

Continuing "NORTH AFRICA"

The N.A.M. News Letter



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KAIROUAN "THE HOLY" : STILL UNOCCUPIED.

In our Daily Prayer Notes we continue, alas, to describe a number of Stations as "Temporarily Unoccupied." In Tunisia, there are Kairouan, Sfax, Gabes, Gafsa, Sousse and Bizerta; in Algeria, Tebessa, Oran and Bone; in Morocco, Taza and Guercif. All of these have lost their N.A.M. workers during the past twenty years. Still, let us not look upon these centres as cemeteries where dead hopes lie buried, but as harvest fields that have been liberally sown with Living Seed. Let us continue to water that Seed with our prayers. "See how the farmer waits for the precious crop of the land, biding his time patiently till he gets the autumn and the spring rains" (Jas. 5, 7: Moffatt). Let us pray for those rains—and for harvester-recruits who shall yet thrust in the reaping sickle!

European Work at Tunis.

There is much cause for encouragement and praise to God for evidences of definite progress in the work at "Bethesda" during the past months. In addition to a numerical increase, the spiritual growth of several members is manifest in effective personal witness.

A Sunday afternoon youth meeting has been commenced in our home with the object of encouraging the young believers into wider service and introducing the Gospel to the unsaved in an informal atmosphere. These meetings have been signally blessed and there is a consciousness of a work of grace going on in some hearts. We are now twenty in number and interest is still growing. Most of these young people remain for the evening Gospel Service, which is also attended by a number of Jewish 'teen-agers.

There is encouragement, too, in the work of the Sunday School under the leadership of Miss Gotelee, who also holds children's classes outside the city as well as a weekly adult Bible class in the home of one of our Italian members.

The door has just opened for one of our young men, who has been associated with the work at "Bethesda" from childhood, to use his technical knowledge entirely in the Lord's work. He has been invited to take the responsibility of a printing establishment attached to a Bible School in Switzerland; where he will have facilities for spending a useful proportion of his time studying in the school. He, and others in the assembly, who are obviously being prepared by the Lord for a wider sphere of service, need our united prayers.

Blessing received calls for thanksgiving, but we are challenged to pray more earnestly as we see Sunday School and children's class members resisting the call they have heard so often, and Jewish young people, who come regularly to the meetings, holding out against the Holy Spirit's pleadings in face of the persecution which certainly awaits them if they surrender. (From Mr. and Mrs. P. J. Patching)

A Desert Journey in Algeria.

In view of his impending departure from Eastern Algeria, Mr. Frank Ewing decided to visit some of the southern oases with supplies of Scriptures and other literature.

In Touggourt there is a resident missionary, Mr. Watson; so Mr. Ewing had not thought of doing any colportage there: but Mr. Watson wished him to do so, in order that the inhabitants might learn that he was not the only man who believed and did as he did! A number of Scriptures in French, Arabic and Hebrew were sold from a stand in the market-place.

The journey from Touggourt to Ouargla afforded an opportunity of presenting the Gospel message to a Swiss Catholic teacher who seemed to be absolutely ignorant of it.

Ghardaia, a well-known Mozabite town, was reached by a lorry leaving Ouargla at 2.35 a.m.—a long and wearisome journey, nothing but miles of uninteresting desert. The town was reached soon after mid-day. In the afternoon Mr. Ewing was at work trying to convince a Jew that Christ was the end of the Law and the only Saviour of mankind. He was able to leave with him a copy of "God's Way of Salvation" in Hebrew. The next day brought many opportunities of conversations with Jews. Mr. Ewing was told that some 600 had recently left for Palestine, their expenses having been paid by rich American Jews ". . . so we are seeing before our eyes the fulfilment of prophecy. The Lord is gathering His people in the Promised Land". One young Jew with whom Mr. Ewing had a long discussion bought the Gospels of Matthew, Luke, John, the Acts and the Epistle to the Hebrews. In addition to selling to Jews and Arabs, five Bibles were sold to French people

Important Note.—During the summer months Mr. and Mrs. Ewing and their daughters have been occupying "Villa Gordon", the Cherchell residence of Mr. and Mrs. Norman Pearce, who are at home on furlough—a furlough that has been prolonged a little on account of a temporary set-back in Mrs. Pearce's health.

Certain factors and circumstances that we have not space to allude to here have led the Council to recommend that Mr. and Mrs. Ewing stay on at Cherchell, and that Mr. and Mrs. Pearce proceed later in the year to Tripoli, further to reinforce that important and strategic centre. All these friends will greatly value our readers' prayers as they seek to adjust themselves to what must prove, for each of the two households, a greatly-changed environment and type of work.

“God brought him : I shall keep him !”

She was a lovely girl. We were always glad when she came to the class, for her quiet influence made itself felt. She was very tall, with eyes that “talked” and told us things she was too shy to say to us. We translate her name from Arabic to English by the word “Time”. She was the only child of a widowed mother, whom we will call “Ma”. Mother and daughter meant so much to one another. What a joy it was to us when we knew that Time had accepted the Saviour. One day we were alone with her on the beach. We had been talking about all sorts of things, and she said, “Talk to me”. “But we’ve been talking”, we replied. “I don’t mean that; *talk* to me.” And we understood. She wanted us to talk to her about the things of God.

It was during the war. Food was short and medicine scarce, and this girl, who had been strong and healthy, developed tuberculosis. Our hearts ached to see her, and we could do so little to help. Her visits to the Mission Station became less and less frequent, until they ceased altogether. We visited her all we could, and kept her supplied with portions of God’s Word. These she tucked under her pillow. As she grew weaker we would sit and read with her and often sing for a long time, knowing she loved this.

Time said to us one day, “I’ve talked to my mother about these things. I want her to think as I do.” It was just before we left for furlough, after over seven and a half years out here, that the end came. Throughout the previous visit she had not spoken a word, but just listened and looked at us with those eyes of hers. She was very weak and we did not feel we could read with her; but we prayed. Just one word passed her lips, and that was a fervent “Amen”. We knew that she had followed and that she had understood the pressure of our hand as in prayer we had repeated, “Though I pass through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil.”

A few hours later the news was brought to us. “Time” had gone into the Presence of her Saviour. The courtyard of the house was filled with classes of Moslem boys chanting the Koran. The distracted mother tore her face in true oriental fashion. A new earthenware dish was smashed to smithereens to drive out the demons. “Time” was buried with all the ritual of a Moslem funeral, like many another in this land; but we expect to meet her again in the Presence of the One Who loved her and died for all the Moslem women and girls of North Africa.

The mother never forgot the little kindnesses we had been able to show her daughter; and when, after our furlough, we returned to see her, all Time’s books and the woolly second-hand garments we had taken to her were brought out carefully wrapped up to be given back to us!

“I do want my mother to think as I do!” This has been an added incentive to visit her. How often we were told, “Ma is not in; she’s gone to the cemetery”. She spent hours at the grave of her only daughter, and it seemed as though she would never be comforted. There was no one to live for.

But now all is different! When last we visited her there was someone else lying in the place that had been “Time’s” last resting-place. He was lifting up his

voice to be taken notice of—a little baby boy! The proud mother picked him up at once and put him into our arms so that we could go on giving him his bottle while she told us his story. She had been visiting a friend, when a woman came in whom she had not met before. They passed the time of day together. Then about two months ago she arrived at Ma’s house asking for her. After the usual salutations she drew out a little bundle she was carrying. “Here is a son to take the place of your daughter, Time. If you don’t want him, you’ll find someone else who will take him.” And off she went.

“God brought him. I shall keep him till death parts us,” said Ma.

Would you like to join with us in praying that the little one whom “God brought” may be used by Him to bring about the fulfilment of Time’s earnest desire: “I want my Mother to think as I do”? (From the Misses I. Dew and G. Sharpe, Rabat.)

Buying up the Opportunities in Algeria.

Miss Margaret Ross has sent a copy of her diary which bears witness to a busy life affording many opportunities for individual witness. A number of little groups of people come for spiritual fellowship and help, and several nationalities are thus reached. Scripture portions are given to tradesmen and others.

One very hot day they had three children of the third generation of Djemaa Sahridj Christians. They came to spend the day. Miss Ross has also been helping in the Young People’s Camp of the Methodist Church. Another time a native family of five paid them a visit and enjoyed singing hymns in French, Arabic, and Kabyle. They finished up in English by singing, “Stand up for Jesus”, which they had learned from British Service men.

It will be seen that Miss Ross and her mother keep “open house” for all and sundry. Many native families take advantage of that and always hear something of the Word of God. Christian friends also find a welcome and prayer fellowship. Surely our friends know what it is to spend and be spent for God and for those He loves.

Note.—Miss Ross was joined in early October by Miss Madge Hutchinson. We trust that the latter’s experience in Tangier and Paris will go far towards making her immediately useful as a companion in a great centre that abounds in spiritual opportunities.

Three Camps.

(1) The first was organized by fellow-missionaries and was intended for young married people—with a few exceptions as to age or status. Mothers with children were welcomed, and some fathers managed to join us too. Provision was made for the children to be cared for so as to allow the parents to attend a maximum number of meetings, study groups or open discussions.

Personally, I found the study on "The Upper Room" a wonderful blessing, and I believe others had a similar joy as they listened to it. My wife was present during the whole fortnight, whilst I was excused the first week in view of the following camps and some matters which did not leave me very free.

(2) A Camp for Kabyle boys, most of whom were already in touch with Mission Stations. This Camp was a strenuous one. I had to be up at 4.45 a.m. to beat the boys to the shower-bath! (They rose at 5 a.m.)

Two Bible Studies each day—one on "The Victories of the Old Testament", the other on "The Miracles of the New Testament" (in Kabyle)—were my responsibility. Not the only one, for we had courses on Manual Instruction (an hour and a half) and my share of this was to teach the "microbes" (aged six to nine) the elements of cardboard modelling. The older boys did woodwork and the seniors helped Mr. Smith to keep his car in order, etc. A series of lectures on Hygiene—"You," "Your Home," "Your Village"—was not without interest and object.

In the afternoons, a welcome *siesta* was followed by two hours given to games—especially Baseball, Volley Ball, or Football. The swimming pool was always a great attraction. Each evening there was a Camp Fire, Games, or "Tableaux Vivants".

It is perhaps difficult to measure or tabulate results, but the effort was not without its recompense. That closing evening was most impressive. Using a striking parable—Jesus the Light of the World, represented by a big candle—each one willing to seek this light from the One Source was invited to light and carry away a small candle.

(3) I had been invited to act as Guide and Chaplain to thirty-two Senior Girl Guides in a twelve-day trek through the Djurdjura Mountains. We generally managed to do our trekking during the early hours of the day. Three o'clock was the usual hour for rising; at times it was earlier still! Following forest tracks, with magnificent cedars and troops of monkeys, we climbed to the highest peaks; or, to vary the programme, descended clefts some two hundred feet deep, at the bottom of which snow can *always* be found.

Quiet meetings, around a camp fire, or under the full moon, gave us time for study and for meditation.

At the close of our trek, all the different companies met and compared notes in a closing Camp near Algiers, for although my section had been limited to "climbers", other sections had been travelling throughout Kabylia—380 girls all told.

In reviewing the Camps with one of the leaders, we dared to believe that ten of the young people will return to this country for service—missionary, nursing,

social service, etc. Some, we know, are already concerned about the immense needs they discovered. This was a worth-while effort, with a fine spirit shown all through. The leader of the "Djurdjura" girls was a grand-daughter of Monsieur Th. Hocart, one of our former missionaries.

What shall the harvest be ?

(From Mr. S. Arthur, Azazza, Algeria.)

Our Annual Meetings.

The Valedictory Meetings in September were the "high spot" of a memorable month. Prayer was abundantly answered. Numbers were excellent, and every one of the missionary messages (seven in the afternoon and five in the evening—twelve speakers in all) was a model of conciseness. It came straight from the heart, and was delivered with real power. Seldom can the Rev. Alan Redpath have been more helpful. The LORD spoke to many in that searching yet inspiring evening message.

A Nursing Recruit.

On the platform with us at that farewell gathering was Miss Winifred Lloyd—a nursing sister with high professional qualifications who has been Senior Midwife at both London and Liverpool Hospitals. Miss Lloyd is intimately known to Highgate friends of the N.A.M., and we rejoice that the LORD has led her to devote the next twelvemonth to help meet the urgent need at the Tulloch Memorial Hospital. Should the LORD make it clear that Tangier is to be the sphere of more permanent service, we are sure that He will find in our sister one who is quite ready to do His will.

Mrs. Harvey Farmer.

We are happy to report that Mrs. Harvey Farmer continues to make steady progress towards recovery. The Editor received a cheering letter from her early in October, and Mrs. Farmer assures us in the kindest terms of her abiding interest in the work of the North Africa Mission.

During these days of recuperation and readjustment when, for a time at least, the sense of loss will grow, rather than diminish, our sister will be much in our thoughts and prayers.