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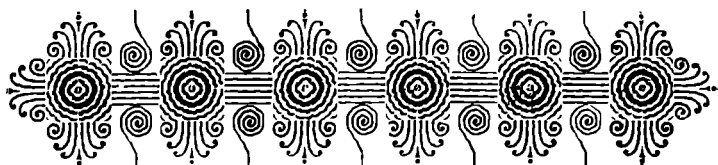
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THE

Sword and the Trowel.

MARCH, 1902.

Between Ourselves.

TO READERS OF "THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL."



DEAR FRIENDS,

Unaccustomed as I am to the use of the editorial "We," I shrink from employing it until compelled to. Moreover, a *letter* seems to bring us into closer touch with each other than an "Editorial" could, and I desire to take my readers into my confidence somewhat as I assume the responsibility of conducting this time-honoured Magazine.

Providence has thrust this task upon me. Personally, I would greatly have preferred to remain a mere contributor, as I have been for nearly five and twenty years. I have stepped into none of the honourable positions which, one by one, have fallen to my lot, without great surprise, and no little diffidence; and this latest call is no exception to the rule.

Instinctively I have turned to Vol. I., No. 1., for no higher ambition fires me than to maintain the original design of my beloved father. In January, 1865, he wrote:—"Our Magazine is intended to report the efforts of those Churches and Associations which are more or less intimately connected with the Lord's work at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, and to advocate those views of doctrine and Church order which are most certainly received among us. It will address itself to those faithful friends, scattered everywhere, who are our well-wishers and supporters in our work of faith and labour of love. It will give us an opportunity of urging the claims of Christ's cause, of advocating the revival of godliness, of denouncing error, of bearing witness for truth, and of encouraging the labourers in the Lord's vineyard.

"Our first and last object is to do practical service, and to excite others to active exertion. We shall supply interesting reading upon

"Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to *shame and everlasting contempt* (1 Peter i. 24, 25; Daniel xii. 2)?

(*To be continued next month.*)

Tidings from Tunisia.

MORE than three months have slipped away since I had the privilege of reporting on Gospel work here. Though hampered by sickness, the Medical Mission has gone on, as the record of 1,154 consultations, since November 1, bears witness.

* * * *

Passing down a native street in Sousse, lately, you might have beheld a strange scene,—

THE CHILDREN'S PRAYER FOR RAIN,—

a group of little Moslem boys constantly crying out, "O Lord, send rain!" Between them, they carry a stick, and over it hangs a piece of rag; they stop at a door, and chant their cry, then a hand is pushed out, and some dirty water is poured over their rag, and they move on, still calling for rain.* Truly, the fields are sad to look upon. Instead of stretches of rich waving green, just patches here and there are seen, and these so stunted and poor that all hope of harvest has almost gone. Too little rain, and too much sunshine, may ruin crops, and men, and nations, all alike.

* * * *

THE CASE AND BARREL OF GOOD THINGS

from the Tabernacle arrived lately, and the first to benefit were the poor Arab children who come to our Sunday morning service. They enjoyed their "supper" immensely. They sat round the big bowls, and dipped their sops into the dish without feeling the lack of knife, fork, or spoon; and not only the meat, but even the bones disappeared before their excellent appetites. Great was their delight with the "sweeties"; and, after the lantern, the presents capped everything. The next morning, I met youngsters, whose entire clothing consisted of the shirt they had received the night before, while toys and dolls were very much in evidence. It was said that some of the smaller children had probably never tasted meat before, and we trust it was a supper according to the mind of Jesus.

* * * *

We have been cheered by—

A CASE OF CONVERSION—

of a man who, while a native of Morocco, first heard the Gospel, unmoved, in Tangier; then, travelling to the East, heard it, again in vain, in Alexandria; and now, after years, is brought to the Saviour in Tunisia.

News has come, from South Morocco, of a man converted, only just lately, whose heart was touched, years ago, by one who has since been "called home." Thus we see that, still, "one soweth and another

* Dr. Churcher also mentions some other very extraordinary rain processions; and, in a later letter, says some rain has fallen, so the fields look fresh and green, but it is feared that there will be hardly any harvest.

reapeth;" and the Word of the Lord faileth not, but accomplisheth that whereunto He hath sent it.

* * * *

IN OUR LORD'S TIME,

pain and sickness brought many into contact with Him, and so is it here. People return, again and again, after longer or shorter intervals, and hear the Gospel message. Just now, we have, staying in our baraka, a young man and his mother, who have returned several years for medicine. They confess Christ; and it is very pleasant to have the young man explaining and repeating after me the Gospel message to his countrymen. May the Lord increase the number of such witness-bearers for Him!

* * * *

THE SUNDAY EVENING SERVICE,

at the shop in town, continues with much to encourage us. Sometimes, the little place is crowded right out to the street. Good attention, and sometimes signs of conviction of sin, rejoice our hearts. An unusual thing happened the other day. While I was at the door, two native soldiers not only shook hands, but kissed me warmly on leaving the meeting. I thought it was very nice of them, but was glad it was myself, and not my wife, to whom they said "Good-bye" in this loving fashion.

I hope the new era for the "S. and T." may prove even brighter than the past; and *that*, to my mind, is hoping a great deal.

T. G. CHURCHER.

Sousse, Tunisia, North Africa.

A Feckless Crittur.

BY JAMES F. TAVINER, B.A., WITHINGTON, MANCHESTER.

"**Y**E ken the E.U. kirk, maister? Weel, keep you straight on till ye come til't. Syne, ye'll see a close. Mistress McFadyon's the third doon. Dinna chap, for she's aye lying. Gang in, an' ye'll see the body."

Following these instructions, I made my way to the house of mourning. It was a dark day for the women of the North. Over the wires, on the Wednesday, had come the news that the attack at Magersfontein had failed. On the Thursday and the Friday came the cost of the futile attempt. Then, from the lone farmhouse in the glen, the stunted dwellings in the city close, and the noble homes on the clustering hills, there went forth a moan, as sad, if not as shrill, as the lamentation of Rachel. The women of the Highlands mourn not their dead as do the mothers of Salem or the dwellers by the Nile, but the firstborn are the firstborn everywhere.

It is said that, to realize the dreadfulfulness of war, one must walk across a battlefield the day after the encounter. I have never done so. I did not see the yellow dust crimsoned with the Highland blood. I was not near them when they heard the roar of that fearful tempest, and felt the leaden spindrift beating in their faces; but I venture to assert that we, who went the weary round of the desolated homes of Moray, know something of what war means.

I had not met Widow McFadyon before; but, on that day, we all knew one another. To have heard that she was numbered with the stricken, was sufficient ground for including her in my list of calls. The close by the E.U. Church, I knew quite well,—a narrow way serving both as a short cut to the High Street and a drying-ground for the inhabitants.