

# The N.A.M. News Letter

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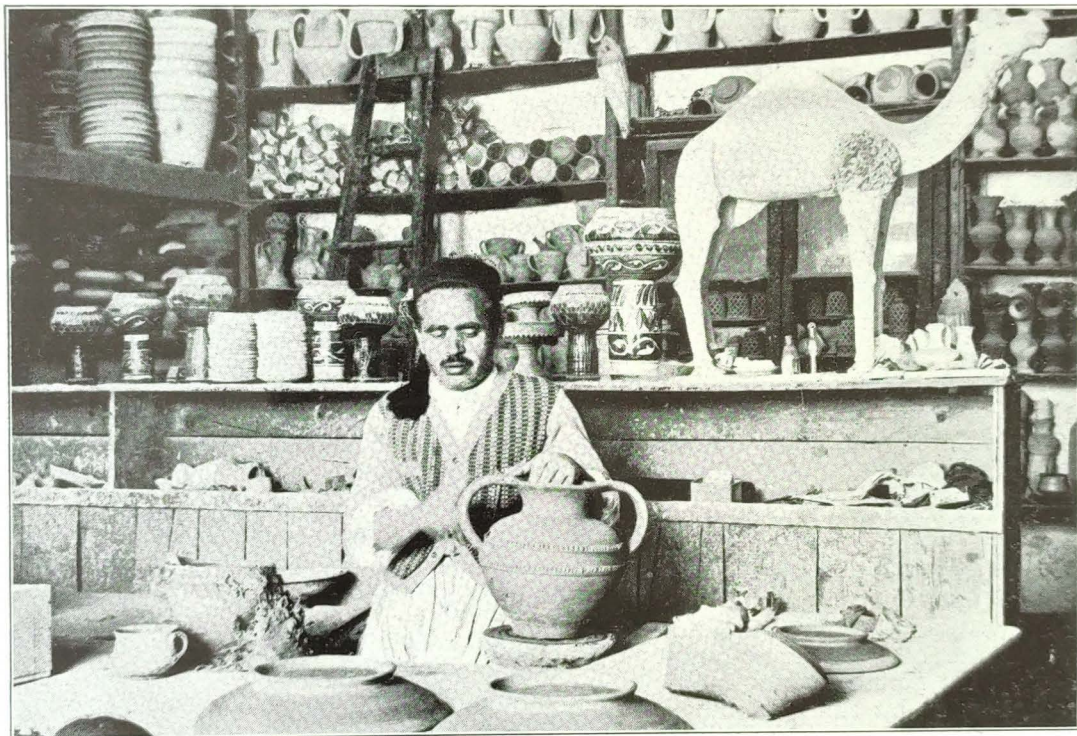


Photo by]

A POTTER OF NABEUL, TUNISIA

[E. J. Long

## *“As Clay . . . in Mine Hand”*

GO down to the potter's house” (Jer. 18, 2) is surely wise counsel in such days as these. There, as the chapter-headings of our Authorised Bibles remind us, Jeremiah was shown “God's absolute power in disposing of nations”; and there Paul too learnt that “the Potter may do as He list with His clay.”

Europe is again in the melting-pot; but whilst to the many it would appear that

“time and chance” (Ecc. 9, 11) are shaping the destinies of men, God's Word reveals that He alone is in sovereign control, fashioning the plastic material—men *and nations*—“unto honour” when it is yielded to His hands, but “dashing in pieces” (Ps. 2, 9) so that it “cannot be made whole again” (Jer. 19, 11) the hardened clay which, “past feeling” (Eph. 4, 19), has become at length that dreadful thing, a “vessel of wrath fitted to destruction” (Rom. 9, 22).

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Yet our Sovereign Lord is still the God of all grace ; and it is *in love* that He is making "all things" (Rom. 8, 28), even "the wrath of man" (Ps. 76, 10) to further His children's good and to fulfil His gracious purpose in this fast-closing dispensation.

And assuredly, bound up in that gracious design, is the evangelisation of the Moslem world. For this essential task He has deigned to call us into His fellowship—"fellowship in the Gospel" (Phil. 1, 5). May we never fail Him!

### "By Way of Remembrance"

WITH a view to refreshing our readers' minds, we propose to devote a paragraph in this and the next few numbers of the "NEWS LETTER" to a description of methods of missionary work employed by our brethren and sisters in North Africa. The paragraphs can, of course, furnish little more than thumbnail sketches, but they will, whenever possible, be supplemented by photographs. We are eager that friends, particularly our Prayer Circle members, should be able both to visualise our missionaries in the actual setting of their work, and to appreciate its varied character.

### Personal Work

No form of Christian testimony in North Africa is more profoundly worth while than PERSONAL WORK. Our Lord preached two of His most wonderful sermons to audiences of *one*,—The Samaritan Woman, and Nicodemus—drawing His illustrations ("water" and "wind") from the immediate environment—the well, and the evening breeze.

Now, whereas the average Briton is hidden away in office or factory for the greater part of the day, the Barbary townsman, plying his trade, keeping his shop, or engaged in his craft, is readily accessible at all times. His hospitable qualities are proverbial, and, provided the missionary is wise and courteous in his approach, friendly contact is soon made, and a profitable conversation opened up.

Sometimes—as in the case of the Nabeul potter, who is a near neighbour of our brother Cyril Morriss—the very setting or accessories of a man's trade will furnish material from which a spiritual parable may be woven. And if, as will most assuredly happen, the introduction of the Cross provokes opposition,—well, there is more hope of reasoning with an indignant individual than with a hostile crowd!

So remember particularly our brethren in this "one by one" ministry, and pray that Pauline courage, wisdom and adaptability may be theirs.

### North Africa under War Conditions

Friends of the Mission will be anxiously awaiting news as to how our workers on the field, and those desirous of returning after furlough, are faring during these days of general upheaval. The following brief notes may prove both helpful and reassuring:

*Work "As Usual"*—From stations as far apart as Tunis, Cherchell and Casablanca come tidings that missionary work is suffering very little from the repercussions of European events. Thus Dr. Liley writes (from Tunis): "The military authorities—who now rule in Tunisia—place *no* obstacle to the prosecution of missionary work as usual." The only modification in the town work appears to be that, in view of lighting restrictions, the evening meeting for Europeans is advanced to 5 p.m. "The greatest change," continues the Doctor, "will perhaps be insuperable obstacles to itinerations, or country visits, with Mission cars." This is due, not only to the strictest rationing of petrol, but to the fact that travelling outside the communal district—whatever the means of transport—is now possible only by special permit.

Mr. Morriss (Nabeul) writes: "Our ordinary activities are scarcely affected in this place," but adds: "My bicycle has now to take the place of the car in reaching places outside . . ."

From Mr. Bocking, just back in Cherchell, we learn that "comparatively speaking, things seem fairly calm and normal"; whilst Mr. Swanson (Casablanca), commenting upon the situation in Morocco, says: "We have not been hindered in any way in our work."

All of which calls for glad praise to God.

Further additional items that may be of interest and help are as follows:

*Cost of Missionaries' Passages.*—Not only is the usual 20 per cent. discount on Mediterranean crossings no longer accorded by the shipping company concerned, but the fares themselves have been increased by 33½ per cent. It is costing roughly £10 *extra* on each worker's fare from London to North Africa.

*Correspondence.*—Letters are taking 10 to 14 days, sometimes even longer, to reach or come from North Africa. With Christmas in view, some friends may like to bear this in mind.

*Cashing Cheques.*—Banks in North Africa are in most instances “collecting” the amount of a cheque before cashing, and some workers have had to wait from two to seven weeks—the extreme limit being for American cheques.

*Lighting Restrictions.*—Mr. Bocking (Cherchell) says these are “not at all severe,” though Miss Gotelee (Tunis) writes of darkened streets, fewer trams (the last at 8.30 p.m.), and compulsory indoor lighting of A.R.P. blue.

*Rationing.*—Mr. Bocking says “Ration cards may be issued for a few articles a little later on.”

## *Travelling to North Africa in War-time*

SINCE the outbreak of War, when over thirty workers were on furlough, some thirteen have already returned to the Field. Every journey has proved an adventure, and the fortitude of our workers is greatly to be admired.

When it is remembered how tedious, even in normal times, are such preliminaries to a journey as consular and passport formalities, the booking of passages and the handling of luggage, it will be readily understood what an ordeal awaits the would-be traveller in time of war.

From reports received, it would appear that the French trains were either ice-cold, or dreadfully over-heated. They were alike, however, in that they were uniformly overcrowded, and took double the usual time to reach their destination. Thus the Paris-Marseilles part of the journey took 21 hours instead of the customary 11.

Miss Gotelee, the earliest of our war-time travellers, was unable to cross direct to Tunis, so, after a four-days' wait in Marseilles, she took a boat bound for Bône, arriving there during black-out hours. The rail journey from Bône to Tunis, which under normal circumstances is but a 4-hour trip, proved under war conditions an irksome pilgrimage of 17 hours. No wonder Miss Gotelee arrived at length at her destination (in the small hours of the morning) “very dirty, very tired, very hungry, but oh! so glad to be home again.”

Another worker described her 10-day journey to distant Morocco (via Algiers) as “a nightmare, but worth it to be back”!

## *Deputation Work*

Replies to a “questionnaire” sent out recently by the Deputation Secretary to about 120 leaders of Christian work reveal that in most centres friends are making every endeavour to carry on as usual. The week-night meetings, advanced to a slightly earlier hour, are being continued in most places, but naturally the older and frailer folk are not able to venture out of doors when black-out conditions are at their worst. Crossing the streets, and particularly mounting upon or descending from tramcars in some of the big cities, is extremely hazardous. In most places, too, there are friends unavoidably absent on National Service.

Notwithstanding, the first month of deputation work under the changed conditions has been extremely encouraging—certainly not less so than during the corresponding period of last year.

Of course, the car cannot now be used safely at night, so that the missionary films are having a rest “for duration,” and fresh sets of coloured lantern slides are being prepared to take their place.

The films rendered a very important service by creating new openings in a variety of centres, and these can now be followed up with the lantern. Last session's deputation programme proved to be unwisely overcrowded during the winter months, so that if even 70 per cent. of last year's openings are still available, there are busy deputation days—and nights!—ahead.

## *Did You See This?*

IN *The Christian* a week or so back you may have scanned the list of Gifts for the Work of God. The N.A.M., in common with a number of other Societies and Gospel agencies, received a cheering gift from a generous donor who, whilst remaining anonymous, nevertheless revealed a remarkable knowledge of the Word; for the text, wonderfully apposite, that accompanied the donation was from Isaiah 23, 18: “. . . For them that dwell before the Lord, to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing.”

What a practical and sympathetic understanding of the missionaries' domestic needs—particularly those with bairns to clothe and feed!

## Finance

THE many disturbances in domestic, business and church life occasioned by recent events have unquestionably tended to pre-occupy many of the Lord's people who normally are generously mindful of the unvarying needs of those labouring in "the regions beyond." It may perhaps be partly in consequence of this that gifts for the Lord's work were greatly diminished for some weeks, though of late there are gratifying evidences of a genuine revival of concern.

## A Tunisian Bride

THAT a Tunisian bride should submit to be photographed at all is a remarkable circum-



Photo by A Tunisian Bride W. J. Long

stance, but that the photographer should be a *man* surely requires an explanation. It is simple: the bride was a Parisian. She had met a gallant young Tunisian at the Paris Exhibition, and had fallen in love with him and married him.

Two years later, the young couple crossed the Mediterranean, bound for the husband's home in Sousse, Tunisia. We were missionaries there at the time, Mrs. Long and I, and first of all made the husband's acquaintance when he began attending meetings held at the Mission House. Eventually he brought his wife, who was languishing for contact with Europeans, and thus began a very warm friendship. It was on the occasion of one of these weekly visits—the only outings the mother-in-law permitted—that I photographed "Madame C." attired as a native bride.

Our limited space allows no detailed description of the many interesting novelties of costume and ornament, but it may be mentioned that the dress itself is of the richest velvet, embroidered with thread of pure gold.

## Dr. Harvey Farmer

FRIENDS will be grieved to learn that Dr. Farmer, who was recently ordered three months' complete rest, has felt constrained, through persistent ill-health, to retire from active association with the N.A.M.

The faithful and zealous services rendered by Dr. Farmer during his many years of association with the Mission, first as Assistant Secretary, and successively as General Secretary and Representative in America, are too well known to require even a summary here.

We are thankful to know that, despite his weakness, Dr. Farmer is kindly consenting to remain a member of the Council, and to retain the title of Honorary Secretary for America, to which country he hopes shortly to return. Friends will share our earnest desire that, in this capacity, Dr. Farmer may long be spared to serve the Mission.

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### Deputation Secretary's Engagements:

Nov. 15, St. Nicholas Road, Bristol; 16, Burnham-on-Sea; 19-20, Christ Church, Teddington; 22, Sheen Hall, S.W.14; 26, Camrose Avenue Baptist Church, Edgware; 27, Kensal Road Mission, W.10; Dec. 3-4, Retford; 5, Harrogate; 6, Bethesda, South Shields; 7, Eldon Mission, Newcastle-on-Tyne; 9-10, Central Hall, Newcastle; 11, Prudhoe Street, Newcastle; 13, John Clay Street, South Shields; 17, Kensal Road Mission, W.10; 31, Stanmore Chapel, Middlesex.