

Continuing "NORTH AFRICA."

The N.A.M. News Letter



OFFICE OF THE NORTH AFRICA MISSION, 34, BISHAM GARDENS, HIGHGATE, LONDON, N. 6

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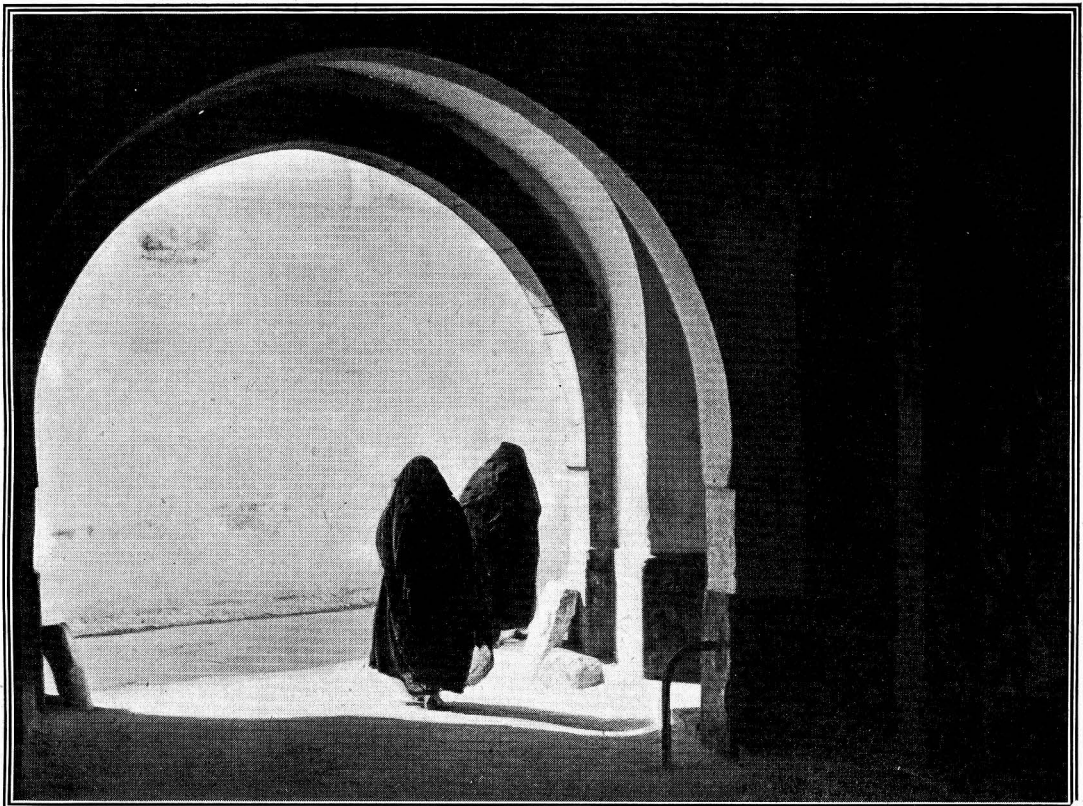


Photo by]

IN A TUNISIAN TOWN

[E.J.L.

Veiled, mysterious figures, emerging from the deep shadows of a vaulted by-way, flitting for a moment through a shaft of sunlight, and then vanishing from view. A little photographic vignette from the Land of Veiled Women. "How quiet and secluded! How remote from the sights and sounds of modern warfare!" Such might seem a reasonable comment upon so thoroughly oriental a scene. As a matter of fact, bombs have been rained down by the R.A.F., night after night, within two or three hundred yards of this very spot! At these Tunisian sea-ports—Bizerta, Tunis, Sousse, Sfax and Gabès—are European believers, native converts, and, most probably, missionaries who either could not or would not leave before the Axis occupation. Please pray very specially for these dear friends of ours during these weeks of supreme need.

“Eben-exer”

AS the year 1942 draws to a close, our concluding note would be one of praise to GOD Who has dealt bountifully with us. “Goodness and mercy” have followed us throughout the year, for it is by the goodness of GOD that all our needs have been met, and it is of His mercy that our friends on the field have been able to maintain their witness during this third year of war.

The activities of some have been limited by restrictions that were almost inevitable in view of the peculiarities of the French situation, but we have reason to be grateful for the large measure of sympathy shown towards our workers by the authorities, by the French people as a whole, and by the natives. Certain of the Pastors of the French Reformed Church stationed in North Africa have been particularly helpful in smoothing out the difficulties experienced in the course of the work, and they have also shown a growing interest in the development of missionary effort among the native population.

The past few weeks have brought a number of our workers within zones of military occupation, but we are thankful that, so far as those in Morocco and Algeria are concerned, there is news that they are safe and well. We are still without news of our workers in Tunisia, but it is just possible that they managed to leave before the Axis forces arrived.

Mr. Norman Pearce, who left Algiers on November 20th, and arrived in this country on December 4th, travelled on the same boat as the English “White Fathers” from Tunis. They informed him that one of their number had called at Mr. Miles’s house to advise him that a special train was leaving for Algiers, but no one was at home. A note was put under the door, but it is not known whether the Mileses and the other British missionaries got away then.

Mr. Pearce told us that all restrictions on missionaries had been removed, and that—in Algeria—they were free to travel anywhere. O.L.C.

Algeria : June, 1940, to November, 1942

AT our invitation, Mr. Norman Pearce has kindly furnished the following account of

conditions in Algeria after the capitulation of France in June, 1940. The removal of such restrictions as Mr. Pearce mentions is a tremendous relief to our workers and a challenge to our faith and prayer; for a new era of opportunity is dawning.

Here, then, is what our friend has written :

“It was not long after the Armistice of June, 1940, before we realised that restrictions of some kind would be imposed upon us and our work. Happily, however, these were less severe for some than for others, which accounts for the wide divergence in the reports published in these bulletins of work carried on at the various stations. To give an example :

“At Cherchell, meetings among Europeans and natives continued for about six months after the collapse of France, even though travelling had by that time become a problem—to develop later, so far as we were concerned, into a thing forbidden.

“Then, in the New Year (1941), we were advised to discontinue our meetings, and were also informed that we were not to go beyond the limits of the *commune*—a radius of some five miles around the station.

“Those who formerly attended our meetings were criticised if seen associating with us. Thus there began a period of enforced inactivity, which lengthened into almost two years.

“Can you imagine our joy at the arrival of the Allied Forces? It was a joy shared by a people who had been held down, for two and a half years, to a life—or rather existence—of hardship and hopelessness. And what shall we say of the spiritual issues involved? It is the opinion of the writer that a new day is dawning in North Africa.

“What, it might be asked, are the immediate effects of the Allied Occupation?

“There is, firstly, a disarming of suspicion created by enemy propaganda—although the *entente cordiale* as we knew it in 1939 may take some little time to re-establish itself. Secondly, and what is perhaps of much greater interest, there is complete freedom of movement for all British missionaries.

“From information to hand at the time of leaving the field—towards the end of November—all the missionaries had received, or were entitled to receive, papers authorising them to travel throughout the whole of Algeria. I myself received papers to this effect as early as November 16th. Some workers had even put their cars into commission, after two years or so ‘in dock.’

“It should here be stated that at no time was there any hostility shown on the part of the native population. On the contrary, many felt keenly the restrictions placed upon us and our work.

“So, with increasing freedom of movement comes added responsibility for reaching those once more accessible. This is just as much your responsibility as ours. Have you seriously considered what your obligations really are? They can be summarised as follows :

Propagating the		Praying
Glorious	by	Giving
Gospel		Going.

“Why not re-read this short article, and ask GOD to show you what He would have you to do?”



GENERAL VIEW OF THE SEA-PORT OF SOUSSE, TUNISIA

Imagine yourself standing upon the roof-top from which this photograph of Sousse was taken, looking out over the native town, with its crenellated walls. On the extreme left is the port, with its docks, where already the Allied Air Forces have dropped a great weight of bombs. The most prominent building in the foreground is the General Post Office. To our left, as we stand on the roof, is the shopping centre of Sousse—where lives our good friend M. Smaggia, a Hebrew Christian greatly needing our prayers during these days of Nazi occupation. Behind us are the railway marshalling yards, already many times bombed. Not far away lives Miss Karen, a Swedish missionary and our former colleague. She, too, will greatly value your prayers just now.

News from Tangier

Dr. G. W. Anderson writes :

“ Recently we have been more than usually busy on the medical side. . . . We have had among our patients quite a sprinkling of men in the Forces. Some have been airmen who have been unfortunate enough to come down on Spanish soil. These have been interned. Work among the large number of Moors who come to us has been appreciated by the patients themselves for the most part, and there is no doubt that it opens up hearts and homes to the Gospel, although we have still to wait for the whole-hearted response that we would like to see.”

One of our Nurses, **Miss Grace Carty**, writes as follows :

“ In a place like Tangier it certainly would be a blessing to have the Gift of Tongues, for at times one feels very helpless not being able to speak. Well, it is said that ‘ actions speak louder than words,’ and we pray that this may often prove the case—so that kindness shown at the Hospital may speak of Him Whom we serve. . . . One gets very discouraged at times at the lack of converts to the Gospel. The people as they listen seem often to be drinking in every word, and are so ready to give assent to what is said ; and yet how hard their hearts are, and how void of understanding they seem—the women especially.

“ Well, the Word is the LORD’s, and it cannot return to Him void. It remains for us to be faithful, through His grace.

“ We have one woman in hospital now who found the Saviour while she was a patient here a few years back. She bears a very bright testimony, by life and lip. I have asked her on several occasions to give a little message to the other women, and she has done so very readily.”

Miss F. Gladwyn, our Dispenser and Anæsthetist, sends us a line in lighter vein :

“ I suppose that if anybody had told me three and a half years ago that our annual drug order from home would not be forthcoming, I should probably have said that the Hospital might as well close down. However, we seem to have made our stock in hand rather elastic, and by supplementing with such things as we are able to obtain locally—at a price—we have been able to carry on without decreasing our number of patients. Medicines are a little less sweet and not so highly coloured, and some things are made according to T.M.H. formulæ instead of B.P., but whatever we have lacked we have never run short of one important ingredient, namely, water ! We have to substitute paper and rag for lint and bandages in many cases. We could wish that soap were a little more plentiful, but doubtless the natives do not miss this commodity as much as we do.

“ There was certainly a time last spring when I thought I might have to learn the art of using a policeman’s truncheon, owing to the shortage of anæsthetic, but fortunately a supply of chloroform and ether arrived when we were down to our last ounce ; so that it was not necessary after all to resort to the more drastic method of making our patients unconscious. I hope that the drugs which have been on order since May, 1941, will eventually turn up one day. Meanwhile, our urgent needs seem to be met, if not from the usual source ; and we trust it will be so as long as we are needed here.

“ The shortage of paraffin oil has been very hard on us, as our steriliser is run with paraffin. Since we have been unable to get any paraffin, the French Hospital has kindly sterilised our things for us in their electric steriliser. I used the last of our stock for making up the developer and fixer for the X-ray tanks the other day, but I hope we shall be able to get more before they need replenishing again.”

Here is need, dear friends, for definite, specific prayer.

Finally, there come from Tangier these lines from **Miss Grace Lincoln** :

" Here in Tangier we have been spared the horrors of warfare, thank God. He is very gracious to us, and we have not lacked, despite the difficulties of buying in every direction. But the native population is suffering terribly. . . .

" On November 5th we held the second anniversary celebrations of the little English school. The Hall was nearly full, and the little people entertained the friends who came with songs and recitations, as well as musical drill. At the close of the gathering the children themselves engaged in a simple prayer. . . . Will you please ask prayer for the 15 little pupils, the majority of whom have no Christian influence at home? It is a great opportunity.

" The Thursday afternoon women's class is encouraging these days. From 12 to 16 usually come, and all seem to be interested in the Word. They listen intently; but one longs to see evidence of real heart-yearning for Christ.

" The Sunday Schools—French in the morning and Arabic in the afternoon—seem rather difficult just now, especially the French one. Many are fearful of coming. However, though small, the little gatherings have been greatly appreciated."

From the "Home Front"

Mrs. J. A. Liley has concluded 12 weeks of most encouraging deputation work in Northern Ireland, and is taking meetings during January and February in the London Area before tackling a Scottish programme.

It requires very little imagination to appreciate the strain of deputation work in such times as these. "Black-out" travel in one's native town is trying enough: in strange places it can be something of a nightmare! Mrs. Liley is doing a splendid work, and here again we can greatly help by our prayers.

Miss Mabel Jones, in writing from North Wales, where she is working with **Miss Ada Clack** among the Forces, says :

" We are so happy in this work among the young folk of the Forces. The Christians among them do so appreciate the fellowship they find here and in the Gospel Hut. Letters are beginning to come in from those who have had to leave this district, and also from grateful parents. This is very cheering.

" Some of the boys have even sent gifts towards housekeeping, which, coming out of their pay, means real self-denial. . . .

" An Air Force corporal and the Army Scripture Reader dropped in on Wednesday evening. Last week we counted 65 callers. Most of them had at least a cup of tea, some a snack, whilst others stayed

for tea or supper. We see the Lord stretching out our rations of tea, sugar, meat, fats, etc., and we just say: 'Why marvel ye at these things? Is not Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever?'"

Candour about Finance

ONE of our missionaries who wrote to me recently said that a great friend of the N.A.M. had expressed surprise that there is a shortage of funds, and added, "I never can understand why the friends of the N.A.M. are kept in the dark about supplies, or how they expect us to pray or give if we have no idea of the need. I am too realistic to appreciate the point of view."

Having donned the metaphorical "white sheet," I now make bold to state that our needs for 1943 are approximately £8,000, towards which a generous friend of the Mission has contributed the sum of £2,000, the use of which has to be spread over the year.

We are thankful to say that our workers have received their normal pre-war allowance for 1942. The higher cost of living warranted an increase in the allowances, but unfortunately our funds would not admit of this.

A subscriber can help the Mission in a two-fold way by entering into a covenant to pay his subscription annually for a period of seven years (or for the duration of his life if less). The Mission not only benefits by his subscription, but can recover year by year the income-tax which the subscriber has paid on the amount of his subscription.

OSWALD L. CARNEGIE.

Congratulations

We express our congratulations and our warmest good wishes to **Miss Margaret Russell** and **Mr. Norman Pearce** on the occasion of their marriage—taking place at Brook Lane Hall, Bromley, Kent, on the very day that this NEWS LETTER is being compiled, January 2nd.

Most earnestly do we pray that the Lord's richest blessing may rest upon our friends as, in GOD'S time, the way opens up for them to work for Him in Moslem North Africa.

PRELIMINARY NOTICE : N.A.M. Spring Meetings to be held (D.V.) in the Court Room, Caxton Hall, S.W. 1, on May 27th, at 3.30 and 5.30 p.m.