

The N.A.M. News Letter

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THE OASIS OF GAFSA, SOUTHERN TUNISIA

Gafsa: City of Palm Trees

WHAT a delightful picture Miss Jones has secured of Gafsa, the city of palm-trees! Yet how unspeakably tragic it is that scenes of such beauty should be a setting for the poignant drama of Moslem domestic life. For these tranquil surroundings convey no hint of the fear-ridden existence of the Moslem wife,—fearful of

divorce, fearful of evil spirits, fearful of death lurking ever near at hand, ready to snatch the baby from her breast.

In the following lines our missionary sisters at Gafsa, Miss Brookes and Miss Jones, reveal something of the sorrow and superstition of the native life of the oasis :

“We have been visiting an Arab woman whose husband, double her age, has just died of consumption. Her face was muti-

lated with scratches—all self-inflicted—that are part of the usual ritual of mourning . . . Outside another house, in which some poor



Mr. O. L. Carnegie

soul has just died, were some thirty or forty women, all of them swaying and chanting and going through the gesture of face-scratching. It was uncanny. There is quite a variety of chants, each associated with its special ceremony; and we can always tell from the weird sounds whether a wedding or a circumcision is being celebrated, or a death lamented. Quite a distinctive incantation is employed to keep off the Evil Eye.

“Not long ago there was a full eclipse of the moon, a phenomenon that the Arab particularly dreads; and throughout the period of obscurity a procession of men and youths threaded its way through the streets, to the accompaniment of vociferous chanting, as though the very loudness of their voices, and especially the constant repetition of the name of their prophet, would ward off the evil.”

Baby-stealing Demons!

It is a far cry from Gafsa in Southern Tunisia to Tetuan in Spanish Morocco, but that similar superstitions abound in Morocco, Miss Low makes clear in the following incident: “A woman from one of the near-by villages brought her emaciated, dying baby last

week for medicine. It was, of course, too late to attempt anything. She and the other women were quite sure that the baby was a ‘changeling’; the demons had taken her own baby and left the other in its place, and that was why it was not thriving! One woman suggested that the mother should carry the baby to a saint’s tomb, shut the door, listen outside to hear if the baby cried, and if so, this was a sign that it would recover, in answer to the saint’s intercession, I suppose. The poor souls are so bound in fears and superstitions, but it is a joy to be able to tell them of a Saviour Who died for them, and ever lives to make intercession for His Own.”

Our New Hon. Secretary

NOT since the death of Mr. E. H. Glenny in 1926 has the N.A.M. had a permanent Hon. Secretary, and it is with gratitude to GOD that we tell of Mr. Oswald L. Carnegie’s acceptance of this office.

Mr. Carnegie is a business man who retired early in life, and who has for many years devoted himself to a flourishing Mission in Whitstable, Kent. He has long been interested in North Africa and, as a member of the N.A.M. Home Council, has paid a number of visits to our Mission Stations there.

Genial and sympathetic, Mr. Carnegie has been most painstaking in his endeavours to arrive at the fullest understanding of the missionaries’ problems, and has won the regard



Mr. Carnegie surrounded by native children at Fedhala, Morocco

and confidence of the workers on the field.

We trust sincerely that under Mr. Carnegie’s gracious and able leadership the N.A.M. may

fulfil yet more effectively the blessed purpose for which the Lord brought it into being,—the proclamation of the Gospel of GOD's grace to the many millions of the Barbary States.

The N.A.M.'s First Field Superintendent

AT its meeting on June 20, the Council of the N.A.M., by a unanimous vote, appointed Mr. T. J. P. Warren Field Superintendent. This appointment followed a three months' tour of N.A.M. stations in Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco undertaken by Mr. Warren, during which he was able to confer with the missionaries upon matters of vital import in so far as the testimony to Christ in North Africa is concerned.

The very detailed Report that Mr. Warren was able to compile as he journeyed from station to station furnished the Home Council with invaluable data, giving the clearest insight into existing problems, and enabling the members to determine the most effective policy for the husbanding of the work in the coming days.

The appointment of a general field superintendent will go far towards meeting the long-felt need of co-ordinating the work in North Africa, and of furnishing a liaison officer linking the Home Council with the Field Councils of the various countries—Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco. The members of these field councils are elected by the missionaries from among their ranks, and they are henceforth to be entrusted with administrative powers in such matters as the allocation of workers, the opening or closing of stations, as well as those matters that affect the general work of the Mission in their respective countries, concerning which they have specialised knowledge born of long experience on the field.

We earnestly commend to our readers' prayers both Mr. Warren and the members of the various field councils, that GOD's gracious blessing may rest upon this new venture in missionary administration, and that it may prove very definitely to be in the highest interests of the work and the well-being of the workers.

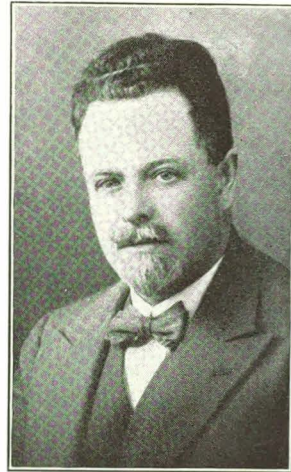
Mr. T. J. P. Warren

MR. and Mrs. Warren began their missionary career in 1911 at Tangier and Oran, and a few months later proceeded to Djemâa

Sahridj, at which station they laboured until March, 1925, when they became pioneers in missionary work among North Africans in Paris.

Not long after this it was decided to send our missionary recruits to Paris in order that they might acquire a knowledge of the French tongue before proceeding to North Africa to study Arabic. The Paris home of Mr. and Mrs. Warren accordingly became the "foyer" where our candidates passed their sojourn upon French soil; and during the intervening years at least four and twenty of our young workers have stayed with the Warrens during their months of language study.

It will be seen from this that no fitter person could possibly have been selected for the onerous duties of field superintendent, for



Mr. T. J. P. Warren

Mr. Warren has an intimate personal knowledge of the younger generation of missionaries, and his affection for them is warmly reciprocated. They will rejoice that he has been cordially elected to a place on the Home Council of the Mission as well.

During his years in Paris Mr. Warren has opened up and developed other important spheres of service, particularly the Paris Missionary Fellowship, through which many other students residing in Paris during their period of language study have enormously benefited. If Mr. Warren is to be completely released for full-time service as field superintendent resident in North Africa (preferably Algiers), it is vital that a worthy successor

should be raised up of GOD for Paris, with its many and urgent claims. Please be much in prayer for this, dear friends!

The late Miss Elizabeth Fryer

IN the last number of "NORTH AFRICA" we were only able to make the briefest reference to the Homecall of our sister on May 27.

Miss Fryer came to the Headquarters of the N.A.M. as long ago as 1909 to take charge of the Literary Department during the years when the Mission Magazine appeared as a monthly publication. From 1917 to 1931, when she retired, Miss Fryer also rendered valuable service as Assistant Book-keeper. Everything to which she set her hand bore the stamp of efficiency, thoroughness and the most scrupulous accuracy.

A friend of Miss Fryer's whose personal knowledge of her extended over many years, when writing to us in warm appreciation of the services she rendered to Highgate Road Chapel—her spiritual home—says he "marvelled at the meticulous care and loving thought she displayed in every detail. It could be truly said of her that whatsoever her hand found to do, she did it with her might. . . She leaves behind a gracious memory of a type of steadfast, immovable believer of whom, alas! in these superficial days there are but few."

Miss Fryer's passing was extraordinarily peaceful. Just a few hours before the Lord sent for her she was serenely happy, rejoicing in the prospect of meeting Him.

At Headquarters we shall miss our dear sister most of all at the Monthly Prayer Meetings. She was the most regular attender, and ever the first to arrive.



The late Miss Elizabeth Fryer

Our Keswick Speaker

MR. LEONARD J. BOCKING, of Cherchell, Algeria, was signally honoured in being invited to represent the Moslem world at the Missionary Meeting in the great Tent at Keswick. Our brother was greatly helped, and his seven-minute message, featuring The Challenge, The Commission, The Cost and The Conquest was not only a masterly and impressive presentation of the need, but an earnest and powerful plea for more workers—particularly young men—for these neglected Moslem fields.

Annual Meetings:

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

Will friends kindly note that the Annual Meetings of the N.A.M. will be held (D.V.) on Tuesday, September 26, at the Caxton Hall, adjoining St. James's Park Station, at 3.30 and 6.30 p.m., not 7 p.m., as announced in the July number of "NORTH AFRICA." The earlier hour is with a view to shortening the otherwise considerable interval between Tea and the evening gathering.

SPEAKERS:—

Afternoon Meeting: Rev. H. A. H. LEA, M.A., Rector of Edgware.

Evening Meeting: Rev. F. JOHN SCROGGIE.