

Continuing "NORTH AFRICA"

# The N.A.M. News Letter



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Photo by]

[E. J. L.

## A Little Maiden of the "Troglodyte" (Cave-dwellers) Region of Southern Tunisia

The Matmata region in Southern Tunisia, with its interesting and picturesque "cave-dwellers" is seldom visited by the missionary. It is off the main Tunis-Sfax-Gabès highway, and approached by a tortuous, rough-surfaced road. The evangelisation of these out-of-the-way elements of the native population can only be regular and effective when we have more men, and more cars, available.

## A Letter from the Tangier Hospital

Dear Friends of the Tulloch Memorial Hospital,

We want to thank you all for the continued support in prayer and gifts which you have given us in the past year. It is very encouraging to know how many folk have the interests of this work both in their hearts and on their prayer lists. Special thanks must be made to the friends of the Worthing Working Party, who so kindly provided, as in past years, the bulk of good things which stocked our Christmas parcels. We are glad too, to hear from several groups of interested friends in America, who have written and sent bandages, and we do thank these helpers on the other side of the Atlantic. A steady flow of parcels containing white rag for hospital dressings has kept up throughout the year, and we are most grateful for this. If you have not received a personal letter, please accept our thanks now.

Another Christmas has gone by and thanks to a gift from the Ethiopian girls at Clarendon School, Abergele, we were able to have a hospital party and presents. After the party held in the Hospital wards at which some 125 people were present there were lantern slides and carols, and many heard the Christmas message for the first time.

Now that we are well into the new year, we look back with praise for what we have been able to do in His Name during 1951. Especially are we thankful for the *continued freedom to preach the Gospel* and to distribute literature.

Attendances in out-patients in 1951 have been about 25,000. In-patients numbered 400 . . . . of these we believe that 3 or 4 have definitely received Jesus Christ as their Saviour. One of these is Z—, the girl with the T.B. spine, who has been in the women's ward for just over a year. Many of you have prayed for her, and it was a joy to see her smiling face and ready welcome whenever one went in, despite the fact that for many months she had to lie flat, in a plaster bed. In January we took her home to her village. She still has to wear a plaster jacket but is very much better. The ward seems very lonely without her. Please pray that she may be kept a true witness in her home. She is, of course, the only Christian there, and as the village is a military zone of Spanish Morocco it is not easy for us to go and visit her. But she has heard much and we believe that the Lord Jesus will be with her, and through her will be able to reach others there.

T.B. WARD. On January 17th, 1952, we started admitting T.B. patients—only two at first. They are in one of the two small private patients rooms in the old hospital, which have

not been used for some time. This is a preliminary to the new T.B. Ward which we are still hoping to build, but so far have not been able to start. As well as a substantial sum in hand towards the building, through the generosity of many friends we have collected most of what we need for Ward equipment—sheets, blankets, etc. Staff also is being provided, and we hope that when the winter rains are passed we shall be able to build. The two patients we have at present are young women, both fairly severely attacked with the disease.

One of them is the wife of the native Christian ward assistant in the men's ward, and although she has never made profession of conversion she is very interested in the Gospel and we are praying much for her and her companion, another very sweet and receptive girl called R—.

THE TRAINING OF NATIVE NURSES. This started on January 21st, 1952, and again in a small way with three native Christian girls. Dr. Janet, Mrs. Kent and Miss Roberts are responsible for the teaching which is being done in English. Please pray that these 'students' may have grace to continue. F—, from Arzila, you already know, as she has been working in the hospital for over a year now. D— comes from French Morocco and was converted there through the American missionaries of the Gospel Missionary Union. H—, the third, is a Tangier girl converted through Miss Edmunds, an independent missionary who has worked in Tangier for many years. They are all three keen Christians, and we do thank God for sending them to us, and pray that they may be a great blessing to their own people.

MISS BENTE ANDERSEN, from Denmark, joined the staff in October. She is helping in the Midwifery department, and in addition to having lessons with Mr. Bocking is attending the Arabic course at the Lycée Français in Tangier. Her knowledge of French is a great help both to herself in learning Arabic, and to the Hospital.

A long-standing double need has been supplied recently in the form of a *drying-room* for laundry and a *hot water supply* for the wards and theatre. To date, both these very helpful facilities are working well.

Thanks are due to Mr. Foster a missionary of the Temara mission who, while detained some weeks in Tangier with 'visa trouble', has employed his time in repairing breakages and doing a lot of much-needed maintenance work for the hospital. Also to Dr. Huffman, who gives an hour a week to our "Skin Clinic" at the Hospital. His specialist knowledge in skin diseases has been much appreciated.



*In this little group, photographed on the Mission Compound at Tangier, are Miss N. Chambers (central figure) and Miss C. Roberts (in uniform).*

## NEWS FROM HOSPITAL DEPARTMENTS

**OUTPATIENTS.** Miss Tridgell writes :—

Although we are in a land where Islam holds sway, we have the wonderful opportunity of being able to preach to a company of 100 or more people in our Dispensary on several mornings each week.

These people come from far and near. Sometimes they come once only, and sometimes again. Some come in great physical need. T.B. in its many forms takes a great toll of life here, children and young people being its main victims. We get many cases of eye diseases, sores and ulcers, often requiring prolonged treatment. Others come with minor ailments, requiring little medical attention; but all come with a great spiritual need. Blinded by the false doctrine in which they have been brought up, they have never seen Jesus the Son of God.

The door of opportunity is open now, but we do not know for how long. Pray with us that the Word may go forth in mighty Holy Ghost power, and that our lives may reveal the love of Jesus as we minister in His Name to these men, women and children, that they may be brought out of darkness into His marvellous Light.

**THE WOMEN'S WARD.** Miss Chambers writes :—

Come with me to the women's ward to-night as we gather for our usual evening service, and I think that you will enjoy it; for even though you may not understand Arabic, you can at least hum with us the familiar tunes as we sing the well-known hymns, and afterwards you will be able to think of us each evening and pray for us in a new way.

Across the garden, through the door opening into the hospital and up the stairs; and here we are in the ward. That word you hear the women use means 'Welcome.' An encouraging beginning, don't you think, to know that we are wanted?

Now let's begin. Where shall we start to-night? Yes, S., you want Number 6 in the hymn book (that is 'Glory to His Name'). You all know this one very well, so everybody sing who can. Good, now next choice. No. 19 ('In tenderness He sought me'). Dear me, they will hardly let the last note die away before they are ready with another! That patient over there wants us to sing a new one that we have been teaching them this past week, so we had better have it. In English we know it as 'There's not a Friend like the Lowly Jesus'. They do like it and just you listen as we come to the refrain 'No, not one.' They seem to put all their energies into it. By the way, I wish you could hear the children singing it in School on Sunday: I think they must hear it right across the road!

Another new chorus we have been teaching them this week is 'I know whom I have believed'; so let us sing it together now. They seem to like the music of it as well as the words!

We usually follow the singing with a message, and you will notice that the shutting of the organ is the signal for quietness and the opening of God's Book.

To-night I am going to speak to them from the text which declares: "When I see the blood I will pass over you", and you will be able to watch their various expressions as I speak. They are listening very well to-night, and these occasional remarks that you hear just mean that

they are following what I say. I am going to conclude the message with the text "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission" and then leave them until to-morrow.

The women are now saying "Thank you for coming over. God's words are good words." We must leave them now, but you know I often wonder what their innermost feelings must be as day by day they hear this Message repeated to them. The Word has been given, the seed sown, and once again we must pray for God to give the increase.

Will you ask the Lord to cause His glorious light to shine in these darkened hearts, so bound by all that Islam means, and ask too, for the writer of this particular bit of news that, as she works in or out of the hospital amongst these people, her lips may always 'Be filled with messages from Him.'

THE MEN'S WARD. Dr. St. John writes :-

To give you an idea of the patients that we get into the ward, let us have a look at those who are occupying the beds just now.

*Bed No. 1.* M—, aged 21. An educated, well read man and a fanatical Moslem. He is a great arguer and has a lot of influence among the men. Since he has been in the ward, the atmosphere has been definitely difficult as far as the preaching of the Gospel is concerned. He prays on his mat on the floor by his bed with his face towards Mecca several times a day. He has T.B. in one lung.

*Bed No. 2.* H—, aged 18. He can read, but has never read anything but the Koran before coming to hospital. Now he has read through the gospels. At one time he seemed most responsive and we thought that he believed, but M—, in Bed 1, has had a lot of influence on him, and now he seems to have gone back. He has T.B. in both lungs.

*Bed No. 3 (a cot).* A—, aged 3. He fell on a broken bottle and cut his face open. He takes no part in the discussions (possibly due to the 12 stitches round his mouth!)

*Bed No. 4.* H—, aged 40. His home is in the Sahara desert beyond the Atlas mountains, and he has come to Tangier to live now. He is very grateful for his operation and listens sympathetically to the Gospel at the evening ward services.

*Bed No. 5.* H—, aged 18. He lives in Tangier and had been in pain for a year with a stone in his kidney. He, too, is very grateful for his operation, at which we were able to remove the stone. He can read and seems interested in the messages.

*Bed No. 6.* A—, aged 60. A man from the Riff country. He cannot read and has osteomyelitis of the tibia.

*Bed No. 7.* M—, aged 50. The Fakih or Imam of the second largest mosque in the town, where he preaches the sermon every Friday. He was very nervous before his operation, and joined heartily when we prayed for him in the theatre. He is friendly and listens attentively.

*Bed No. 8.* The Haj (who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca, and is thus much respected by other Moslems), aged 70. He comes from Larache, and has had a cataract operation and is very grateful that, after a long period of blindness, he can now see.

So we come to the end, and hope that now perhaps you can have a better idea of our work here. As we hear news from Egypt of a Mission hospital being closed and missionary work curtailed and stopped, we know that it may easily come to us too—for the Moslem world is full of unrest and Morocco is no exception. Pray for us that we may redeem the time and buy up the opportunities, for the days are short; but praise God with us that the door is still open, although we know not for how long.

With greetings from us all on the staff here and again many thanks for your loving upholding in prayer.

Yours in His Service,

F. A. R. St John.

NOTE. Friends may like to be reminded that the excellent booklet SET ON A HILL, describing the work of the Hospital, may be obtained (for One Shilling, post free) either from Mr. Harold St. John, Clarendon, Abergele, N. Wales, or from the N.A.M., 34, Bisham Gardens, Highgate, London, N.6.

## Fruit in Morocco

One of our big girls had been prayed for during the early months of last year, and as the year wore on she was more and more laid on our hearts. We believed she would be the trophy of grace for 1951 as there had been no other, to our knowledge. During the last few months we felt that she might have yielded to the Lord, but we had no evidence. On almost the last Friday of the year, B—, who does the watching during the prayer-time, saw that this girl was praying on her own. On the very last Sunday of the year she said something in the meeting that made us sure the great transaction had taken place, but we were waiting for the definite confession of faith. It came to the last day of the old year, and apparently there was no chance of seeing her again until it was out; but the Lord was only trying our faith, for during the morning she sent someone to borrow a hymn book and brought it back herself in the afternoon when all the others were out. What a lovely

opportunity for a talk! She then told us that she had accepted the Lord as her Saviour, and how our hearts rejoiced at the knowledge of definite fruit that year, and how we praise our Heavenly Father for His great faithfulness.

One of the other older girls, for whom we so badly needed a Christian husband, became engaged in January, and her sister, only eighteen months younger, has already been asked for. How sad that these dear girls cannot have "helps meet for them." Pray that they may not be entirely kept in, but may be allowed to continue coming here for spiritual help and instruction.

Another big girl, the one with evil home influences, has been very difficult lately, and recently sent a message that she was not coming any more. We believe the Lord will deal with her and bring her back to her classes. Will you pray especially for her? How much she needs keeping power!

—From Miss Irene Dew.



Mr. & Mrs. Stanley R. Smurthwaite.

## New Workers for Spanish Morocco

At a time when the news from Tunisia is gravely disturbing and a variety of other considerations—particularly this long period of severe financial testing—might suggest to some minds the need for extreme caution, if not retrenchment, the Council of the North Africa Mission feels led to give evidence of its reliance upon the unfailing faithfulness of God by sending out two new workers to the Field.

Mr. and Mrs. Stanley R. Smurthwaite first made application to the N.A.M. in the summer of 1950. They had just concluded their period at All Nations Bible College and Redcliffe Missionary Training College respectively. Both had been in fellowship at St. James's Church, Worthing—a spiritual, missionary-hearted centre with which several of our workers have been associated in past years.

It is noteworthy that our brother and sister felt called of God to offer themselves for service in Spanish Morocco, an area of our Mission Field in which we have had no resident man worker for over fifty years.

Our friends' departure for the Field was delayed by two factors. In the first place, they had had but little experience of a foreign language and the Council felt it wise that they should study Spanish in the homeland and give evidence of reasonable linguistic ability. To this condition they cheerfully submitted—as they did later to the further stipulation that they should pray in their outfit and passage money, as well as funds sufficient for six months' support.

A special Vaedictory Meeting was held for Mr. and Mrs. Smurthwaite at St. James's Church on March 13th, and they left for the Field on April 2nd.

There will doubtless be initial problems associated with suitable accommodation and further language study, but we are confident that the Lord, Who has undertaken hitherto, will make every needful provision. We warmly commend to our readers' prayers these new recruits who have gone to reinforce a strategic position in our field of operations.

## Seed-time in Kabylia

As is usual in the mountain district, the "winter" has suddenly given way to "summer," for between the two there is rarely any appreciable transition, although, for the sake of distinction, we might call the present summer weather "spring," and the super-heated period between July 15 and September 15 (when the temperature reaches 117 in the shade) "summer". The winter has been particularly severe this year, but the sun is now back in its African strength, and the mountain torrents are roaring hard and carrying tons of water towards the sea.

With the fine weather, men are going to market in full force, for the ground is about ready for spring ploughing and they must buy seed and also bullocks for this ploughing, as well as renew their primitive ploughs and Biblical yokes. So we have set apart these days for Colportage in the markets. Three days this week have been so spent, leaving all the less urgent sedentary jobs for the rainy days or the torrid days.

(1) The first market visited—the usual round of the market, stalls and customers, with results little out of the ordinary. Thirty-one copies of the Scriptures were sold, plus the gift or the sale of a considerable number of tracts, leaflets, etc., for, in true Biblical fashion, even in Colportage, one must add the "baraka"

(blessing), which, in a Kabyle market, could equally be translated by "good measure" (corn), "pressed down" (figs) "running over" (oil), or the extra book added free of charge!

(2) A centre with lots of schools all around, and scholars and parents with an open mind. The result was that eighty-four Gospels in French were sold, mainly to boys, plus nine bigger books to their parents. A talk with a member of the J.E.C. (Catholic Students' Youth Movement) was most interesting. Here was a young man of twenty from Brittany, doing his military service in Algeria, who reads his Bible daily, and gave me the assurance that his feet were being kept in the Way. A second man reminded me of a recent meeting at T—, in Lorraine.

(3) A market right in the valley, about which I wrote a short article some years ago. That mid-day climb back to the road, with an elevation of more than 1,600 feet in an hour was hot, and I had a cool down before setting off to cross some stretches of mountain road where snow was still filling the ditches. All that to dispose of seven copies of the Scriptures! Was it worth while? It must have been if it was in His plan for the day.

—From Mr. S. Arthur.

## Tidings from Libya

On February 22nd we re-started the girls' sewing classes in faith, believing that help would soon be forthcoming. It came in a different manner from what we had expected, for a young Christian woman, recently come to Tripoli with her husband who is in business here, offered to give us a hand. We have one class on Tuesday afternoons and the other on Thursday mornings.

Our need for a doctor has been temporarily met by one of the British Army doctors who very kindly comes to help us by holding a clinic every Wednesday afternoon. However, he is due to be released from the Army in August and may leave the territory at any time. Hence the urgency for our own missionary doctor. How eagerly our native friends are waiting for him to come!

We saw an example of how some of the other parts of Libya could be opened to the Gospel through medical work while we were on holiday. We stayed in a little mountain town on the fringe of a vast mountain region of some 130,000 people, mostly Moslems, who are without a hospital. The United Nations may do something to meet this need, but how grand it would be if the missionaries could step in first. Quite a large proportion of the inhabitants of the town where we stayed live in caves, and we were offered a cave rent free, and also free

wood and fruit, if we could stay and give them medicine!

Please pray especially for our house-boy, B—, and our faithful helper, M—. They are so continually under the sound of the Gospel, and yet, as far as we know, they are still Moslems. S—, who was Aisha's neighbour, comes to us regularly to read in Arabic and English. Pray also for him.

—From Mr. and Mrs. Norman Pearce.

## Marriage of Miss Madge Hutchinson

We are happy to announce the marriage, on April 4th, at Algiers, of our missionary Miss Madge Hutchinson to Mr. Fred Perkins, of the Brethren, who is labouring for the Lord in Algeria.

Although this alliance means that our sister will be leaving the ranks of the N.A.M., it is cheering to know that another missionary home is being set up, the influence of which is bound to tell for Christ amidst its Moslem environment. With our affectionate congratulations we send to our sister and her husband assurance of regular remembrance in prayer.

## Birth

On March 9th, 1952, to the Rev. and Mrs. R. I. Brown, of rue Es-Sahabi, Kairouan, Tunisia, a daughter—Carolyn Esther.

To the dear parents, and to little Christine and Christopher who have suddenly acquired so charming a wee playfellow, we offer our affectionate congratulations.

## F.F.M. "Slavanka" Conference

**The Committee of the Fellowship of Faith for the Moslems has very regretfully decided that for various reasons it will not be possible to hold the usual Conference at Slavanka this year. As an alternative, however, arrangements have been made for two days of meetings at the Caxton Hall, Westminster, London, on July 3rd and 4th. There will be sessions from 11 to 12-30, 3 to 4-30, and 6 to 7-30, under the leadership of the Chairman, the Secretary, and other members. We shall be most grateful if friends in the London area will kindly book these dates and endeavour to attend as many of the gatherings as possible.**