

Continuing "NORTH AFRICA."

The N.A.M. News Letter



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Photo by

VILLAGE WOMEN OF MOROCCO

[E. J. Long

When it is remembered that six out of seven of the native inhabitants of North Africa live outside the towns altogether, it will be appreciated that concentration upon the urban populations would merely touch the fringe of the spiritual need. Before the War, the motor cars located on a number of Mission Stations extended the radius of missionary itinerations to an extent undreamed-of when the early N.A.M. workers were venturing into the unknown hinterland that lay beyond the Barbary Coast. War-time restrictions imposed upon the movements of our workers have brought their itinerating labours to a stand-still; and until happier days return, such villagers as those pictured above will remain, alas, inaccessible to the Message of Grace.

Our Field Superintendent

THAT our missionaries are having to endure a good deal of privation and hardship during these long months of war goes without saying; but the individual burden varies, and none of our workers carries a load of heavier responsibility than does our beloved Field Superintendent, Mr. T. Warren. Few in the Homeland are in a position to appreciate how exceedingly complex and manifold are the problems and difficulties with which our brother has daily to cope. One of the major tasks is the administration and distribution over a wide area of financial supplies received or available under conditions that are constantly varying, and destined for workers located in places where the purchasing power of the franc varies between extreme limits.

Handicapped by ill-health, hampered by pettifogging restrictions, and continuously held up by the exasperatingly slow postal services of war-time, Mr. Warren is in great and growing need of our unflinching remembrance in prayer. He is undoubtedly GOD's gracious provision for us in a day of unparalleled difficulty; but *let us not leave him to battle alone!*

Missionary Problems: First and Twentieth Centuries

It is characteristic of Mr. Warren that, however great the volume and preoccupation of administrative work, he maintains his masterly series of "Messages to Missionaries." In the current number (No. 12) he deals with the question: "*Can it be the will of GOD that I should stay on in an unproductive field?*"

The question is of such general interest and paramount importance that we print here the earlier part of Mr. Warren's answer:—

"You do not find on the field the same opportunities that you would have at home to speak to large and enthusiastic audiences. You envy those who continually have such opportunities, either at home or in other parts of the field. You are shut up to a humdrum round of limited intelligences, of oyster-like minds, of iron traditions, of flabby wills.

"But do you face anything worse than the early Apostles? We have seen in a previous

study that, from the material point of view, conditions of travel and living are entirely different; but the moral, intellectual, and spiritual problems are very similar.

"The Apostles lived and worked in countries that were, for the most part, under foreign domination. They preached to people who were largely influenced by foreign culture. They, too, were up against linguistic and mentality problems.

"The Jews spoke a colloquial language; their sacred writings were in a literary and—in many ways—dead language. The Apostles had to do with Latin-speaking officials, with Greek-speaking leaders of cultural thought. Were not their problems similar to yours? Yet they made men think; they challenged all classes of men with the Good News of the Kingdom of GOD. That was a wider thing than what we define as The Gospel to-day.

"They won the slaves, but the same messages of the Cross penetrated to the public forums, to the palaces of governors and emperors. If Paul proclaimed himself a 'bond slave of Jesus Christ,' he also gloried in the fact that he was 'an ambassador in chains.'

"Why not take your Bible and read it again to see what it has to say to the men of to-day on the problems of the hour? Go to the Bible as if you were one of the men to whom you are offering it. Read it as if you were one of the cosmopolitan inhabitants of North Africa who is reading it for the first time.

"Take Paul's discourse at Athens as a model. It is an epitome of spiritual philosophy. It teaches biology, theology, sociology and international relationships. You could get from it a whole list of topics which would be of interest to the keen young men of to-day. Surely there are some such around you. Perhaps you have not yet found the right kind of bait for them. Remember what the Lord said to His disciples: 'Every scribe who hath been made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man . . . which bringeth forth out of his treasure *things new and old.*'"

Tulloch Memorial Hospital

IN the course of a Report given on the recent Annual Gift Day at the Tulloch Memorial Hospital, Dr. Anderson remarked

that patients came to the Hospital from remote districts. One reason for the Hospital's popularity, he believed, was its reputation for having done conscientious medical work for over half a century. The prevailing atmosphere of international unrest presented a unique opportunity to medical missions of winning the respect and love of the rank and file, and of achieving, under God's blessing, a work of abiding value.

In furnishing statistics of the year's work (Dec. 1st, 1940, to Dec. 1st, 1941) the Doctor said there had been 10,474 consultations. In the Out-patients Department alone 6,699 dressings had been done. In-patients had numbered 266. In the Theatre 154 operations had been performed; 148 in the Out-patients Department. There had been 26 confinements in the maternity ward. All these figures show an increase on last year's totals.

We would commend to our readers' prayerful remembrance this important branch of missionary service, that the ministry of healing may open avenues of spiritual approach to many a native heart.

Dr. J. A. Liley

WRITING from a troopship, bound for an Eastern destination, Dr. Liley gives us a graphic account of life on board. His cabin-companion was a Christian Scientist, of whom the Doctor humorously remarks: "He seems to be about the best choice that could be made for me, as he is a non-smoker, teetotaler, and 'surrounds himself with good thoughts' to keep off disease! To help in the last item, he gives all a good example by a half-hour's Bible Study before breakfast, but assisted (?) by the Quarterly 'Christian Science Scripture Notes.'"

Apart from his many other opportunities for Christian testimony, the industrious Doctor started two language classes—one of them (for beginners in Arabic) being attended by twelve officers, six Salvationists, and two Unitarians. At the Italian class John's Gospel was the text-book, the Doctor having a quantity of these with him on board!

Whenever and wherever we read of our workers on furlough, they are in the thick of the fray, "buying up the opportunities" and doing valiant service for their Lord.

News from the Field

THE letters that we receive from the field are still few in number; yet, put together, they give a pretty accurate composite picture of "things as they are" to-day. Local conditions vary, some workers enjoying more freedom than others: the distribution of food-stuffs and household commodities is inevitably uneven, the quantities being at best but meagre and the variety very restricted. The suffering of the natives everywhere is pitiful, and, combined with other factors, must burden the sympathetic missionary heart.

We have received a very long and detailed letter from **Mr. and Mrs. Marsh** of Lafayette. From so much that is uniformly interesting it is difficult to make a particular selection, but here are some paragraphs that are representative:—

"You will realize that since the Armistice our position has been rather delicate, and we have been practically cut off from all fellowship with other missionaries, not even being permitted to spend a few days with Mrs. Marsh's sick parents at Tabarouth. However, until September (1941) I was able to obtain petrol for the car, and during the early months of the year paid over 150 visits to the villages with the Gospel. . . . When the new Administrator came he asked me to discontinue the village work, saying this was in our highest interests just then; but promising that I should be allowed to resume the work if conditions improved. For 14 years these villages have regularly had the Gospel, and now GOD is bidding us be quiet while He speaks to the people in 'another tongue'—that of hunger and nakedness. It may be that thus they will be prepared to receive the Saviour.

"This gives us more time to concentrate on work nearer hand. . . . GOD graciously overruled (recently) in what was a very serious situation, involving the whole missionary community in North Africa; and the accusations were finally withdrawn. Our house and hall are now taboo for Europeans, as you can guess; but we have been asked to continue the Gospel meetings in a private house, though with a much-reduced congregation."

Mrs. Marsh adds: "The work among the women and children goes on much as usual. Numbers are good. . . . On Sunday my tiny girls come along: I have a very large class.

They are such little darlings, and look so sweet as they sing action choruses. . . . There are more and more homes open for visiting, but unfortunately the people are very pre-occupied with their needs just now, most being in rags, and some nearly naked. . . . I have been busy in my spare time making little baby garments out of our old clothes and any scrap of material I have by me. I am sure many will die this winter from the cold. Record low temperatures have been prevailing. It is quite impossible to buy material, and wool is so dear. *I have heard of whole families having to stay under the one bed blanket all day, taking it in turns to wear the one ragged garment available, in order to get a little exercise.*"

How greatly the Lord has favoured us in this sheltered land! May we not grow weary in our intercessions, for this is *the only way* in which we can help these poor, needy folk.

Working on her own in native Tangier—at some distance from the Marshan—**Miss Rokeby Robinson** has fared no better than the natives in her quest for food and fuel. Paraffin is exceedingly scarce everywhere, and is the staple fuel of many. But, like other workers, she makes light of her privations and finds wonderful compensations in the work. For days at a time Arabic is the only language she hears or speaks, and she finds that her reward is a growing facility in the presentation of the Gospel message. Miss Robinson has treated over 1,300 patients at her dispensary, and practically every one has heard the Glad Tidings.

Writing from Tangier, **Miss Hubbard** tells us she "still does a bit of work among the people, and at the classes." Recently she was greatly saddened by the callous indifference of both father and mother (Moslems) towards the sufferings of a baby daughter of seven months. Although the father was a wealthy man, and thought nothing of buying half a sheep with which to regale his friends at a sumptuous repast, he grudged the spending of any money whatever on the purchase of milk for his child. She was, in consequence, just starving to death. "I came away," writes Miss Hubbard, "feeling sick about it all: they were so hard and untouchable. Does mother-love exist in a Moslem heart? I have often doubted it, and that day I doubted it still more."

When the greater part of letters from the field is thus taken up with the sorrows of

others, it is evidence enough—were such evidence needed—that our dear missionaries are allowing neither the distraction of a world war nor undue preoccupation over their own privations to make them oblivious of the need around them, or to render them less responsive to the "cry, as of pain."

Miss Low and Miss Bradbury, of Tetuan, tell us they were able to carry on "much as usual" during 1941. Attendances at the dispensary reached the remarkable total of 7,006, and there were 35 midwifery patients—the latter implying that in many instances fresh homes were opened for visiting and Gospel testimony.

Of the natives as a whole Miss Low writes: "Visiting is a difficult part of the work, I feel. The folk are friendly, but it is so hard at times to get a real opportunity to present the Message, and we do need the preparation of the Holy Spirit in our own hearts as well as in theirs."

It is surely *just here* that our prayers can help!

And finally, **Mr. P. Padilla**, of Tangier, sends the following encouraging items:—

"During one of my visits I came across several of the children in the house playing at Sunday Schools. One was acting as teacher, and they all sang hymns and recited texts. It was all overheard by the grown-ups in the house; so that even in their play the little ones are testifying to the Lord Jesus.

"Visiting is being done almost every day of the week, and contact is thus maintained with those who fear to attend the public meeting in times such as these. . . . The two sisters and sons mentioned in my last report (see last number of the NEWS LETTER) continue to come faithfully, and try to bring others."

Homecall of **Miss E. K. Aldridge**

WHILST this issue was actually in the hands of the printer, news was received of the Homecall, after a brief illness, of Miss E. K. Aldridge (formerly of Morocco) in her 85th year.

In expressing our deep sympathy with our late sister's relatives and friends, we would add that fuller particulars will (D.V.) be given in our next NEWS LETTER.