

PROBABLY no Sunday congregation of worshippers changes as frequently or represents as many denominations as does the American Community Church, Saigon. Tours of duty of government personnel ordinarily last from one to two years. During this brief time, these people participate in the missionary effort underway in Viet Nam. Varied has been this participation, ranging from paying the rent of the city's Chinese Gospel Bookroom, buying medicines for the tribes people, to assistance in rebuilding Vietnamese churches.

This last mentioned project concerns both help in re-building war-ruined, termite-devoured churches as well as aid toward building new churches. The adjoining picture of the church under construction at Go Cong belongs to the former class. In the old church I have worshipped, preached, and slept, thankful the rotten wood didn't give way. Sunday afternoon, March 20th, during the dedication service I sat in the now completed new church.



Church Construction at Go-Cong

SAIGON AMERICAN CHURCH ASSISTS BUILDING PROGRAM

by J. S. Sawin

The American Church Committee felt that our help in church buildings should be only a final push over the financial hump. Consequently any building program must be near completion prior to making a request. The American Church aid at best is small, never more than 20,000 piasters (about \$278.00 dollars), but can be up to one third of the total cost of construction. For example, a country congregation, who live on farmer's rations, i. e. things, not money, rebuilt their church for 30,000 piasters. The American Church gave 10,000 piasters of this amount. This token aid leaves the total initiative and most of the burden on the local church, but the money given shows the interest and concern of the Americans towards the Vietnamese Christians. In eight months four church buildings have been finished here in the south. The district superintendent and committee decide what churches shall receive help. In the central district, twenty-three requests have been received. The D. S. and his committee face the unhappy task of selecting three or four churches to be given assistance. Would that all could be helped!

The American Church expects to give for various projects during this fiscal year at least \$7,500 dollars. To many Americans this represents their first contact with missions and missionary giving. Many others help support this work here while also contributing to their regular denominational missionary program. Unitedly we work towards the day of a completed Bride and a returning King.

THE CALL OF VIET NAM

MR. AND MRS. E. F. IRWIN...



... MR. AND MRS. I. R. STEBBINS

THE CALL OF VIET NAM is issued bi-annually by the Viet Nam missionaries of the Christian and Missionary Alliance.

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By definition, one that is sent on a mission is a missionary. We usually think of the term missionary as one serving the Lord on a foreign field. However, the important fact is that God has commissioned His disciples everywhere with the task of making Christ known, whether by preaching and teaching or by living and witnessing. Were every Christian to consider his responsibility in this light, as a messenger of the Gospel wherever he lived, surely the Church of Christ would prosper both at home and abroad.

We have been privileged to be called of God for service in Viet Nam. Because of that specific call we have dedicated ourselves to the task of making Christ known and believed in by the preaching of the Gospel to the Vietnamese people. Thus, in presenting this issue of The Call we would present the missionary in Viet Nam : his Preparation, his Challenge, his Role, and his Reward.

This year we have a total of sixty missionaries working among the Vietnamese and five others working among the Chinese. Twenty-eight of these missionaries are language students ; five are engaged in administrative work ; one couple is ministering to the American Community Church, and one couple is working with the British and Foreign Bible Society. At present there are only two couples home on furlough. It is also interesting to note that thirty-two of these people or one-half the staff are first term missionaries.

THE PREPARATION...

"EXPECT the best ; be prepared for the worst ; and be ready for anything." Good advice for the new missionary who has just set foot upon foreign soil and has stepped over the threshold into a new way of life. No one passes out this gateway the same as when he entered. The Orient will change him more than he will change the Orient. This article might well be labelled, "The Missionary's Adjustment", for the extent of his preparation will be in proportion to the degree of his adjustment to his new environment. Well might the wise new missionary's prayer be, "Lord, help me quickly and graciously adjust to change".

Primarily, all other phases of preparation are subservient to the missionary's spiritual preparation. However, there are some practical aspects of preparation and adjustment that need to be considered. The new missionary who is constrained by the love of Christ and compelled with a driving inner desire to see the people delivered from the power of darkness through his ministry will be genuinely interested in the LANGUAGE and the CULTURE of the people to whom he is sent. If there is no genuine interest there is probably very little genuine constraint. Thus, let the new missionary be clothed with humility and equipped with a healthy attitude, and let him plunge into this new language and culture with all his being. Let him

ADJUSTMENT ATTITUDE APPLICATION

by Robert Henry

listen before he speaks. Let him learn before he teaches. Let him follow before he leads. He will soon discover his preparation in America was not nearly as adequate as he formerly imagined. He has lots to learn, and the ATTITUDE with which he takes up this task will determine his success or failure.

If the missionary wants to win the people to Christ, he will diligently strive to equip himself with the tools with which to do the job. He will study hard, no matter what degree of language ability he may possess. All his inner resources will be taxed to the limit in this preparation and adjustment; he will press on with dogged determination, for he will soon be God's Voice to a benighted nation. So let it be, dear Lord.

THE CHALLENGE...

THE challenge of one million Chinese to be reached for Christ in Free Viet Nam is one that cannot be ignored. There are but five missionaries working among them. True, the majority of them reside in the Saigon-Cholon area, and it is there that the three existing Chinese churches are located. Yet Chinese are to be found in every city, town, and sizeable village.

We had heard of several large villages of Chinese speaking people one hundred and fifty miles north of Saigon, and the first visit by our Chinese pastor in Cholon met with such good results, that we decided to go back for a longer stay during the time of the full moon — as these villages have no electricity.

Shortly after arriving we made haste to pay our respects to the village chief and army commander, etc. Then we began driving up and down the streets, announcing that there would be "good-news" given out in the market area that night. The local police station loaned us their yard and equipment. Their tommy-gun carrying guards acted as our helpers to keep back the several hundreds of excited children who wanted to watch Mrs. Bordreuil play the organ, and see how Mr. Bordreuil could get such music from a saw!

I acted as the forerunner, giving about fifteen minutes of basic Gospel, upon which our Chinese pastor, Jonathan Kaan, built with his additional thirty to forty minutes. As a foreigner I dared not make fun of their gods.

Of the Chinese

by C. C. Fowler

But Pastor Kaan being Chinese went on to make their worship of paper gods seem very silly indeed. This was followed the next night by emphasis on Jesus the Saviour — the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Two services were held in each village, and the days were filled with visitation, services for new believers, talks to the school children, etc. Never have I had a more hungry, responsive audience. After dealing with the five here, three there, six here, who were bold enough to accept publicly right away, there was always a hungry crowd who thronged about to ask questions after the services were over.

The main reason for their reluctance to accept Christ immediately comes from their long years of ancestor worship. If they stop their ancestor worship, what would become of the souls and value of thousands of uninterrupted years of work, they ask. This, though easy to answer from our viewpoint, is a question their blinded and darkened souls find very hard to answer. If, through your prayers, many of them make the break and find Jesus worth it all, wouldn't you as well be wonderfully rewarded?

... Of the Youth

by Spencer Sutherland

ACCORDING to a recent publication, 52% of some two million inhabitants of Saigon are under twenty years of age; 32% are children under ten. The average age of the Saigonese is twenty-two years and nine months. Hard to believe but true. As we daily traverse the city, these statistics become realities and present challenges to us. What is done in a spiritual manner for the youth of today directly results in the Church of tomorrow.

What is being done? Among the efforts so far is a monthly Youth for Christ evangelistic meeting sponsored by the youth groups of the city. Weekly district and local youth rallies are held. In one church a class in witnessing has begun. Several youth groups have organized witnessing bands. A



At District Rally

student witness patterned after the Inter-Varsity Fellowship has been established. Yet in the light of these staggering numbers of young people in the city, it is clear that much yet is needed in meeting this challenge of youth.

... Of New Areas

by Dick Taylor

AMONG the more than 500,000 people in the Kien Giang Province there are less than 700 Christians in three small areas. There is a good church in the provincial center of Rach Gia, but it faces fearful odds. There are two struggling young works, one to the east of us, the other to the north. One of these infant churches has no pastor. Between here and the Cambodian border one hundred kilometers to the west there is no church to give

forth a Gospel witness. Near the border is the picturesque but bigoted city of Ha Tien, reputed to be the stronghold of Buddhism in Viet Nam. Yet we are convinced that God has some people in that city. Out in the Gulf of Siam there are twenty-three islands that must be evangelized. This constitutes a most needy area, and if we were multiplied fourfold in number we couldn't do justice to the work that needs to be done.

THE ROLE...

What is the missionary's job & how does he do it?

by Dale Herendeen

THE work of evangelism in Viet Nam is a work done largely in cooperation with the National Church, that is with the local pastors in the various districts. Rarely can the missionary function alone in this responsibility, nor would it be wise. Furthermore, it is our desire to be "co-laborers" with these brethren, for it is they, not we who best know the hearts of their fellow countrymen. As they take up this ministry, we as missionaries are happy and eager to assist. This assistance extends all the way from preaching to driving the pastor to visits with officials, from singing to stringing up transistor loudspeakers for night meetings. All this we do eagerly as a part of our missionary task.

And thus the Gospel goes out in the spiritual darkness of Viet Nam. Whether we "gossip" it over a cup of hot tea during visitation in the villages or preach it in passion to a tightly grouped crowd whose intent faces are lifted toward us in the night meetings, the Good News is going forth here in this day of opportunity in Viet Nam.

May I describe a typical meeting. During the day we visit the officials and as many homes as we can. After an early dinner the jeep is filled with those who go to assist and to witness. We always bring along a pressure lantern, the accordion, and booklets to distribute. Generally the meetings are held on the steps of the local school house or village community building. First we have a lesson especially for the children, and then our main meeting. It is very simple. Perhaps a number or two on the accordion, a special number in song, prayer, introductions and acknowledgements, and then the preaching. The missionary will often preach first, followed by the pastor or other national. These meetings rarely begin before 8:30 or 9:00 P.M. Our closing word is an invitation to believe. It has been in such meetings and in visitation that hundreds have come to Christ in the past few years here in Viet Nam.



New Christians At Binh Dinh

... in Evangelism

CHAU O is an important center on the main highway, some twenty kilometers north of Quang Ngai. A year ago we took part in a three night evangelistic effort, and about fifty people professed Christ as Saviour. Then urgent demands elsewhere kept us from the area for three months. In the fall we were finally able to return to Chau O for a sustained, well-manned campaign.

Working with the District Evangelistic Band and several volunteer laymen and women, we began preaching nightly and visiting in homes daily. The presence of missionaries helped to attract large crowds; our personal witnessing, music and singing also helped create a favorable atmosphere for the message which followed.

After the usual scores of children had gathered, we would begin singing and then teach them to sing a chorus or hymn like "Oh Happy Day", explaining the words to give them basic truth on the way of salvation. They sang lustily after a few trials, and their singing usually drew their parents



and other adults closer. Then a flannel-graph story would be told, followed by more music and the preaching. Some decisions were made nightly, but more were made in homes, as we were guided to friends and neighbors by fervent new Christians. Daily fellowship in prayer, about the Word and at mealtime, plus working together to bring souls to Christ, brought over-flowing joy to every heart during the two month campaign.

Harold Dutton

ABOUT a month ago we went with the two preachers to the Binh Dinh market place about fifteen miles from here. It was a special day when everybody from the country around comes to buy and sell their provisions. We managed to get the car with the loud speakers into the midst of this great mass of people. Without any formalities we began playing the organ, preaching, testifying, and selling penny Gospels, which went like hotcakes. The majority had never heard such a message, listened to such singing, or seen such cheap, attractive books in all their lives.

A few days later we went with the camp trailer, portable generator, and all our equipment to stay a week in this town, preaching, teaching and answering

their questions. Many times it would be midnight when the crowds dispersed.

It would take a book to tell the results. Just one example will have to suffice. A man who happened by during these meetings heard the Gospel and in a few days came back to the little preaching center, where the student preacher lives. He accepted the Lord and went back to his village and has persuaded most of his friends and neighbors of the truth of the Gospel. Since then we have spent a day in his village. In every home we visited souls were saved. In just those few hours we spent in that village twenty-two souls were saved.

Chester & Mary Travis

... in Teaching

SHORT

TERM

SCHOOL

VISUALIZE with me these seventy-odd country Christians—ages ranging from eighteen to sixty — packed into one of the larger homes in a remote village. Most have been saved but three or four months ; only two or three have Bibles — the rest cannot afford to buy them. However they, do have a clear-cut testimony of having turned from idols to serve the living God. The simplicity of their faith and sincerity of their joy in Christ I will never forget.

BIBLE

SCHOOL

IN a few weeks the Tourane Bible Institute will close its doors. This school began in a stable in 1922 with five students, as a center to train men and women to be preachers and teachers of the Word. Since then, through its halls have passed hundreds of students, and through them the Church of Christ has been established in Viet Nam.

From every section of this land, from almost every station in life, men and women have come to study here. They have gone forth throughout this entire country witnessing to their fellow-countrymen. They are pastoring groups of Christians; they are evange-

These were representatives of the more than one hundred forty who had recently been saved in the unusual working of God in that area. They had gathered for a week of concentrated study, and their eagerness for and responsiveness to the truth was a thrill to see. The daily lessons were on the Life of Christ, Catechism, Life in the Spirit, Prayer, Hymn Singing, and Memorization of Scripture. Diligently they listened, took notes, memorized, preparing to go back and tell the others who could not come. I had come to minister to them, yet they brought untold blessing to my own heart. Anew I felt the urgency of both commands of Christ: "Seek my sheep; feed my sheep".

Mrs. J. H. Revelle

lizing in new territory and opening new churches. They are telling others the precious truths that they learned in the Bible School.

But this school has grown and now must change its location. The buildings that we now occupy will accomodate only seventy-five students; we cannot take care of all the applicants. We must enlarge our borders, and for that reason the doors of the present school are closing, but only closing so that they may open wider. This school — the hub of the work, the most important phase of our missionary activity, the place where men and women will be trained for the future — will open next September at Nhatrang. Our prayer is that it may ever be true to its vision of holding up Christ as Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming King.

Mrs. E. F. Irwin

... in Administration

by Betty Arnold

THE ship has docked. Among the welcoming group on the pier, the most important person is the Mission Business Agent — at present, Johnny Fitzstevens. He is the one who helps the missionaries through the intricacies of customs. Still later, is the registration at the American Consular Office; getting photographs and being finger-printed for obtaining a Viet Nam registration card; familiarizing new missionaries with some "do's" and "don'ts" of Oriental life, and answering many questions. This together with the "usual day" of supplementary language study before breakfast, meeting plane or train, making purchases for folks up-country (and woe beide the man who fails to record where and for whom he spends money!); keeping a check on the many visa renewals for the more than one hundred missionaries in this land. If you think this job sounds like fun, Johnny will gladly relinquish it to you!

Esther is doing an excellent job taking care of the Receiving Home, which accomodates newly arrived and furlough bound missionaries, those who have come in for dental or medical work, children returning to Dalat School, etc. Along with this she helps her husband with the task of purchasing; she takes people shopping or tells them where to buy for the best price.



Margaret Johnston

Coupled with this work for the Lord is the ministry in the Field Headquarters, Business Agency and Mission Press Offices. What would we do without Margaret and Nancy? Our monthly allowance comes to us already figured out — and often we are prone to accept it, not realizing the hours of bookkeeping required to put it in completed form.

And of course there is the never ending correspondence in connection with finances, field work and New York Headquarters offices. It takes time to plan for Executive Committee Meetings and Annual Conference, to say nothing of getting the minutes in order, mimeographed and mailed. The Annual Report must be prepared, telling the results of the work of the field throughout the year. This is first presented to Council and appears in printed form for distribution to Missionary Prayer Groups.

We could not carry on our work without the help of these in specialized capacities. We are thankful for all they do for us. Their ministries are not glamorous and do not make for good publicity, but done for the glory of God and in a Christ-like way they shall not lose their reward



The Fitzstevens



Nancy Mack

THE REWARDS...

of over forty years
ministry in Viet Nam

... **I**t was Saigon, and we were visiting the churches one more time before leaving on furlough. What we considered "country" forty years ago is now an integral part of the city. This rapid growth and tremendous change in recent years is typical of the planting and developing of the Church in Viet Nam.

... From the inception of the work we have had the satisfaction of seeing works established and mature into self-governing and self-supporting churches. Buildings have been constructed; the church constitution has been written; the Scriptures, hymnals and Gospel literature have been printed and distributed throughout the country.

... The Christians themselves however, are the most important factor in the growth of the church. Some of the converts led to the Lord and baptized in those early days are now ordained pastors and church leaders. With many of them we have enjoyed fellowship for over forty years. What a joy to see them grow in the Lord.

... Many of their children have entered the Bible School. Others are already in the ministry. With these are three of our own children. Perhaps this is our greatest satisfaction of all—to see them in cooperation with the growing church in the ministry of the Gospel in Viet Nam.

I. R. Stebbins



Mr. & Mrs. I. R. Stebbins



Mr. & Mrs. E. F. Irwin

... **W**E were gathered in the Tourane Bible School Chapel. All the students were there. As they gave their notes of praise and requests for prayer, my heart thrilled. They told of new converts here and there, seemingly everywhere, where they had been telling the story of salvation.

... Again, we were at a country church. The pastor asked the Christians how many people they had witnessed to during the week. One said he had spoken to twenty-two. Another had talked with twelve. One young boy had testified to five of his schoolmates. During the week nine people had prayed the penitent's prayer.

... Mrs. Irwin and I are going back to Canada this summer. We have spent forty-five years here. When we came, there was only one little meeting place in all of Viet Nam. Now there are thirty-two churches and several out-stations in this one province of Quang Nam alone. Has it been worthwhile? A thousand times yes. The Vietnamese pastors are preaching the Word where we leave off. Our Bible School is full to capacity with young people training for the ministry. The Christians are witnessing for Christ; the churches are full, and they are self-propagating and self-supporting.

E. F. Irwin

NEWS

We are happy to report a sizeable increase in our staff since the last issue of The Call. Mr. & Mrs. R. H. Taylor have returned from furlough and are stationed at Rach Gia. Mr. & Mrs. R. L. Davis, Miss Helen Erlandson, Mr. & Mrs. E. A. Kline, Mr. & Mrs. R. W. Pendell, and Mr. & Mrs. K. F. White have come as new missionaries and are hard at work in language study. We have received word that the Otis Fishers will be able to return to the field in May. We praise the Lord for answering prayer and making this possible.

PRAY

Pray for the Daily Vacation Bible Schools soon to be held throughout Viet Nam. Evangelism among Vietnam's millions of children is one of the most neglected phases of our work. Pray that the Vietnamese church may catch a vision of this need.

Pray for the students of this year's graduating class as they go from the Bible School out into the

Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey held a two week S.T.B.S. at Banmethuot for representatives from the Resettlement Camps of that area. There were twenty-one students present from eleven camps.

The Al Kowles have located in Tourane and begun their ministry among the Chinese of Central Viet Nam. Two young people have accepted Christ, and others have expressed a desire to believe.

Taped gospel programs are now being played weekly in the markets of fourteen cities throughout the country. This presents a tremendous potential opportunity to reach the crowds of the market places who might otherwise never come under the sound of the Gospel.

work. At present there are not enough pastors to meet the needs of the churches.

There were 1,323 baptisms recorded for the whole field in the year 1959. Remember to pray for these new Christians.

PRAY THAT THE MONEY MAY CONTINUE TO COME IN FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW BIBLE SCHOOL AT NHA TRANG. THIRTY THOUSAND DOLLARS IS NEEDED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE IF SCHOOL IS TO OPEN THERE IN SEPTEMBER.