of the Republic should be a Maronite Christian, the Prime Minister a Sunni Muslim, and the Speaker of the House a Shi'ite Muslim. The balance of religions is so delicate, that no census has been taken for years. The Christians do not want to see the Republic absorbed into the Arab-Islamic world, but they are aware that the Muslims have been gaining for some time, owing to the large number of Christians who emigrate, as well as the influx of Palestinian refugees and the higher birth-rate of the Muslims.

Christianity has a long history in Lebanon. Our Lord healed the Phoenician woman's child in the area of Tyre and Sidon, Paul preached at Tyre, and the faith spread through Phoenicia until Constantine ordered the destruction of the shrine of Adonis and Astarte, though today a huge statue of the Virgin Mary has taken their place, known as "Our Lady of Lebanon". The Maronite Church, affiliated with the Church of Rome, is the largest and oldest Christian community, having existed since the fifth century. The Christians are now divided into Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Armenian Orthodox, Syrian (Jacobite), Orthodox and Catholic, and Protestants of various shades.

The Druzes were originally an offshoot of the Shi'ite sect of Islam. They believe that the Shi'ite Caliph Hakim was the incarnation of God, and when he disappeared from Cairo they announced that he would reappear as a kind of "Messiah" before the last Judgment. For centuries the Druzes have tried to keep their beliefs and their sacred books secret even from the uninitiated among their own people. To avoid persecution, they practised 'dissimulation', taking on the religious colour of their surroundings, like a chameleon. Even today, it is difficult to know what a Druze really believes, and whether he is sincere in his profession or not.

SOCIAL LIFE

Through the media of films, television, advertising and education the Lebanese way of life has felt the impact of the West. Unrestricted importation has flooded the market with goods from every part of the world, and in Beirut, where it is estimated two out of every three Lebanese reside, nearly everybody owns a car (judging by the congestion in the traffic), a refrigerator, and a TV set.

Apartments to let have central heating and all other modern conveniences. Young people dress well, in the latest fashion, and are quite sophisticated.

Yet they have strong ties with the more Eastern, traditional way of life in the villages and in the mountains. Such a compact little country makes it possible for people in nearer villages to hold jobs in the cities and return home at night.

The family is still the unit in Lebanon. Family ties are close—especially those of uncles, aunts and cousins on the father's side. If the father of a young family dies, his brother is in duty bound to

support the family. If the eldest son is old enough, he must be responsible for bringing up his brothers and sisters, and he cannot set up his own home till they are off his hands.

In comparison with the West, there is still little freedom for the sexes to meet socially. Marriages are arranged, often between cousins, though the girl is given the right to refuse. More sophisticated youth wants to make its own choice nowadays, and does so quite often. Women have been emancipated to a large degree. Muslim women are no longer veiled and enjoy opportunities of higher education. The proportion of illiteracy in Lebanon is the smallest in the Arab world. Although girls work now in banks, offices, and factories, on the whole they are still closely guarded. But Lebanon is still a man's world. A baby boy is born. Everybody visits the happy home saying, "May he be blessed. May he be kept safe. Thank God for your safety (to the mother)". Then "roughly" is served—a spicy sweet made of ground rice, decorated with mixed nuts. But if the baby is a girl, there is often no announcement, and this silence has become proverbial, so that on any occasion when there is a lull in the conversation, someone says, in the silence, "A girl is born".

Lebanese hospitality is famous. Visitors and visiting take precedence over almost everything else. Correct behaviour includes a knowledge of the many greetings in Arabic, each with its own reply. However generous the spread put before the honoured guests, they cannot leave until the traditional cup of black Turkish coffee is served. On returning the empty cup, the guest says, "Daimy", a sentence in a word, expressing the wish that we may always drink coffee together in such happy circumstances. The host replies, "May you live always". As he sends off his guests the host says, "You have honoured us", and they reply, "We have been honoured". The first three words everyone learns in Arabic are, "Tfadaloo", "Ahlan wa Sahlan" (both for welcome) and "Bukra" (tomorrow—not to be taken literally as the next day). In the villages, especially, it is customary to have a "seat of honour" which is opposite the door. The guest sits modestly as near the door as he can get until the host takes his hand and says, "Come up higher".

CLANS AND FEUDS

"I and my brother against my cousin, and I and my cousin against the alien" is an old saying. Blood feuds have become comparatively rare between families and clans, but is a rare thing to find a village with no feuding political parties nor family quarrels. The Lebanese temperament is volatile, strongly expressing the emotion of the moment. An angry driver may be pouring out a spate of curses one moment, and the next be shaking hands with his adversary, all smiles and good-will. But—if a man happens to have a gun when he is seeing red, it is just too bad—anything can happen.

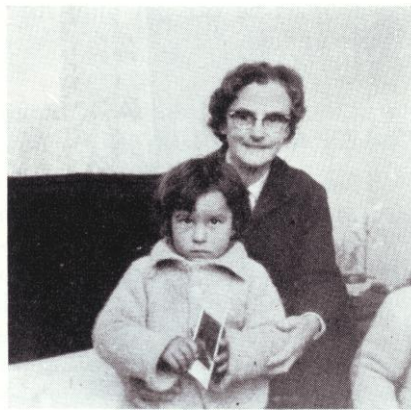
The people are warm-hearted, kindly and humorous, loveable and attractive. In Arabic we say such people's "blood is light" in contrast to the "heavy blooded" who are dull and unattractive. In business, whether it be buying land, or arranging a marriage or a sale, the matter must be broached slowly, with circumlocution, each side listening for hints and inflections of voice of the other, in order to take their cue as to the next step.

THE FUTURE

What does the future hold for Lebanon?

The same degree of neutrality, sustained for so long by skilful diplomacy, no longer seems possible. While Lebanon, especially the Christian community, does not wish integration with the Islamic Arab world, she cannot remain independent of it and has been inevitably drawn into the Arab-Zionist conflict. The growing strength and activity of the guerillas about whose operations the country is sharply divided, have called down severe reprisals. Once again, because of her geographical position, Lebanon has been caught in the whirlpool of Middle East politics; but she may yet, as in the past, extricate herself, and with her genius for compromise, find a way of co-existence with East and West, making her own contribution as a small but extremely influential State, linking the two.

MOLLIE HARRIES



Mollie Harries, senior missionary in L.E.M. at this time, is the continuing link in the L.B.I.⁷ with its Founder, Rev. Evan R. Harries, her father. She began in L.B.I. as translator for her father three years before he retired and has continued as a very versatile lecturer in L.B.I., as well as in the Teacher Training College for some years, until the present time. One of the most able linguists in the Mission she is in considerable demand as a teacher of "The Word" in a great variety of Church groups. She has been elected as one of the first women elders in a leading national church.

Mollie graduated with B.A. from Auckland University in New Zealand before answering God's call to be a teacher in Lebanon and Syria where she served in Damascus, Ain Zahalta, Shemlan and Beirut, and on the Missionary Executive Committee.

Quiet but forthright, wise and discerning, Mollie's help and advice, as well as her outstanding capacity for true friendship, are greatly valued in Mission circles and beyond.

⁷ L.B.I. = Lebanon Bible Institute

Preaching Christ to Moslems. Aubrey Whitehouse

The Arabic-speaking countries of the Middle East are predominantly Muslim. But in saying that we should not conjecture up in our minds a picture of hundreds of long-robed devotees rhythmically bowing in prayer five times a day. Today the Muslim Middle East—or rather, the accessible part of it—is only slightly more Muslim than the Christian West is Christian. That is rather a rough comparison however, and applies mainly to the countries clustered around the eastern end of the Mediterranean, which have most felt the impact of Western influences.

Even so, there are vast differences between a Muslim country and a Christian country due largely to the Muslim conception of the faith. Islam is not simply a religion—it is a social-political religious system and, in many countries in fact if not in law, nationality and religion are synonymous. There are still some Muslim countries where none but Muslims are in law regarded as citizens of the country and where the religious law of Islam is applied. In others, where non-Muslims are in law regarded as citizens with equal rights and privileges, in practice there is considerable discrimination against non-Muslims, particularly Christians. This is not merely the legacy of the centuries of bitter strife between the followers of rival faiths, but because of built-in incompatibilities. Where you have the Quran saying "Verily God's religion is Islam" and the Gospel recording the words of Christ—"I am the Way, the Truth and the Life; no man comes to the Father but by Me", such unequivocal statements are bound to produce a clash.

The clash is a fact, but that is not our main concern in this article. What we are concerned about here is to try and understand the nature of the problem which Islam presents to the proclamation of the Gospel. Why has the Muslim for thirteen centuries proved so remarkably resistant to the message of the Gospel of Christ, and why has so little inroad been made into this, the latest of the great monotheistic religions of the world?

There is no simple answer to that question, but part of the answer can be found in two apparently contradictory ingredients in the religion, each of which has a peculiar appeal as much to men in this generation as in previous generations. There is first, the note of authority so largely missing in all areas of life today but which men have in fact, always desired. It is a relief to be able to accept the fact of the transcendence of God and to surrender all one's affairs to Him. (The meaning of the word "Islam" is of course, "surrender"). To be relieved of the responsibility of making decisions and merely to say that what happens is "what God has willed" undoubtedly makes a strong appeal to the reluctance of men to take a strong stand on moral issues.

On the other hand, Islam is also a "do-it-yourself" religion. It is by fasting, prayers, almsgiving and pilgrimage as well as witness that one may hope eventually to gain paradise and not because of the vicarious work of another. The ability to do something oneself and to achieve salvation—as far as that may be possible—is something that appeals to the innate pride of man.

Add to these two ingredients the fact that Islam is the last of the "revealed" religions, replacing all previous revelations, and is as far as the Muslim is concerned, God's last word to man. It is therefore as incongruous to suggest to a Muslim that he should accept the message of the Gospel and become a Christian, as it would be to suggest to a Christian that he should become a Jew. Moreover, the Muslim who becomes a Christian is not simply changing his religion, but is

renouncing his family, social and national ties. This is always a serious, and often dangerous step to take in those countries where Islam predominates. And if we add to that, the sad fact that a convert from Islam is frequently regarded with suspicion by members of the Christian Church, it is not difficult to understand why there are so few converts.

But the real core of the problem of Islam goes deeper than that. The tragedy is not that this religion has been responsible for the degradation and evil to be found in so many Muslim lands—that is the universal result of the natural depravity of the human heart—but that it provides an inadequate, and therefore dangerous remedy for the ills of man under the guise of a universal elixir of life. Because Islam lacks the knowledge of the anatomy of the spiritual life of man it has been unable to conceive of the radical surgery necessary to remove sin, and for all the grandeur of some of the Islamic teaching of the transcendence of God, it lacks an understanding of His holiness.

These twin faults in its doctrinal structure have produced a faulty understanding of the nature of forgiveness, which in turn is largely responsible for the Islamic denial of the atonement. To the Muslim it is both inconceivable and immoral to state that a sovereign God should require any vicarious sacrifice for sins in order for Him to forgive. He forgives whom He will, as and when He wills. There is no moral basis to the Muslim idea of forgiveness and no idea of its costliness.

Yet, this is I believe, the vulnerable point in Islam. The Muslim knows that sin, however defined, will be punished unless it is forgiven. But if forgiveness is entirely capricious and cannot even be guaranteed by the performance of religious duties and good works, there is always this unrelieved question mark to every statement—and every hope—concerning the future beyond the grave. This is true whether one is dealing with the sophisticated educated Muslim who is scarcely to be distinguished from his materialistic "Christian" opposite number, or the rigidly orthodox religious Muslim, or the simple illiterate or barely literate peasant.

More than anything else they need to be able to see that sin is a debt they cannot simply ignore, that it destroys man's relationship with God and his fellow-man in a way that cannot be repaired by a shallow repentance and an indifferent forgiveness, and that it carries a judgment they cannot evade. They need to be able to see the moral basis of forgiveness and the costliness of it. In this way they can begin to appreciate something of the wonder and the glory of the incarnation and the atonement as well as its necessity.

Nevertheless it still remains true for the Muslim as for the Corinthians long ago—"No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit". It is the work of the Holy Spirit alone in the lives of Muslims that will bring them to see "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ".

AUBREY WHITEHOUSE

In London several missionary societies are discussing how they may work in closer association in the promulgation of the Gospel in the Middle East, particularly in outreach to non-Christians.

As forerunners in this kind of co-operation Aubrey and Elsie Whitehouse were seconded by M.E.G.M. to serve with L.E.M. in Lebanon. They had been missionaries in Egypt for 23 years where Aubrey's ministry was concerned largely in reaching out to Muslims. The abortive invasion of Egypt in 1956 resulted in their expulsion and Aubrey came to lecture in L.B.I., became Principal in

1964 and is now developing L.B.I. Extension Courses throughout the Middle East.

A Bible teacher of outstanding ability and versatility, Aubrey Whitehouse also initiated a series of weekly Radio Bible Studies in the form of group discussion directed particularly to the needs of Muslims. They have continued now for over three years and they are being broadcast from two stations covering the whole of the Arab World. These studies are also now to be translated into African languages.

(Ed: The photograph of Aubrey was too poor quality to reproduce)

OUTREACH to NON-CHRISTIANS

**Loris Anderson
Lottie Farquharson**

WHAT DO THEY THINK?

"Jesus Christ is not the Son of God—to say He is, is sin—terrible sin. No Muslim can say that".

"You say Christ is God and that He was crucified. Can God die? He's not God if He dies".

"Christ is the word of God. That's right. Our book says the same. He came to give us God's message. In fact there's no real difference between our Druze books and your Bible. There's only one God. We believe in Him and we believe in Christ too".

To the Muslim, the follower of their prophet Mohammed, the mention of the Son-ship of Jesus Christ immediately suggests marriage. Can God be married? What an absolutely abhorrent idea! The Quran speaks of the son of Mary, a good prophet who even lived a sinless life, but not God, and certainly not His son. Christ was too good to die. In His justice, God did not allow that, but sent one so like Christ that the Jews were deceived and killed him instead of Jesus.

Denial of the atoning work of Christ fits in with the Muslim belief that merit is gained by observing the daily prayer times, giving to the poor, fasting during the month of Ramadan, repeating the creed and making the pilgrimage to Mecca. This stored up merit will be weighed at the judgment against sin committed, the result determining the final destiny of the sinful person. There is no free salvation, no certainty of acceptance with God, no power over sin, and consequently a lowering of moral and spiritual standards to fit in with man's ability.

The average Druze knows nothing of his religion for only a small minority, known as "the initiated" are allowed to study its tenets written in the holy books. One or two of these such as "the Book of Wisdom" are available for all to read, but beyond this all is dark mystery. The Book of Wisdom says that Christ is the word, but it means no more than that God spoke His word through Him. There is no idea that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, who came to save from sin and bring man back into relationship with a just and holy God. The Druze also believes in re-incarnation. When one dies, another is born at the same time, so that the number of Druzes remains always the same.

HOW CAN WE REACH THEM?

Some knowledge of the beliefs of those to whom we go is necessary, though flat denial of them or argument gets nowhere. Words must be backed up by understanding of them as people and sympathetic appreciation of their difficulties. Above all—love in action—the love of Christ seen at work in the life of a person. In Beirut lives a man who not long ago used to climb the winding staircase to the minaret of the mosque to give out the call to prayer five times a day. Today he is a new man in Christ Jesus, working to broadcast the message to the Muslim world. How did it happen? By the drawing power of the love of the Saviour, taught and lived out by one who himself had come out of a non-Christian background.

A young Syrian Muslim was called up for military training. He was not specially interested in religion but had read widely without finding the truth. The standard of morality in the army was very low so that the conduct of one true Christian officer stood out startlingly against that dark background. What was the reason for the difference? He suggested that the Muslim read the Bible. He said he had done so and seen nothing there. However, because of the personal testimony of the officer, he began to read—and met Christ.

A girl from an important Muslim family was a boarder in a Christian school. Being rather an outstanding personality, she led the others in her rebellion against the teaching. Surely she would be the last to be affected. But the sovereign grace of God is not limited by what appears to be impossible, and a confrontation took place between this girl in her need and the living Christ. To the astonishment of her classmates, her right-about-face was as complete as that of Saul of Tarsus. Yes, teaching is a way to reach many of the youth who no longer find their religion adequate.

Few are prepared for the cost of open confession. Yet some secret believers, notably Druze women have remained faithful for years, and influenced their children.

WHERE CAN WE REACH THEM?

Look into a Lebanese prison. How absorbed that man is, with books and a Bible spread out in front of him ! He is writing—answering the questions of a Bible correspondence course. Having killed a man in self-defence, he had a comparatively light sentence, but it was long enough for a Muslim to find the truth in Christ. Recently he has been released and is now in Christian service.

That group of young men in Somalia is listening to a broadcast called 'The Word of Life' recorded in Lebanon by the L.E.M. Team. Every week they gather for it, and light has already dawned in some of their hearts. One has a brother who graduated from L.B.I. and is training as a teacher in England so as to qualify for re-entry to his own country to witness there.

In a hospital for chest diseases in Lebanon, patients from the Arabian Gulf, Iraq and other Muslim strongholds have time and leisure for talks with the messengers of Christ and for reading and pondering the many books available. L.E.M. visitors have good contacts here.

Sounds that speak of fun and games going on—a large crowd of children of all ages milling in the playground of that modern looking school. Is that Tyre school in the south of Lebanon? Surely in that predominantly Muslim town a Christian school is not welcome! And yet there are more than 500 children who study the Word of God every morning in their classes.

The scope of outreach as far as the L.E.M. is concerned includes the countries of the Middle East and North Africa where the greater part of the population is made up of Muslims. In the broadest sense, however, it is world-wide, as Arabic-speaking Muslims and Druzes are found in many countries. Lebanon is a suitable starting-point because of its geographical position and because it has a much greater proportion of nominal Christians than any surrounding country. This means Christian representation in parliament and more freedom for Christian activity.

WHAT ARE THEIR PROBLEMS IF THEY BELIEVE?

Change of environment—a new convert steps into a different world. Isolation from family in spirit, if not in body, is inevitable, and as family ties are closer than in the West, this means loneliness and a sense of insecurity, even if he does not have to face actual persecution. The convert also has to adapt to social and cultural conditions very different from those he has been used to. This is made easier if a church accepts him into fellowship, and allows him to be absorbed into the congregation as an ordinary member rather than an oddity to be exhibited. Christians are growing in an understanding of this need, though there are still many who have not been able to overcome their hereditary, deep-seated fear of Islam and therefore distrust the motives of a convert.

Personal Problems. Among these, marriage looms large. For a Muslim or Druze convert to find a Christian husband or wife is a complicated and difficult matter. The parents of a Christian girl are reluctant to give her to a man who (according to the law) has "Muslim" written on his identity card. Suppose he should go back to Islam what would her position be? Suppose he died, their children would belong lawfully to the Muslim relatives.

A Christian man who is prepared to marry a girl from a Druze or Muslim background, will have to be involved with her family, who will have some say, possibly, in the upbringing of the children.

Yet even in this delicate matter, attitudes are changing. A young man of a fine Christian family recently married a girl of a well-known Druze family. She had been converted and baptised about two years before and was teaching in a Christian school. He had to run the gauntlet of talk and criticism, some of it from Christians, though not from his own family.

A Christian girl married the man converted in the Syrian Army, already mentioned. Both she and her parents stood firm during the engagement, against a barrage of opposition from different people.

On the other hand there have been tragedies like that of three sisters, converted, baptised and in Christian service for years, who did not find husbands among the Christian community. Their parents were dead and they had a dread of what the future might hold for them as three unmarried women in these lands, so they eventually capitulated and are all now married to Druzes and out of the Christian church, though some are praying and trying to win at least one of them back.

Those who have come out of non-Christian faiths, need fellowship with one another. They have been encouraged and strengthened by conferences arranged at regular intervals when they can share their problems, and know that there are others going through the same experiences.

IS THERE ANY MOVEMENT?

There is certainly no mass movement in these lands so near the heart of Islam. Nevertheless, though numbers are small, there are always some coming to true faith. There is a spirit of enquiry abroad. Many of the younger generation are dissatisfied and looking for something better. L.E.M. and L.E.S. are aware of this and in the field of literature, as well as by personal contact and radio programme, are endeavouring to make known the truth of the Gospel.

National Christians are awakening to their responsibility to non-Christians, and part of our outreach is to encourage and train our fellow-Christians in this tremendous task.

WORKING WITH THE CHURCHES

Joan Nicholson

"A hundred and thirty years of missionary work in Lebanon and you are still there! Why don't you go where the Gospel has never been preached?" This may be the reaction of some who are reading this. A hundred and thirty years of missionary work and many Lebanese villages untouched by the Gospel, a hundred and thirty years of missionary work and only a small percentage of the people practising Christians, a hundred and thirty years of missionary work and only a few young people training for Christian service as Pastors and lay-workers. We might spend time looking into the reasons for this situation. Where did our predecessors fail? Where were their methods faulty? How has false teaching weakened the Church in this land? "My mother always had the Bible open on her lap" is a remark frequently heard about the previous generation, whereas in Protestant homes today the Bible is often no more than a family heirloom. However, we are not concerned in evaluating the work of the true men and women of God who were our predecessors but rather in our responsibility for the present. What part can the expatriate Christian play in the Church in Lebanon and the rest of the Middle East today? "Servant of the Church" is the title Paul gives to Phoebe of the Church at Cenchrea and if you are prepared to come to Lebanon not primarily as an adviser or a teacher or a preacher but as a "servant of the Church" then the great need of the Church in Lebanon may constitute a call of God to you.

Let us look in more detail at the Church in one part of Lebanon. After teaching for some years in Damascus, seven years ago I moved to Lebanon to work in the parish of Merjayoun in the South of the country bordering on Syria and 'Israel'. Arriving there in the autumn, the first conversations I heard were about going out to gather up the olives which fall to the ground before the main crop is harvested. The parish is chiefly agricultural, but the prosperity has been greatly reduced through the effects of politics on trade. In their turn economic conditions have affected social and religious development. I had not been in Hasbeiya long when I was introduced to a teenage boy from a neighbouring Druze family, who had become a Christian and had begun to play some part in the life of the Church. His mother was a widow and from his father he had inherited Canadian citizenship. At the age of nineteen, realising that there was little future for him in his home environment, he left for Canada where he could work to support himself and have time and money available to continue his education. His story is typical of many young men in Lebanon. In view of this exodus of young people there are very few adolescents in the seven village churches of the parish. Schools, on the other hand, are expanding rapidly and unless the pupils are evangelised by the church and the missionary as the servant of the church, Christianity will be swallowed up by godless forces.

In case you should think this fear is exaggerated, come with me to two villages on the slopes of Mount Hermon. The bus climbs slowly up the road from Hasbeiya to the next village where the women are filling their water-pots at the fountain. They are all wearing white veils as Druzes. Nearby in the village street is a Christian Church, but a house to house search for a Christian family would be almost fruitless because one by one the Christian families are leaving the village. Continuing up the mountain the bus finds it harder to negotiate the hairpin bends and the country becomes more and more desolate until suddenly we come upon another village apparently walled in by the mountain-side. In the winter this village is often cut off for weeks together by snow. Again we find in the village street a Christian Church, but the girls from the few remaining Christian

families are marrying Muslims. We should find one Christian believer who under great pressure from her family married a nominal Christian teacher.

The team of workers in the parish of Merjayoun consists of a Pastor with two unordained assistants and two women missionaries from L.E.M. The Pastor, as a young man, was called of God to the ministry and went to study in the Lebanon Bible Institute. His gifts of Bible teaching and expositions have developed over the years, helped by his knowledge of English which he has acquired largely on his own. In view of the needs of a large parish and his committee work outside the parish he still needs missionary help. The part of the work allotted to us has been children's evangelism, Sunday School organisation, work amongst the older girls and women as well as teaching in the church school in Hasbeiya. How in Lebanon can the expatriate missionary still make a contribution in the realms of education, evangelism, training of workers, care of converts and outreach?

1. Education. In Hasbeiya we live in an apartment over the school which was originally the Mission school but it is run by the church and is only one of four schools. Although there has been a tremendous increase during the last few years in the number and efficiency of the government schools, yet there is still a place in the educational system for schools which are under church auspices. In such schools the expatriate teacher may contribute to the reputation of the school by teaching English and giving personal advice about teaching Scripture if not teaching it himself, as well as making personal contact with the pupils and training them for leadership in the future.

The story of a student now beginning in the third year of a four year course of study for his B.A. degree shows that such work is worthwhile. He has been elected President of the Christian Union in College for the coming year. Twelve years ago he was attending the Primary Church School in Hasbeiya. His home was Druze, so at an early, age he developed a consuming interest in politics and a deep-rooted antagonism to anything savouring of Christianity, so that he did all in his power to wreck the Scripture lessons taught by the missionary in the school. However, believing prayer had its effect and in the year before he left school there was one occasion when the message given seemed to have penetrated below the surface of his mind. While he completed his high school education at a non-sectarian school the Holy Spirit continued to work and he attended an evangelistic meeting in Hasbeiya as a result of which he was converted. The next Sunday and every following Sunday saw him taking his place in the Evangelical Church. The Pastor, however, was not resident in Hasbeiya and so any perplexing problems of doctrine or behaviour he faced were usually brought to the Mission house to be made a subject of discussion and prayer. The Church and the missionary were working side by side in the nurture of this Christian life. There came times of persecution when permission to attend Church services was withheld, when the Word of God was confiscated and when the shelter of the home was denied for several weeks at a time, but through it all his faith stood firm and in God's own time the way has opened up for Christian baptism. Now he is in a position to "teach others also" and as a teacher he will have numerous opportunities of winning others to Christ.

In Lebanon, in contrast to other countries in the Middle East, Christian teachers from abroad with appropriate qualifications are readily accepted. Is this a way in which God is calling you to serve the Church in Lebanon?

2. Evangelism. As workers in the parish our evangelistic opportunities have not been limited to the Church school. The former principal of the Girl's Government School in Hasbeiya was a former pupil of our Girls' School in Beirut and a member of the Evangelical Church. She and her successor have been willing to encourage the girls to come to voluntary lunch-hour meetings. It has been encouraging to see the same faces week by week, most of the girls being from Druze homes. Many of the girls borrow a Christian novel or biography from our lending library. In these meetings we have made full use of our movie film projector, showing extracts from the Moody Fact and Faith Films and other films of an educational nature. In the other small town of the parish, Jedeideh, we have had a similar meeting for boys and girls in the lunch-hour, sometimes having as many as seventy or eighty children attending.

At nine o'clock on Sunday in the summer and nine-thirty in the winter after the morning Church service in Hasbeiya, we set out in our Volkswagen loaded with teaching material and equipment. The first stop is Ibel, another village of the parish, where, in contrast to the handful of adults coming out of the church we find forty or fifty children ready to go into Sunday School. Will regular teaching Sunday by Sunday mean that in twenty years' time these children will form a congregation of forty or fifty? Realising that the fall-out comes at the age of eleven or twelve, this year we have had an extra class of teenagers after the regular Sunday School. A mixed class of teenagers has been no easy proposition with no male help, but the miracle was that they kept coming until the end of the year and came back in the summer for a fortnight of Daily Vacation Bible School. We know that through the miracle of conversion, even these can be delivered from the godless ideology that prevails among the nominal Christians of Ibel. Children's evangelism, neglected in the past, is a sphere in which we can work with the Lebanese Churches, introducing to them new methods of approach.

3. Training of Workers. In the section of the Sunday School in Ibel for younger children we look upon the training of a teacher from the Church as much more important than the teaching itself. In the second village to which we go after a picnic lunch, there are also two girls from the Church who have been helping in the Sunday School for two years and will probably very soon be able to assume full responsibility for it. Training in the preparation of lessons and in the use of visual aids are spheres in which the missionary's help is still needed. It is only recently that the Evangelical Church in Lebanon has begun to realise the importance of work among children and young people. There is a fruitful avenue of service for those with skill and experience who are willing to work with the Church in the training of Youth Leaders especially outside Beirut.

A few years ago the Church Women's meetings were run mainly in conventional ways with a talk which resembled the Sunday sermon. When a Bible Study in which all could take part was suggested we were able to help the Church by writing a series of Bible Studies for translation and then encouraging others to take a turn in leading the studies. The result has been a much more lively interest and the studies have been used by a group of Roman Catholics in Damascus who were interested in studying the Bible for themselves.

4. Care of Converts. We have already referred to the Druze boy who immediately after his conversion began to attend Church and was accepted as a member of the fellowship. Other non-Christians have not been so readily received into the Church and this has been a cause of stumbling to them and prevented them from progressing spiritually as they should. When we consider the history of the Middle East we can understand the attitude of distrust towards non-

Christians on the part of the nominal Christians and even of real believers. One Pastor admitted that he did not believe a Druze could be converted until he saw conversion demonstrated in the life of a convert. Over the last few years the attitude of many believers has changed radically, but those who come from quite a different culture and background and can look at the matter more objectively still have a contribution to make in the care of converts. In recent years some L.E.M. missionaries have been members of a committee, consisting of nationals and expatriates, which was set up to care for converts from other religions.

5. Outreach to the Arab World. So far we have been considering the Church inside Lebanon, but in these days it seems imperative that there should be an outreach to countries outside, where non-Christian faiths are dominant. The Lebanese Church is only just beginning to wake up to its responsibilities in the matter, but a few have responded to the call to work in other Arab lands. One L.E.M. missionary on the Outreach Committee of a Church in Beirut has been able to stir up a sense of responsibility to pray for a Lebanese evangelist, one of her former students, who has gone to Aden. By getting her to send Slide-Tape reports she is maintaining this interest. Here is another way in which the expatriate worker can stand beside his fellow Christians encouraging them to look outward to other Arab lands where they could go as teachers or nurses or in other capacities and be accepted immediately as speaking the same language, whereas the Western Christian is often shut out because of political barriers and even when he is allowed to enter he has to overcome language and cultural barriers before he can begin to be of use.

Wherever we go in Lebanon today we see little pines or cedars growing in the mountain sides, planted by the government. Some of these small trees are wilting and dying for lack of the right care. Some of the Churches in Lebanon are still newly planted, some are suffering for lack of the right care. We who have had greater privileges still need to serve the Church in Lebanon. Is God calling you to this work?

YOUTH at the CROSSROADS
An Educational Ministry
Hazel St. John

"Please, what is life? Thank you in advance", wrote a 14 year old to her form mistress when questions for discussion were invited. "If there really is a God, how can I find the way to Him?" asked a Muslim V1th former, new to the school, in the Ethics class.

Throughout the Middle East, with its millions of followers of Islam, rapid changes are taking place everywhere and young people in particular are asking questions and seeking new ways of life. "Go ... ye therefore and teach . . ." was one of the last commands of Christ to His disciples. Yet of all the Arab lands, Lebanon with its half Christian, half Muslim population is the only one left where the door is still open for Christian schools and where there is freedom to teach the Christian faith not only to Lebanese students, but also too many from surrounding countries.

Our educational work, begun in 1860, includes now two Training Centres, a school for some 25 blind boys, the Lebanon Evangelical School for Girls (L.E.S.G.) with about 800 pupils; and the Lebanon Evangelical School for Boys (L.E.S.B.), with 460 or so boys. All of these are in or near Beirut. Then down the coast at Tyre is a school for 500 children, almost 90% of them from Muslim homes, while in Beirut roughly 40% of the students are Muslim or Druze. The L.E.S.G. and L.E.S.B. go from Kindergarten (K.G.) to University entrance standard, and in Tyre to the Brevet exam, taken at 15 or 16. Through these schools many contacts can be made with the families, close links are kept with Former Students, and in every way possible we co-operate with the local churches in encouraging students to link up with them.

The two Training Centres are the Lebanon Bible Institute and a Teacher Training College, and not only in Lebanon but all over the Middle East are pastors, evangelists and Christian teachers trained in one or other of these Colleges and it is impossible to measure how deep and how far their influence goes. Several leading evangelical clergy in the land are graduates of the L.B.I. and a number from the Training College are in positions of leadership in both government and private schools; while many have a real witness for Christ among the children they teach.

In the schools the majority of the students are, of course, Lebanese, but we have altogether now students of about 30 nationalities, and the leaflet sent out annually to all Former Students of L.E.S.G., with news and a clear Christian message, goes to 42 countries.

If in a sense we stand at the Crossroads geographically how true this is in other ways too.

Educationally there has been great advance in Lebanon since independence 25 years ago. There is now a good system of government education with clearly defined programmes at all levels, which we, like others are following. It is encouraging that our successes in government exams lately have been well above average for the country as a whole, and among L.E.S.B. and L.E.S.G. students, leaving from the University entrance classes, about two-thirds go on to University. Are private and committee-run schools now necessary, some may ask? In spite of great progress there are still not enough government schools to meet the growing demand, particularly at High School level, and in government schools there is no religious teaching at all. We on the other hand greatly value our freedom to have school prayers for all, Scripture and Ethics lessons, a wide variety of voluntary

meetings and in the summer, camps for different age groups; there is also an emphasis on social service activities and training in the taking of responsibility through the Student Council or Class and Club committees. In Tyre particularly the school is very highly esteemed, and parents value tremendously the character training which is given.

Socially there have been great changes too. Thirty years ago Muslim girls would be asked to leave the room or veil their faces if a man visitor came round the classes. Today all the latest fashions can be seen on the streets and beaches of Lebanon, and some girls can ski and swim, attend Western films with their boy friends and mix more freely than ever before. Yet the more conservative are still very carefully looked after out of school hours. The wide variety of attitude on the part of the parents can cause a lot of conflict in the minds of children faced with different standards and wanting far more independence. "I try so hard to make my mother a little modern", sighed one gay teenager from the Yemen in a recent Ethics class, "but it seems she cannot change". In the schools, too, we have a wide range of social background; children of ambassadors and relatives of foreign rulers make friends easily with some from quite needy homes, from refugee families, or from simple village communities.

Politically there is in Lebanon, as almost everywhere else, a rising tide of national feeling and sense of involvement which increasingly permeates school life. Student as well as teacher strikes are common now and though so far we have been kept wonderfully free of these there is no doubt that discipline is affected by this growing restlessness and we need great wisdom to know how best to present the message of Christ in a way that is going to seem relevant to young people who are beginning to question everything, including the religion of their fathers, be it Christian, Muslim or Druze. At the same time parental authority and family ties are still much stronger here than in many lands, and though this can be a great blessing, it also means that it is very hard for a student from a non-Christian background, specially a girl, to step out openly as a follower of Christ. We believe there are many secret believers who long to do this, and we thank God for some, both past and present students who are witnessing to their faith in Christ in spite of opposition. In this respect Christian youth movements now active in Lebanon can be of very great help.

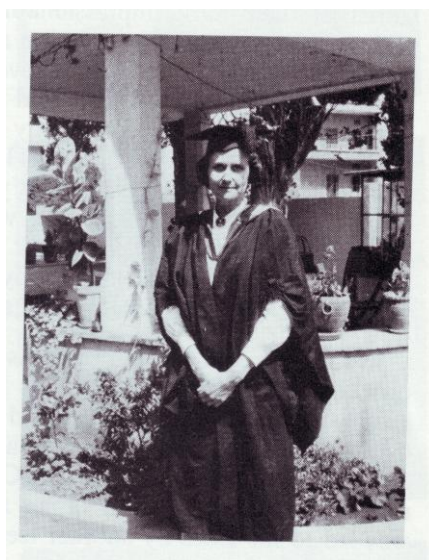
In the set-up of our work as a whole, big changes have also taken place in the last few years, along the lines of a clearly defined policy. All the former Mission properties have been transferred to the Lebanese Evangelical Society, the national branch of the work, and it is their executive committee which has the responsibility of running the schools. Nationals are in key positions in each of the institutions and where foreign principals still remain it is only on a temporary basis. At the same time there is a real need and place for workers from overseas too, and we can have in Christ true fellowship and happy co-operation.

Spiritually it is a wonderful privilege to be reaching people for Christ at their most impressionable age. Little children may be taking in far more than we realise and often repeat at home much of what they hear at school. A seven-year-old in Tyre, setting out for home on a day when there had been a lot of disturbance in the streets was heard to say confidently to her small companion. "Don't be afraid. Jesus is with us and He will look after us." Another small person, new in the K.G. this year, heard her teacher mention in morning prayer another child who was away ill. Several days later she danced up to her teacher who had forgotten the incident for the moment, and exclaimed joyously, "You see God does answer prayer, Tina has come back again."

In many ways Christian students can be a help to others of their own age. In the Boys' School the lunch hour meeting is run by a group of older Christian boys, and in the Girls' School, Youth for Christ meetings are planned by a committee of students with a Staff Advisor. It was after a Y.F.C. open meeting that a V1th former, daughter of a Hindu father and a Roman Catholic mother, was led to the Lord by another teenager who had been visiting the school. Asked later why she had not accepted Christ before, the Indian girl replied, "I just needed someone to encourage me."

Perhaps the ultimate value of educational work from the Christian standpoint can best be judged as one looks at Former Students. Many, it is true, leave without any desire, as far as we can tell, for newness of life in Christ. And yet for such we can still pray on in faith. One Former Student when quite old felt she could never hope to be saved because at school she had deliberately turned away from Christ. Her grandson who had been at the Bible Institute, was able to show her how limitless is God's mercy and she was soon rejoicing in her new found faith. One thinks too, of the girl from Tyre who is now serving the Lord in Aden, of the L.E.S.B. Old Boy who is now the pastor of one of the most live evangelical churches in Beirut, of the girl from a Muslim home, converted at L.E.S.G. when she was 14, and later married, with very little say in the matter, to a judge in the Muslim law court. At first her husband was rigidly against the thought of sending their small daughter to us. "Of course she will go to a Muslim school." But on a recent visit she told us with great joy that God was answering prayer and bringing a change in her husband's attitude. "Maybe after all we can send her to the K.G. at L.E.S.G. next year, because in spite of everything, he says he would like her to grow up like me!"

HAZEL ST. JOHN



For years, Hazel St. John has held the principalship of the Lebanon Evangelical School for Girls, and has been responsible for its development from a subsidised institution to a financially flourishing one which has contributed largely to the successful launching of the L.E.S. as a national evangelistic agency independent of overseas support. Hazel's varied service on the Field has been based on the L.E.S.G., to which she came as a short-termer in 1938 after graduating from London. But the "short-term" has lengthened into years of devoted, able ministry. There seems to be hardly a Christian activity in Beirut in which Hazel does not have some share, contributing enthusiastically

both ideas and practical help. Her almost inexhaustible energy finds outlets outside the school, in helping all kinds of people who are in need of material and spiritual help, enlisting the aid of many others in carrying out this ministry.

Hazel has also become well-known in the homelands through her very informative, racy newsletters each month, written on behalf of the Field. These are read avidly by all those privileged to receive them.

Finally, over to the Blind School. One of the best and most noticeable things there, is the good standard of achievement and confident sense of purpose. Three of the boys are now studying at University while still based in the Blind School. Results in the London G.C.E. exams have been good, two boys taking and passing Maths last summer, a really hard subject for the blind of any nationality. The boys go out on their own in the Beirut traffic and are generally gaining in self-reliance.

One of the greatest needs is to find ways for the boys to earn their living when they leave. Real advance along this line has been made this year with the new Telephone Switchboard Training Programme. An Instructor came from Denmark and gave a month's intensive course and with further practice and instruction boys should be able to operate any one of the three main types of switchboard used here in Beirut.

The younger boys show a specially happy spirit and warm responsiveness to the Christian message, and though among the teenagers there are here, as everywhere, those who go through a difficult stage spiritually, or who seem to lose interest altogether, we thank God for the past and present students to whom faith in Christ has brought new meaning and joy to life. A recent example is a Druze boy of 15, new this year after being blinded in a shooting accident. He has become a changed person since hearing about Christ and accepting Him for himself and his eagerness to know more is apparent to all who live with him. Never shall I forget, too, listening to the testimony of one who was blinded as a boy by an explosion. He passed through a time of grief-stricken bitterness, but has now emerged as one who could say confidently at a meeting for sighted children, "I can thank God now that I lost my sight; but for that I might never have come to know Christ as the Light of the World and the Light of my life." Surely none can doubt the value of Christian schools which, as an instrument in God's hand, can help to make in the lives of some, whether blind physically or spiritually, a difference as radical as that?

Youth at the Crossroads. "What is Life?" asked the teenager. "How can I know the way?" said the Vth former. Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life". But how can they know unless there are those to teach them?

ELAINE ABOUD

One of the first National Principals of a Mission school in the post World War II era, Mrs. Abboud has headed the Lebanese Evangelical School in Tyre (L.E.S.T.) since 1952. Elaine began as a teacher in the school after graduating from our Teacher Training College in Beirut. She took charge of the school when missionaries were evacuated for a period during World War II but later left to be married. She returned to become Head of the School and her wisdom in dealing with parents and

tense situations, her faith, patience and love in helping and training the children (whom she regards as her own), her involvement in all activities in the Tyre community aimed at its uplift and improvement, and her devoted and loving service of her Lord in all things, make Elaine a leader, counsellor and friend beyond compare in Mission and National circles and in the whole of the Tyre area.

(Ed: The photograph of Elaine was too poor quality to reproduce)

L.E.M.
LITERATURE OUTREACH
C.A.L.L. to Talent

C.A.L.L.—the CHRISTIAN ARABIC LITERATURE LEAGUE —is an association of four literature agencies which has as its purpose:

"To initiate, maintain and promote the production, publication and distribution of all kinds of Arabic Christian literature to the greatest extent possible, in the most efficient way possible and by all means available."

The L.E.M. and the national L.E.S. were Foundation members with the Manarah Society of this association and now A.L.M. (Arabic Literature Mission) has joined too, to produce an efficient and effective organisation doing away with overlap in every way. L.E.M. contributes personnel and funds to this project and publications are reaching over 20 different countries where Arabic is used or known by some.

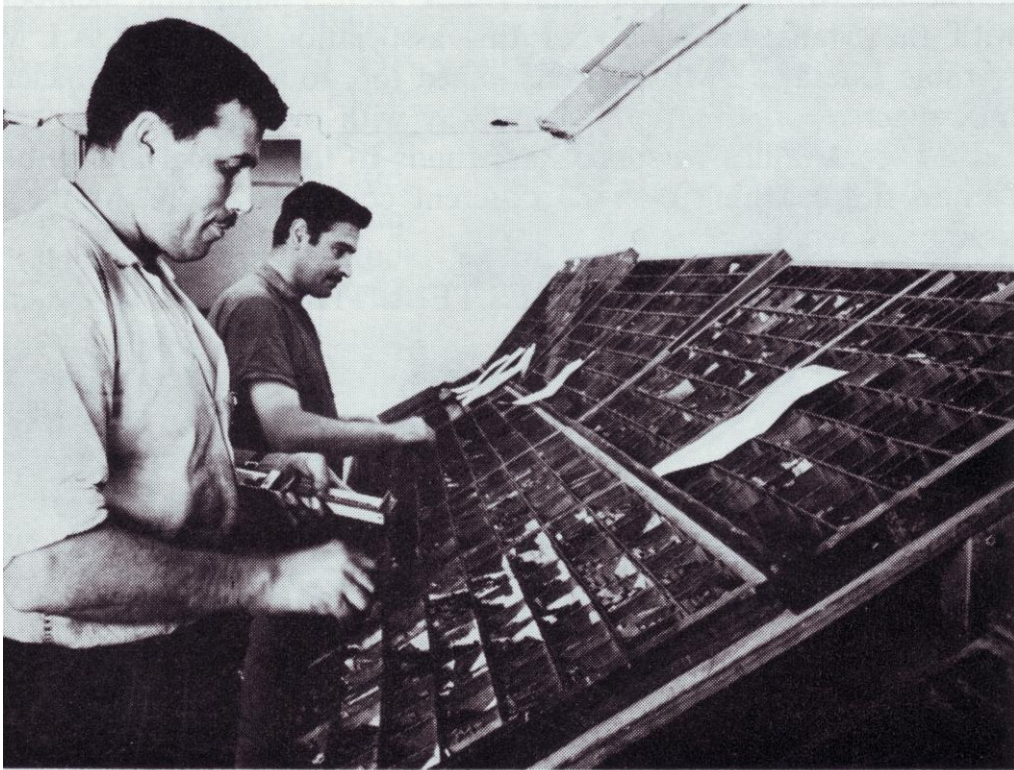
LET THE PICTURES TELL THE STORY



What shall we publish ?



A National writes.



Typesetting—the old way.



Proof reading.



The cover sells
the book !

What shall I get ?



Get them out !



Engrossed !



What is this tract ?

IMPACT on YOUTH

Douglas Anderson

Christ gave to a young man, John, an important place in the building of His Church and it has always been part of God's economy that youth with its enthusiasm and determination should take its rightful place in the world-wide task of the Church of Jesus Christ. Let us with sincerity thank God for the growing involvement of youth in the Church in Lebanon, and let us acknowledge the debt we owe to them in the spread of the Gospel. May they always find that in Christ's service there is a place for them to fill, and joyous fellowship with all others engaged in the building up of the body of Christ.

The picture in Lebanon gives much for encouragement as we look at the movement of the Spirit of God among young people.

Some years ago while living in Baalbek it was a privilege to watch the birth and growth of one of the finest youth works in Lebanon today. A "Navigator" family, the Waldron Scotts, moved into the neighbouring town of Zahle and there began a quiet and consistent witness amongst senior High School students. Key young men were targetted and slowly a nucleus of sincere, born again and Bible-studying youth was formed. They were trained to use the Navigator system of "multiplying" and were soon winning others for Christ and acting as their spiritual tutors. Once the initial group had been formed and begun to function, the evidences of God's work were clearly seen. Lebanese youth in High Schools, Colleges and Universities began to feel the impact of a strong, consistent witness from young people just like themselves. The method used is a personal approach to share with the individual the joy of salvation in Christ. When each "Navigator" has been used to lead a group to the Lord he then meets regularly with them for Bible Study as set out in the ten booklets on "Studies in Christian Living".

One of the earliest tasks undertaken by the then newly formed L.E.M. Literature Department was the publishing of this series in Arabic and the series has now been completed by Youth Sings! the Christian Arabic Literature League in which L.E.M. participates. As the members of the group grow in knowledge and Christian maturity they are involved in evangelistic outreach. Dormitories in schools, colleges and universities are visited and the students are sometimes asked to fill in a questionnaire which can lead on to a clear presentation of Christ's message. Those won in this way are put under the care of one of the previous group and so the work multiplies. Young people from all backgrounds in Beirut, Zahle, Tripoli, Aleppo and other centres as far off as the Arabian Gulf are feeling the impact of the original group and their spiritual fruit. Churches have gained new vitality as they have welcomed these young people into their fellowship and opened before them opportunities for service. As the work among the young men flourished it was recognised that a similar work must be commenced among girls and this has followed a similar pattern. Already some fine "Navigator pairs" are in the making! One of the great blessings of this work has been to foster a Spirit-born desire to win others for Christ and to equip young people spiritually and mentally for the task. The method of the personal involvement of the leader—quite often an older person—and the passing on of his zeal, knowledge and maturity in a spirit of fellowship and equality is one which must be learnt and emulated by all those, churches and individuals, who seek to harness the talents of youth in Christ's service.

The "YOUTH FOR CHRIST" work has aimed more especially at the High School students and has attracted quite a number of young people on to its working force. When a "Youth for Christ" representative was first invited to come to Lebanon the committee, on which L.E.S. (National Society) and L.E.M. personnel serve, stressed the importance of making it a Church-centred movement so that there would be no divided allegiance. In this way Youth for Christ rallies and clubs feed the national evangelical churches and strengthen their witness among young people. Youth for Christ, under the able leadership of Len Rodgers from America has held, among its many activities, well planned and attractive Youth Rallies. The enthusiasm of youthful committee members, good publicity and the bright singing and youth participation in the programmes have made these rallies more and more of an outstanding success. The groups in the schools, as in the L.E.S.G., have also provided a place where students can share their experiences of Christ with others and the committee work entailed in the preparation of weekly meetings and the leading of these meetings has proved an effective training ground for future service as Youth Leaders. This experience has been further enriched by Training Conferences where up to 30 young people have had worthwhile group instruction.

The visits of "Teen Teams" from U.S.A. has added a real stimulus to the whole of youth work in Lebanon, reaching far beyond the limits of the regular ministry of Youth for Christ. These dedicated and well-trained young people have been used by the Spirit of God to win many for Christ and to bring the challenge of consecrated Christian living and the use of their gifts and abilities in Christian service to many young believers. Lebanese Teen Teams have in their turn made visits to some of the surrounding countries and have brought a new impact for Christ on youth in those lands. By using new approaches—they recently put on an excellent "Folk Musical" presentation of the Christian message—bright programmes and interesting methods from other lands—some of which have to be greatly modified to fit in with local patterns—the Youth for Christ appeal has proved particularly attractive to those who have been to English medium schools, for Y.F.C. uses this language medium as they reach out to Armenian as well as Arabic speaking youth. The benefit of Y.F.C. to the whole evangelistic thrust of the Church will emerge fully when those national "leaders in training" within the movement have reached a place of maturity and authority both in the movement and in their own Church Youth Groups.

Each youth impact which is to maintain its influence for Christ on the youth of Lebanon today needs to be led by the Spirit of God in adapting its approach and programme to the changing cultural climate of the Middle East where it seeks to win Youth for Christ. One very encouraging outreach by Y.F.C. along this line was the "Coffee Club" organised by them first in a pilot scheme in a mountain summering town and then as a fullscale programme involving a visiting Teen Team of exceptional ability and appeal. In particular the Coffee Club in Beirut was effective because it was located right opposite the American University and drew up to 250 students and other young people to the two sessions each night given by the Teen Team. Another outstanding feature of these Coffee Clubs was the co-operation between the "Navigators" and the "Commandos" (of whom more soon) with Y.F.C. in the personal work and follow-up in them. To see young people who never go near a church talking earnestly with Team members and the other young workers about spiritual things and, in a number of cases, committing themselves to Christ, was thrilling beyond words.

The work of the "MUNTALIKUNE" or "Commandos for Christ", is an indigenous youth movement with an impact on Lebanese young people that aims to bring the renewing power of Christ to all

sections of Lebanese society and in time far beyond the borders of Lebanon. Here we have a group of young national Christians who are inspired by a high ideal and are being enabled by God's grace to build towards it by a well-arranged and disciplined programme of study and work. The uniqueness of this group, and perhaps its greatest potential, lies in the fact that it was conceived by Lebanese young people and is financed and maintained by their own efforts. The challenge presented to them by the effectiveness of special methods in reaching and influencing youth, by other youth movements has resulted in a new depth of committal to the task of evangelism and revival and a new determination to prepare themselves physically, mentally and spiritually to make Christ's voice heard and His power seen in the Middle East.

Their work is organised with military precision and each member participates in one or more of the groups, committees and departments. These departments have the oversight of the varied activities of the Muntalikune such as the Spiritual Life, Scouts, Social Work, Outreach, Music, Publicity and these in turn are responsible to the central leadership. This central group meets regularly for prayer, study and policy making. It has been my very real privilege to meet with this central group in an advisory capacity at their regular meetings and also to share as an ordinary member in many of the activities of the movement.

From the outset the importance of presenting the Christian Gospel in a way relevant to the conditions and thinking of youth in the Middle East today was recognised and so along with their weekly Bible studies which are held in small groups, they have maintained a regular series of study groups and lectures concerning present day social political and religious thinking in their own society. They have also undertaken surveys of the pressing social needs in Lebanon and this has resulted in the carrying out of several Christ-centred social welfare schemes.

At present members of the Muntalikun are responsible for eight Christian Scout groups including one in the needy Karantina area and one among pupils of the Lebanese Evangelical School for the Blind. They have spent weekends in villages repairing drainage and roads and holding meetings in the evening. The "Chiclet" boys (small boys who sell chewing-gum in the streets of Beirut to make money) have felt the warmth of their Christian love as they have enjoyed good food, fun and a Bible story. Orphanages, hospitals and Old People's Homes, irrespective of religious affiliation, have been visited, gifts distributed and the message of Christ presented. During the summer months groups of the young men volunteered for work in certain areas of Southern Lebanon where they helped in whatever way the local authorities requested and so were able to speak to many about the power and love of God. More recently they have, with the co-operation of the local authorities in areas near the Southern border, been active in teaching First Aid, digging air-raid shelters for schools and winning the confidence and friendship of the young people as well as of the authorities. This has created a good atmosphere in which to spread the influence and message of Christ.

This practical approach is having a two-fold benefit. Firstly, it is channelling the energy and potential of Christian youth into a well-disciplined service for Christ and secondly, it is meeting some of the pressing practical needs of today in the Spirit of the Redeemer. There is no doubt that, given their place in the overall economy of Christ's work, as our Lord Himself welcomed and used the energy and enthusiasm of youth during His earthly ministry, these young men and women of the Muntalikune can have a far-reaching ministry of revival throughout Lebanon and the neighbouring countries.

Impact on youth by youth—these are some of the thrilling developments and possibilities in Lebanon today. We thank God for every means being used by the groups mentioned and by others in various evangelical denominations and we pray that a great army of young people may take its place in the forefront of Christ's work in these lands. Youth today is seeking new ways to express its thoughts and ideals—by the abundant grace of God may the youth of Lebanon be won for Christ and find in our ranks a sincere welcome and a worthy place.

The cause of Christ in Lebanon and the Middle East is in need of the Impact of Youth that we may all be stirred and challenged to work hand in hand for a far-reaching Impact for Christ on Youth.

DOUGLAS ANDERSON



Douglas Anderson was once caricatured as an Indian god with many hands because of the wide range of gifts and abilities with which God has endowed him and which he uses to the fullest extent possible in the service of Christ wherever he is located.

Because he came to Lebanon when only 22 and lived with a Lebanese family with 4 teenagers in it, Doug acquired an ability in Arabic teenager terms unparalleled in missionary circles. This, together with his musical talent and his understanding of modern youth and his sympathy, has given him unusual communication with young people in churches, in Youth Movements and in outreach to non-Christian young people, in Baalbek, in Beirut and in conference work.

Many of his gifts have been utilised more recently in initiating a literature thrust by L.E.M. This in turn led to the formation of a Joint Literature venture in Lebanon on the part of 4 societies as "C.A.L.L. (Christian Arabic Literature League) of which he became Manager, as well as Artist.

Doug has moved up steadily into positions of leadership in the Mission and in the national Church with which he is in fellowship, serving on the church diaconate. Dulcie his wife, and three children, Jillian, Helen and Bruce, play their part too in the Church life and its witness.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Kathleen Bennett



What picture does the word 'missionary' conjure up in your mind? Probably most of us have a picture of a 'special species' of Christian, a cut above the ordinary, chosen and sent out to face the challenge of adventurous and rewarding work in tropical jungles or and deserts.

Perhaps some of these ideas were in the back of my mind as my boat sailed into Beirut, September 1968. "What would the people I had read about in the magazine really be like? How would a very ordinary person like me, fit in?" How relieved I was to discover that every one else was just ordinary too! No halos to worry about! Teachers in schools with discipline problems, housewives at home with family problems, only the concrete jungle of skyscrapers and the and desert of human hearts, the daily slog of routine, reminding so much of Christian work at home.

One thing that struck me about the L.E.M. as a mission (with the study of missions fresh in my mind from college) was the advanced thought, and more than thought, action, in the organisation of the work on the, Field. I found a mission working along side a national society in .whose hands is the organisation of the work. I found missionaries as members of various national churches, working alongside the Lebanese Christians. I found the policy of getting away from mission compounds and institutions, and found myself happily settled in a flat with a fellow worker, a home, just like anyone else's home.

What about the people of the city in which I found myself?

Well, no fear of becoming a drab, out-dated missionary here. I am struck by the well-dressed, fashion-conscious Lebanese. In school I was faced with modern, confident young ladies. The challenge that had faced me at home, faced me again. How can I present the Gospel in a relevant way to these young people? I began to ask myself if their problems were the same as those of English teenagers. Where was the point of their need at which Christ could meet them? Yes, they were the same young people with the same needs, but growing up in a totally different setting. There is not the atheism and agnosticism, not the disbelief in the supernatural that I had met in England. There is, however, the same apathy and lack of interest in spiritual things, the same materialistic outlook on life. There is not the same problem of immorality from too much freedom,

but there is at heart the same teenage rebellion and desire to be free from parental restriction.

I was impressed by the overwhelming advantage of having Christian schools rather than just Christian teaching in state schools, thinking back to the struggle of trying to present the Truth in the presence of so much error and being the only Christian on the staff in the school at home. Here the whole aim of the school is that the girls might come to Christ in a personal way, and while they are not being coerced into it, there is every opportunity given to them —opportunities too for the staff to come together for Bible study and prayer.

How glad I was to discover that my work was not confined to the city. There was the opportunity of the weekend ministry in the mountain village of Ain Zahalta. Surely this was real missionary work! However, I soon realised that church life in the winter in Ain Zahalta is very similar to life in the village chapel in which I had grown up—a small congregation mainly of the older generation and a large Sunday School of young children with a shortage of helpers. Not only are there the difficulties of nominal Christianity and family disputes, but also most of the Sunday School children are of the Druze religion and consequently would have great difficulty in standing as real Christians.

As we visit homes in scattered villages we meet one and another who have heard the Word in past days in school or Sunday School and are still bearing a clear testimony to our Lord. The same Lord is at work today and He will make His Word fruitful. Our job is to be faithful to the work committed to our hands as others have been in the past.

The New Direction

Les De Smidt

Since the Middle East is in a state of turmoil the great powers are inevitably manoeuvring to develop their spheres of influence here. Unpredictable emotional reactions result, and these can get out of control, giving to the proclamation of the Gospel a political significance not at all intended by expatriate members of the great powers who proclaim it. This fact must be taken into account as we look towards the future, as it makes the tenure of missionaries somewhat uncertain. God has used the pressure of events to impel the L.E.M. to provide for such contingencies as they could foresee, by establishing a financially and organisationally independent National Society named the "Lebanese Evangelical Society" (L.E.S.) registered with the Lebanese Government. This society has been given, by deed of sale—to ensure that there will not be any 'guilt by association' later—all property previously owned by the Mission. The L.E.S. has also taken full responsibility for all institutions of the Mission as well as all matters involving personnel. Thus, whatever the effect of international politics on the area, the Executive Committee of the L.E.S. has full authority to carry on the work without let or hindrance. They are already developing the work with real vigour and vision, and the administration is so arranged that even if all missionaries are compelled to withdraw the national society will be able to deal rapidly with the situation and carry on.

The L.E.S. has already proved its virility and maturity in carrying responsibility. The Society has opened its membership to all who have shown ability as leaders in the various indigenous churches as well as in institutions and activities of the Society itself. This gives them a considerable group of able men and women from which to draw in the administration of the affairs of the Society and in the expression of national initiative. Soon after the inception of the Society, they undertook the building of a new school in Tyre when the Government expropriated the old L.E.M. property there. The situation in the southern area of the country is such that they are being constantly called upon to exercise great wisdom and restraint in carrying on the school effectively in trying circumstances. There is great cause for gratitude to God for their wise handling of many a difficult situation which could have flared into serious trouble. In such situations the national ability and initiative are being tested and have proved adequate. With the Tyre project completed they have now launched three new projects and are inviting personal and financial participation of nationals as well as that of the missionary-minded public in other lands.

The first project is a Conference Centre in the grounds of what was formerly the Lebanon Bible Institute in Shemlan, a village about 2500 feet above sea level overlooking Beirut and a long stretch of the coast of Lebanon. The old building, which is no longer worth repairing, is to be replaced by a number of family and dormitory units providing accommodation eventually for 150 to 180 people. The second project is an addition to the Lebanese Evangelical School for the Blind to provide accommodation for more students and to extend the function of the school as a rehabilitation centre for the blind. The concrete frame for these rooms is being built first and then, as funds become available, they will be completed.

The third project is an Old People's Home to be built at a suitable altitude in the mountains. Certain Church groups are sharing in this venture and great interest has been created by several articles which appeared, unsolicited, in the local press. This project will be the first evangelical home of this nature to be specially designed for the purpose. This is a field of service into which even missions have not ventured in the past.

But the L.E.S. is not merely occupied in establishing institutions. Members of L.E.S. are also involved in the projects of leading evangelical churches in Lebanon. One denomination has a five year evangelistic outreach programme in which the L.E.S. is sharing with its resources. Its co-operation with another denomination takes the form of providing personnel to work with the Church. It is constantly on the lookout for worthwhile ventures sponsored by indigenous churches in which it can participate. This widening fellowship with the churches is a source of strength to the Society in fulfilling its function in Lebanon.

The National Society also looks beyond the borders of Lebanon. While numbers of Missions cling to the urban areas of Lebanon and to the institutions with which they are familiar, the L.E.S. is looking for opportunities to reach out into the unknown, ready for any venture the Lord may open to them into the Arab lands around them. It has already loaned one worker to a Mission in the Persian Gulf where he and his wife worked with great acceptance until this door of opportunity closed for the time being. They are now looking for men and women who will work in the Aden and Yemen areas, teachers and nurses who also have a true missionary spirit. These will be sent to help those who have pioneered the work in these countries. It is the aim of the L.E.S. to become the missionary arm of the indigenous churches of Lebanon and to this end they are strengthening their ties with the churches through their growing national membership.

In the National Director, David Tleel, God has given to the Society one who is a truly devoted servant of the Lord. He is fully committed to seeing that the Society becomes an instrument that God can use for the purpose of extending His Kingdom in the Middle East. On the National Executive of the L.E.S. are other choice children of God, among them Rev. Fuad Accad, Executive Secretary of the Bible Societies in the Levant and for 18 years Chairman of the L.B.I. National Advisory Council; Dr. Tewfik Khayat, for 18 years now lecturer, translator and correspondence course supervisor in the L.B.I.; Miss Nadia Haddad, who has served in the Girls' School (L.E.S.G.) as teacher and secretary of the school for a number of years; Miss Dora Raad, who has worked as an evangelist in Tyre and Beirut and has considerable experience in outreach to non-Christians; and others who have much to contribute in the way of knowledge and varied experience in Christian work in these lands.

Since membership of the Society is open to all national evangelicals who are invited to join it by its General Assembly, the membership may be increased indefinitely. Members of various churches who are already members of L.E.S. are actively participating in its affairs and promoting its projects. The Society reciprocates by participating in the projects of the churches and this constitutes a unifying fellowship also between the various churches.

The prospects for the Society are exciting, as members become more deeply involved and begin to envisage wider possibilities. Many more nationals are realising that these projects and ventures are really their own and so they are ready to give them financial as well as other help.

The National Society is, at the same time, very conscious of the help which missionaries can give as trained personnel and in turn to train nationals in the skills needed to make their projects effective as agencies of evangelism. The National Society workers have relieved the missionaries of much of the routine responsibility of administration, thus setting them free to give themselves to other ministries. It is here that the co-operation between the Mission and the Society is a source of strength to both. The Society constantly urges upon the Mission the need for more missionaries

whose lives are committed to this work who will work alongside the nationals in the Society and in the churches so as to impart their "know-how" and help them to adapt it to the local situation in the Middle East. The L.E.S., like the L.E.M., is prepared to use every means known to the mind of man suitable to the task of making the whole Gospel of Jesus Christ known in these lands. The Field is wide. There are nearly 100 million Arabic-speaking people in the Middle East and the L.E.S. is committed to evangelising them.

Because of their growing experience and spirit of co-operation the Society is attracting the attention of other bodies being formed to evangelise in Lebanon and the Middle East. The success of the co-operation between the Lebanon Evangelical Mission and the Society is serving as a model for others and recently one body, all set to start a new 'mission' in Lebanon, opened negotiations with the L.E.S. in an endeavour to reach an agreement by which the L.E.S. would act as this new mission's National body in Lebanon and the Middle East to carry out its aims. Each new possibility also emphasises the need for missionaries with the skills needed in the new ventures and plans, first to help get the ventures under way and then to train those who will become the ultimate light-bearers through the various agencies that are thus initiated.

Because the Middle East is in a state of turmoil, it presents an unprecedented opportunity to make Christ known to needy men and women. It is when security is threatened, when the known ways are challenged by vicious forces, when change shakes the foundations of an accepted way of life, that men turn their minds to seek the unshakeable things; then men look for firm foundations, and then we can present Jesus Christ as the unshakeable Rock upon Whom we may build our lives. The Lebanese Evangelical Society stands foursquare on the "eternal verities" made known in Christ and is committed to their proclamation and application to every situation in the Middle East today. The L.E.M. stands firmly on the same verities and is behind the L.E.S. to help in every way in which the Society needs and invites their assistance, as long as the Lord holds the door open for them to remain in this land.

DAVID TLEEL

How often God matches the man and the moment! David Tleel and the establishment of the national "Lebanese Evangelical Society" is just such an occasion. David entered the service of the L.E.M. in 1949 as a teacher in the Boys' School, then he became Assistant Field Secretary, and later National Director in the Mission until the National L.E.S. was registered with the government. He was then elected as its Director.

David was born in Palestine in 1925, and eventually qualified as a Chartered Accountant and served with the Iraqi Petroleum Company as their Auditor. He became one of the thousands of refugees from Palestine in 1948, settled in Lebanon, attained Lebanese citizenship, and married Leila Hawa, a Boys' School teacher. (They have two boys, Iskander and Suheil.)

David's father was a very successful merchant in Palestine but gave it all up to become a preacher of the Gospel when he was converted. In like manner David too has devoted his considerable ability to the Lord's service.

Gifted with great patience and a deeply sympathetic nature, David has proved to be an able administrator with considerable initiative and adaptability, a man of God truly devoted to the Lord

and the extension of God's Kingdom in Lebanon and the whole Middle East. It is David's zeal for the promotion of evangelism in every way possible that has given to the National L.E.S. such a clear and effective evangelistic emphasis in all its activities.

FUAD ACCAD

Fuad Accad has been Chairman of the National Advisory Council of the L.B.I. since 1952—the body that became the "prototype" of the National Executive Committee of the L.E.M. before the National Society was finally established. He was then elected a member of the L.E.S. first Executive Committee.

Fuad, fully committed to the Lord and His service and recently ordained a minister in an indigenous church, has served with the Bible Society in the Near East for 37 years. He is currently engaged in supervising the production of a new translation of the Bible in Arabic, a project acceptable to all Christian Churches in the Middle East and in which almost all are participating.

Fuad's business ability, wide experience of Christian work, discernment of trends in the Middle East, and close touch with people at every level in Lebanon and neighbouring countries make his contribution to the councils of the L.E.S. very valuable indeed.

(Ed. The photographs of David and Fuad were of too poor quality to reproduce)

FROM THE CROSSROADS

"Looking Ahead"

Les De Smidt

It is at the Cross-Roads that the advance made in the future is decided. Consider

THE OPPORTUNITY FOR ADVANCE.

The L.E.M., as the only widely accepted interdenominational mission in Lebanon, is in a unique position to make a varied and valuable contribution to the cause of Christ in Lebanon and thence to the whole of the Middle East. The relationship of the L.E.M. to its National Society, the Lebanese Evangelical Society (L.E.S.), is also a unique one with unusual potential in the missionary situation in this area. It is open to observation in its inner workings on the part of the major denominations through their members, some of whom are now members of the Society as well as of the Mission. This relationship is meeting with increasing approval on all sides and even with enthusiasm. L.E.M. 'stock' has seldom been higher as a result of the advocacy of the nationals themselves. This is the result of the form of co-operation established between the Society and the Mission in the Field.

Look at the map. You will see how the Mission and the Society are together reaching out into more than 20 different countries even now. Radio Programmes, Literature Publications, and Correspondence Courses cross borders that are closed to any kind of itinerant evangelism, and the response shows that the Gospel is reaching needy and thirsty souls. Where nationals are able to operate more effectively than missionaries the National Society is sponsoring national activity and is supporting them in co-operation with the indigenous churches interested in reaching out beyond the borders of Lebanon.

THE SCOPE OF ADVANCE.

In this position of strategic advantage the L.E.M. is faced with ever expanding possibilities in a constantly changing situation. It sees its avenues of service extending out in four particular directions.

1. **The Field**, more or less confined to Lebanon in recent years, is extended again and now includes the whole of the Middle East (and in some respects even beyond this), in co-operation with indigenous churches and with other evangelical agencies working here.

2. **The General Evangelism Thrust**, mainly through mission-centred efforts previously, is now being directed in a broadening measure into and through these evangelical churches and so to all who welcome our co-operation by means of missionaries with special gifts, abilities and experience.

3. **The Educational Evangelism and Training Activity**, until now largely centred on the institutions founded by the Mission, is extended to include all schools and university colleges which will accept our co-operation by means of missionary teachers and lecturers.

4. **Special Outreach Projects**, in addition to the Correspondence Courses, Extension Courses, Literature Ventures and Radio Programmes initiated in recent years, are now extended to include,

within the scope of the Mission's ministry, every means available to the service of the Gospel, in co-operation with other agencies using the same means.

THE PROGRAMME OF ADVANCE

On the Field we believe that the Lord is leading us to implement a Programme of Advance with three main emphases during the next decade at least.

1. **The Stewardship Emphasis.** The aim is to have a missionary task force of teams of committed missionaries and their equally committed personal supporters. The share of the personal partner at the Home end in the work is to back the missionary in prayer, and help to provide his financial support. To this end Personal Partnership Schemes are being promoted in each Homeland. In the Field the Mission aims at helping the National Society (L.E.S.) to establish a body of national contributors to L.E.S. outreach projects.

2. **The Recruitment Emphasis** aims at large scale recruitment of men and women called of God to serve alongside nationals in the Middle East in the exploitation of every possible evangelistic and training opportunity. (The recruits needed are set forth on pp. 68-70.) In the Field the Mission aims at helping to recruit active members of the indigenous evangelical churches into the National L.E.S. and so to help extend its effectiveness and strength.

3. **The Outreach Emphasis** aims at initiating ventures of faith with close co-operation between the L.E.S. and the Mission and the Mission Home Councils.

THE STRATEGY OF ADVANCE

Certain practical steps have been taken in the past few years which point to a positive overall strategy which can be applied in the Middle East. We have called it a "Strategy of Co-operation". By this strategy the already partially active co-operation between evangelistic, church and missionary agencies in this area would be more purposefully extended by co-operation in practical ventures as well as in co-ordination of effort. The ring formed by Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Eritrea, South Yemen, The Trucial States, Kuwait and Iraq, has a number of evangelical and interdenominational missions, societies and churches working in it. As this ring of societies and churches extends the co-ordination of their efforts in practical co-operation, it is possible for an overall common strategy to emerge.

Ventures which lend themselves immediately to this are literature promotion, promotion of graduated correspondence courses, extension courses, short-term training institutes, radio programming, and others which may present themselves to societies and groups in closer proximity to each other. The interchange of personnel for special projects, campaigns etc. will increase mutual understanding and reveal enlarged areas of basic agreement and so aid in the attainment of an inter-group relationship which makes overall strategic planning possible.

"Why turn our eyes to areas other than the country in which we are active at present?" Dr. Max Warren, leading missionary statesman in Britain today answers: because "THIS IS ONE WORLD, AND THAT RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHAT IS ON OUR OWN DOORSTEP CAN ONLY BE FULLY DISCHARGED IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR RESPONSIBILITY FOR THOSE FURTHER AWAY". ("Perspective in

Missions" Pg. 17). Those in the Homelands discharge this wider responsibility through missionary endeavour in lands overseas. If the missionary is to share this world-wide vision with the people whom he serves then he must continue to reach beyond his local area. If we set no example of going further, then we cannot be surprised at the growth of a parochial outlook in those with whom we work. Unfortunately missions have tended to enshrine in their very names a parochial outlook. The L.E.M. thus looks beyond Lebanon to the whole Middle East encouraging the L.E.S. and the churches to do so too.

If, in view of the complexity of evangelical endeavour in the Middle East today this practical co-operation and co-ordination of effort is attained, then, we believe, this will lead on, under God's good hand, to a period of unprecedented advance in this whole area.

What of the storm clouds over the whole area? Well, we have been commissioned to "Go"! to declare the Good News, remembering that "He who observes the wind will not sow ; and he who regards the clouds will not reap." (Eccles. 11: 4).

NEEDED - RECRUITS

LEBANON today represents an open door of opportunity for the Gospel of Jesus Christ into the whole of the Middle East and beyond. It is a bridgehead into the whole of the Arabic-speaking world and the whole of the Muslim World, situated as it is in the very stronghold of Islam.

The LEBANON EVANGELICAL MISSION is an interdenominational and international fellowship of missionaries and their supporters and national Christian believers, who, in dependence on God for the supply of their needs, seek to reach out to men in need of Christ throughout this region of the Middle East. Missionaries assist in the national churches with which they become associated, in institutions of various kinds run by L.E.S., or may be seconded to institutions and activities with other groups for mutual benefit in the overall missionary task of the Church. They initiate new ventures in Christian witness and advance, in partnership with their national colleagues, training them to assume responsibility as soon as possible.

AVENUES OF SERVICE

1. General Evangelism. Where men and women of trained ability, dedication and experience are prepared to give themselves to learning from the people of the Middle East, their language and way of life, and to spend time with them in friendship, there are no limits to the opportunities for satisfying service here.

L.E.M. co-operates with the main indigenous churches in Lebanon and there is a constant demand for the help, advice, experience and initiative of missionaries in evangelism, pastoral and training ministries etc. The great need is for men and women who have not only had a general missionary training but who also have some training and experience in pastoral counselling, leadership training, youth work or other church-centred activity. Missionary work now is more and more that of training nationals by working alongside them as a team mate.

During the next five years we need at least 3 men and 2 women as permanent General Missionaries.

2. Educational Evangelism. L.E.M. helps the national Society which is responsible for 3 large schools with a total of over 1500 students ranging from K.G. to University Entrance levels. These schools give ample opportunity for evangelism of a steadily persistent kind, for entry into many homes of the students and for follow-up work among former students. In addition all the opportunities open to general missionaries are open to missionary teachers in their association with the national churches. Our desire is to provide missionary teachers of English as a second language throughout all classes. The schools attract students from all over the Middle East and so have far-reaching influence.

During the next five years we need: 2 men and 2 women graduate teachers of English for High Schools. 1 man and 1 woman graduate teacher of mathematics and science for High Schools.

2 women teachers of English for Primary schools.

1 Teacher training specialist for Teacher Training Department.

2 men graduate Theology and Biblical Studies lecturers for L.B.I. Extension Course programme.

3. Literature Outreach. The L.E.M. launched into this area of activity fairly recently and has co-operated in the establishment of a fellowship for the more efficient and effective production of Christian literature in Arabic, known as the "Christian Arabic Literature League" (C.A.L.L.). Beside the need for more and more first class quality pamphlets and books there is the challenging need for an evangelistic periodical to reach out to approximately 100 million potential readers in the Middle East. Therefore the need for permanent missionaries who will master the Arabic language and who have training in journalism, writing and publishing cannot be over-estimated. During the next five years we need at least 1 man and 1 woman for this task.

4. Radio Outreach. There are three radio stations which beam the evangelical message in Arabic to the Arab World. Without the tremendous expense of establishing another Radio Station the L.E.M. has the opportunity of preparing programmes for these stations. The cry is for trained script writers and programme directors who will master Arabic. These missionaries would then be able to use their skills to exploit the immense possibilities of reaching the Arab World for Christ through radio. During the next 5 years we need at least 1 man or 1 woman for this task.

5. University Outreach. The presence in the universities in Beirut of students from all over the Arab World and even far beyond, presents an opportunity of tremendous strategic importance. It opens up a whole new area of activity for the L.E.M. as adequately qualified personnel may be seconded to teach in the universities. During the next five years we need at least 1 man and 1 woman for this task.

A bridgehead into the Arabic-speaking world ...

A door that is wide open ...

"Pray ye therefore..."