

Jan. 12, 1924

The Indo-China Conference

A SEASON OF SPIRITUAL REFRESHING AND MISSIONARY VISION

By REV. R. A. JAFFRAY, Wuchow, South China

The following article tells of the salvation of many souls in Indo-China, the blessing of God on the work of the Bible schools at Tourane, the completion of the translation of the New Testament in the Annamese language, and two new stations being opened, one in Cambodia and one in Cochia-China.

The writer has now returned from the trip to French Indo-China, having been absent seven weeks, having travelled approximately 3,000 miles, and having visited all of the eight Main Stations of the Alliance, and other cities where we are expecting by His grace to open soon.

It was indeed a joy to meet the twenty-seven Alliance missionaries of the French Indo-China Conference, and the ten days spent together in fellowship and prayer, as well as in consultation, were full of blessing and profit. Joyfully and gratefully were the new missionaries welcomed to our Conference. On the first day of the Conference it was our pleasure to join in happy matrimony the lives and hearts of Rev. D. W. Ellison and Miss Muriel Harrison. They received their full quota of rice, and left us for a few days' honeymoon at Hue.

The spirit of the Conference was deep and true. There was manifestation in every session of the presence and pleasure of the Lord in our midst. There was real prayer power, as we met from day to day at the throne to pour out our hearts for the needs of the work to which He, the Lord of the Harvest, had appointed us. Thank God for the "unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace."

A few facts briefly stated will, we believe, help our friends at home to pray more faithfully for us than ever in the past,—yea, and to praise the Lord with us for what He has done and what He is doing in Indo-China.

Rapid Growth

The total membership of the Indo-China Church is now about 800. Of this 500 are members of the Tourane Church. At Sadec there are over 100 members,

and the rest of the membership is scattered among the other six stations. The growth of the Church has been rapid, and we ask the prayers of the Lord's people that these precious souls, redeemed as brands from the burning of heathenism and shame, may be truly saved and may know the Lord Jesus in a personal way and be true witnesses for Him among their people.

There is an average of twenty inquirers a week, seeking the Lord at Tourane. Praise God for this glorious stream of salvation. The membership was doubled last year. The work at Fai-foo, the



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outstation, has been greatly blest, and many souls have been added to the Lord. The Christians of the Tourane Church are scattered all over the state of Annam and are bearing a witness for Jesus wherever they go. In many a place, where as yet we are forbidden to open a chapel, there are saved ones from the Tourane Church, telling in their homes and places of business what the Lord Jesus has done for their souls. Satan may try to hinder the spread of the Word of God, but if only God's witnesses will tell out what

He has done for them, there is no power on earth or in hell that can hinder the flow of salvation's blessed river.

Teaching Others Also

We are very much encouraged with the progress of the Bible School work at Tourane. In all there are about thirty young men who are in course of training as preachers of the Gospel. Some of them have had a year in the Bible School and have had a year in the practical work of a station, and have now returned to the Bible School for their second year. And so they will continue, a year in the school and a year in the work, till they have finished their three-year course and graduate. It is in answer to prayer that so many young men have volunteered to give their life to the work of the Lord, and it is a prophecy, we believe, of what the Lord is going to do in the speedy evangelization of the Annamese. Many of these young men have given up good positions and good salaries to come to the Bible School. Many of them are able, in some measure, to support themselves, though they all need more or less help, and some of them need to be helped altogether, as they have no means of supporting themselves. Please pray for an ever-increasing number of Spirit-called and Spirit-filled Annamese young men for the great harvest field of French Indo-China.

New School for Women

We have felt in a very real way that the strength of our work lay in the fact that God is calling out a goodly number of young men for the work of the ministry. On the other hand, we have felt that the weakness of our work lay in the fact that we had no adequate plan for the training of the Bible women. This conference therefore determined that there should be such a Women's Bible School started at once. There are already quite a few women who are ready to enter the Women's Bible School to train for the Bible women's work, and we are anxious

to have as many as possible of the wives of our prospective preachers come to the school and take a regular course of Bible study. Please pray for Miss Frost and Miss Ailshouse in this important undertaking.

First Annamese Conference

Another important advance step in the work that was made at the Conference was the decision to call the First Conference of Annamese workers this year. This all-important meeting is to be held at Tourane in February, if the Lord will. We want you all to pray that it will be a time of real spiritual blessing. It will be a two-weeks' meeting and largely devoted to Bible study, heart-searching messages, and prayer for a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the whole work. Pray for the Committee as they arrange for the Conference. Much wisdom and grace is needed to direct the growing work and the Annamese workers on right lines, so that the Church of Jesus Christ in Indo-China will be not a foreign church in Annam, but a real indigenous church,—self-supporting, self-administrating and self-propagating.

The New Testament Translated

It is a cause of great rejoicing with us that after years of faithful and hard work by the translators and printers in coöperation with the British and Foreign Bible Society, we have now completed the New Testament in the Annamese language. Up to the present time we have only had portions of the Bible in Annamese, and we have had to depend upon the use of the Chinese Bible, or the French Bible, which are understood somewhat by some of the Annamese Christians. There is a Roman Catholic Bible to be had, also, which, however, is not satisfactory. Thank God, we now have a New Testament of our own and about half of the Old Testament is also ready.

Another Lighthouse in Cambodia

The Conference decided upon the opening of two new stations during the year. One of these is Cambodia. Mr. and Mrs. Ellison were appointed to the city of Battambang, and we are glad to report that they are now settled there in

their new work. It is a great center, a full day's ride in an auto from the Capital, Pnom-penh, where we first opened. Thus we now have two stations in Cambodia. Oh, let us pray for a great harvest of souls for the Master from among these long neglected people. The second new station is to be at My-tho, a big center in Cochin-China. Mr. and Mrs. Smith are to take up the work there for the Lord. We know that our friends will unite with us in prayer for these two new stations that souls may soon be saved at each of these places and that the Name that is above every name may soon be magnified in these dark parts of the world.

Further Plans for Advance

In closing this article may we again ask earnestly the prayers of our friends at home for the opening of the cities of the Protectorate of Annam and Tonkin which are still closed to us? Some of us who

have been praying much for this opening have a feeling deep in our souls that the time is at hand when we shall be permitted to enter these ripened harvest fields for the Lord Jesus. We are especially praying for the cities of Hue and Nam-dinh.

His people are to be gathered from every tribe and kindred and nation and tongue. His new redemption song is to be sung by men and women redeemed from every land and nation. Thus we shall make it our policy, yea, our passion, as the servants of the Lord, to go to these parts of the world where the Name has not been known. The day when the trumpet will sound and the Lord will return will soon be here. It is hard to believe that He will delay much longer. Let us do what we would wish some day we had done, *now*. Let us not procrastinate. Lord, help us to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel as a witness to all nations."

Student Life in French Indo-China Among the Newest Soldiers of Christ

D. I. JEFFREY

Three years ago we commenced the Indo-China Men's Bible School of the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Mr. Irwin's back stable. But those were temporary quarters which long since have been outgrown. I believe that the Alliance readers will be interested, as I tell just where we are today, and you will be happy to know that the twenty-five students of whom I write are the fruits of your prayer and your backing by the grace of God.

A Christian Village

Tonight Mrs. Jeffrey and I went down

to visit our married students' quarters. There is a regular little village clustered around the front yard, back yard, and side yards of Thay Thua, our Annamese pastor at Tourane, and a mighty man of God. Let us get a picture of it, if we can—four bamboo houses with Thay Thua's in the center. The occupants are Mr. Do and family from Cantho, Cochin-China; Mr. and Mrs. Heng from Pnom Penh, Cambodia; Mr. Nien and family of Sadee, Cochin-China; and others from Tourane; altogether there are twenty men, women, and children in our own little village.

A Crowded Gospel Hive

It is delightful, mysterious to visit these homes, for each house is partitioned off into many small rooms which are used as bedrooms, office, kitchen, and storerooms. Thay Thua has a prophet's chamber, and to get into it you must crawl under or around his bed. One does not feel like keeping his hat on in that room.

From the time one enters the bamboo gate of the compound, he is in a Bible atmosphere, entirely different from the houses next door. These men talk Bible all day long and the children are naturally soaking it all in. Tonight as we arrived, the youngsters were just commencing their regular evening meeting. They sing, pray, and preach in their little service, and do it well. Their ages range from two to twelve,—another bunch of preachers in the making.

In the Training Barracks

The unmarried men's dormitory is a brick building that was erected this summer. It is built on our mission property, two or three hundred yards from where our married students live. The single men's dormitory is a series of ten rooms, with an aisle down the center. There are two rooms at one end which serve as library and dining room. This building was erected to meet the pressing need of the present year, and it is full. The need is urgent for at least two more such buildings next year, for men and women's Bible schools, to say nothing of the lack of classrooms. These single men's rooms are cozy little dens with two men, two beds, and two tables each. If you walk down the aisle, you will see neatly engraved cards, with each student's name on the door. However, the place is very plain and reminds one of a prison or a hospital. The doors are made with slats, and the inside walls do not reach all the way to the ceiling, but it is home to our eighteen single men. The day after tomorrow Thay Quoc and his wife will arrive in Hanoi, and another couple will soon be following. We have to go into the real estate business to fix them up. Happily native houses can be bought for from ten to fifty dollars, but simple brick structures are cheapest in the long run, as repairs on bamboo huts are frequent and expensive.

I had dinner and supper with the single men today, and they are a happy bunch. I must tell you a secret, though. The students "kicked" about the food, and I had to prove to them that it might be worse. However, we often eat together for fellowship, not only when complaints are registered.

Encouraging Progress

Our course this term includes ten subjects. Thay Thua teaches the following: What the Bible Teaches, by Dr. Torrey; Bible Keys, by Dr. Pierson; Genesis, by Mr. Jaffray. Mr. Irwin takes a daily class in Chapter Study, and I am teaching

Old Testament—the Prophetical books; New Testament—the General Epistles and Revelation; Church History, Homiletics and Public Speaking, and The Life of Christ. We have entered this third year of our history very much encouraged because, with many of our old men back, it makes teaching much easier. We are much better able to keep us the standard that we have endeavored to set since beginning, and this year's students are above the average in studying ability. Please pray that they may keep well above the average in spiritual progress. And please remember in prayer the seven students who are now preaching in Cochin-China and Cambodia. These men will return later to complete their studies.

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