

NORTH AFRICA. x

THE MONTHLY RECORD

OF THE

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North Africa consists of—

Morocco, Algeria, Tunis, Tripoli, Egypt, and the Sahara, and has a Mohammedan population of 20,000,000.

Mohammedanism has nothing in its teaching that can save the soul. It teaches some truth, but carefully denies the fundamental doctrines of Christ's divinity, death, resurrection, etc.

No effort has, until recently, been made to evangelise this part of the Moslem World, except in Egypt. It was considered impossible to gain an entrance, much less a hearing, amongst these followers of the False Prophet.

God has withered and is still withering the political power of Mohammedanism in Africa. Its vices were too glaring for civilisation to endure. Slavery and piracy in Algeria led to its subjugation by a nominally Christian power. Tunis and Egypt followed. Morocco and Tripoli enjoy only nominal independence.

Islam's spiritual deceptions and social degradations cannot be removed by force of arms. Only the reception of the truths of the Gospel can remedy these evils.

MOROCCO can be reached from London by steamboat in four or five days; it has an area of about 260,000 square miles (equal to five times the size of England), and a population estimated at from 4,000,000 to 8,000,000. It is governed by a Sultan, whose name is Abdul Aziz, a youth of about nineteen years of age. The country is divided into thirty-three districts, each of which is under the superintendence of a Kaid. The semi-independent hill tribes are ruled by their own chiefs, and scarcely acknowledge the authority of the Sultan.

The North Africa Mission began work in Morocco in a small way in 1884; at the close of 1897 it had substantial mission premises, with hospitals, in Tangier, and stations in Tetuan, Fez, and Casa Blanca. It has thirty-six missionaries in the country, besides helpers, labouring amongst Moslems, Jews, and Europeans. As the bulk of the population are in villages, many more workers are needed than this great country may be evangelised.

ALGERIA, within fifty-five hours' journey from London, is the most advanced in civilisation of all the countries of North Africa, having been held by the French since 1830. After great expenditure of life and money, it is now thoroughly subject to their rule. Its extent is about three times that of England, and its population 4,500,000, principally Moslems, but with some hundreds of thousands of French, Spaniards, Italians, Jews, etc. The country has a good climate, and much beautiful scenery; there are many excellent roads, and two thousand miles of railway.

The North Africa Mission has five mission stations, with fifteen brethren and sisters working in them. The bulk of the people live in villages scattered over the country, and only a very few have, as yet, been reached by the Gospel.

TUNIS is under French protection, and practically under French rule. It is hardly so extensive as England, but has a population of about 2,000,000, nearly all of whom are Mohammedans. There are, however, some thousands of Italians, Maltese, French, Jews, etc., on the coast. Seven workers of this Mission are stationed in the capital. Ten others are carrying on Medical Mission work in Sousa and surrounding villages. Five are now settled in Kairouan, and two in Bizerta. The remainder of the Regency, with its cities and villages, is still to a great extent unevangelised.

TRIPOLI is a province of the Turkish Empire, several times larger than England. It has a population of about 1,350,000, who, with the exception of a few thousands, are followers of the False Prophet. The Moslems here are more intelligent and better educated than further west, but much opposed to the Gospel. In 1889, two brethren began to labour for Christ among them, and there are now six engaged in the work. A Medical Mission has been conducted here with cheering results.

EGYPT is still tributary to Turkey, but under the guidance and supervision of the British Government. The Mission commenced work in Lower Egypt in April, 1892, and has eleven Missionaries there, including wives. The population of Lower Egypt is seven millions, the great majority being Mohammedans. The American Presbyterians have an excellent and successful work, mainly, but not exclusively, amongst the Copts. The Church Missionary Society also has work in Cairo. There remains a widespread need for more labourers amongst the Moslems, who are difficult to reach, and very few of whom have as yet been converted.

THE VAST SAHARA, with its scattered population of Berber and Arab Mohammedans, remains still without a solitary missionary. We pray God that soon some brethren full of faith and of the Holy Ghost may be sent to preach Christ amidst the inhabitants of its palmy oases.

NORTHERN ARABIA is peopled by the Bedouin descendants of Ishmael; they are not bigoted Moslems, like the Syrians, but willing to be enlightened. This portion of the field is sadly in need of labourers.

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