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Viet-Nam

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ANAM, THE NEGLECTED.

BY G. L. HUGHES.

The last few weeks as we have taken a retrospective view of our work in South China and especially in the province of Kwong-sai our hearts and lips alike have uttered praise to God for what He has wrought. For, although itinerating trips had been made into this province and a work begun at Kwai-p'ing by the Presbyterians, and at Wuchow by the Southern Baptists before the advent of the Alliance missionaries, yet it must be said that the Alliance was the first to have a permanent foothold in this, with the possible exception of Hunan, the most anti-foreign province in China. That God has greatly blessed the labors of our brethren is evident from the fact that we have now eleven stations, and although many of the strategic points have been occupied, yet much work remains to be done. But the object of this paper is not so much to draw attention to this province as it is to bring Anam with its untouched and apparently uncared-for millions before the Alliance friends at home.

Recent events in the political world clearly show that God has His eye on this sad land. France, to whom Anam belongs, has disestablished the Romish Church, thus putting Papacy on an equal footing with other religious bodies. The reception given the French fleet at Portsmouth, England, about two years ago, together with Britain's friendly attitude during the Moroccan trouble, shows that the old-time enmity between the two countries is, to some extent at least, giving way to better feelings. Coupled with these events may be mentioned the opening of an Alliance Station at Lungchow, about two days' journey to the Anamese border. These new possibilities, however, bring greater responsibilities. We read that when Jesus saw the multitudes He was moved with compassion, because they were as sheep having no shepherd. Beloved friends at home, here is a flock of 22,000,000 sheep without a shepherd. For centuries they have wandered in sin and superstition "without God and without hope in the world." Provision has been made in Christ for their full salvation, but they do not know it. The Gospel has been entrusted to us that we in turn may pass it on to others. The Apostle Paul said that he spoke as "one allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel." Are we fulfilling our trust? Here is a land that has been closed for centuries, and now God is silently but surely opening it. To be sure the Anamese do not call for us with outstretched arms, neither did China, but the early Catholic and Protestant missionaries pounded at its doors until, finally, they gained an entrance. Jesus did not sit down in Jerusalem and simply invite the people to come and hear His wonderful teachings, but "He went about doing good." He brought the Gospel to them. It is the same here; if Anam is to be evangelized, our friends at home must take it to heart in prayer, young men must come out and help us, money must be forthcoming. It is a grand privilege. Assuredly, no work can be compared to that of the missionary. The world may talk of the learning of the scholar, the valor of the soldier and the foresight of the diplomat, but what are these compared to the privilege of carrying the Gospel, "which is the power of God unto salvation," unto a people who know Him not, and in course of time to have hun-

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dreds of souls transformed into the image of Jesus Christ? This has been done in the past. There is not a nation or tribe but what is susceptible to the Gospel's regenerating power. Let any one who has an iota of doubt about this carefully read the achievements of the Gospel in different countries, in the

past century, and his doubts will soon disappear. What about Khama and Africander in Africa, Pastor Shi of China, the natives of Tierra del Fuego and the Fiji Islanders? These are self-evident facts. And what God has done in the past, in other countries, He will yet do in Anam. But "how then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent?" My brother, I pray you in Christ's name ask yourself these questions in God's presence. Surely there are young men in the homeland whom God would have volunteer at once for dark, neglected Anam. Are you one of them? Will you, with a sincere and willing heart, ask God what He would have you do? This may be a test of your consecration. Young men who have lustily sung, "I'll go where He wants me to go," may now have a chance to prove the genuineness of their devotion by asking the Lord what they can do towards giving the Bread of Life to the perishing Anamese.

Columbia called for volunteers to rescue Cuba from Spanish oppression, and tens of thousands of Americans, in the prime of life, proved their patriotism by enlisting in the service of their country, though privation and death awaited them.

During the Boer War, Britannia let her sons know that she needed help, and without hesitation 500,000 young Britons stepped forward and signified their purpose, if needs be, to become targets for Boer bullets. Nearly 1,000 years have passed since the Great Captain of our salvation redeemed mankind and commanded His disciples to proclaim the "Glad Tidings" everywhere. And yet Anam, with its teeming millions, is to-day almost as much unevangelized as when Christ gave His last command. My brother, I pray you in Christ's name that in the secret of your own room you will ponder and pray over this sad fact.—South China "Alliance Tidings."

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