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A Trip to Indo-China.

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The following article is gleaned from a detailed account of a trip from South China to Annam taken some months ago, by Mr. and Mrs. Jaffray, Miss Candee, and Miss Marsh. We have selected such portions of the account as picture life in French Indo-China.

The party arrived by boat in the harbor of Haiphong, a harbor of many peculiar features! Because of shallow water, the way to dock was made slowly with frequent surroundings and stops. For several hours we have been getting nearer and nearer, and now at 9:30 we are swinging around to the wharf. None of the usual preliminaries of landing at a foreign port, such as inspection or examination of passports.

Near the dock, we take rickshas for the telegraph office and post office, and oh, the luxury of a broad-seated, large rubber tired Annamese ricksha, with comfortable springs, and an easy running ricksha coolie.

We find Post office and Telegraph station in the same building, and then return to the boat passing the French Governor's residence, a large Protestant French Evangelical Mission Church, and several other buildings of modern structure all in well kept grounds. The streets are wide and in excellent order.

The French on shipboard, as in the cities, hold to the custom of their country, of breakfasting at 11 o'clock and dining at 6:30 or later.

After breakfast, while waiting for the whole party to be ready for the afternoon's sight-seeing, we are in the dining room—Mrs. Jaffray writing letters, Miss Marsh typewriting, and I taking notes of things within and without. A number of Annamese boys are showing their interest in typewriting by looking in at the windows, and as I lift my head they salaam after their own fashion and jabber away about this great curiosity.

They are dressed rather shabbily as are many of the children of the country. The Annamese dress, not especially stylish at best, having no air of aristocratic elegance about it, lends itself to an appearance of abject forlornity when below par. One becomes interested in the different kinds of garments and hats, or often turbans instead of hats. No French millinery apartments could furnish greater variety of hats than can be found in the line of Annamese head coverings. Some were dressed after the Chinese fashion, others sported a costume partly Annamese and partly Chinese, and others, the purely Annamese, which with the well dressed meant white pants and black shaam with black turban. The men wear this costume, while that of the women is of the same cut, but they never wear the white pants, and always earrings. They also can be distinguished by their hats of various patterns. Many of the better dressed men wear the conical hat which sometimes had the appearance of great extravagance when made of fine feathers closely plaited and capped by a large silver decoration.

The town had a cosmopolitan air as we rode through the streets. We saw Chinese, Japanese, and French stores side by side, and found one of our men spoke Chinese. The whole appearance of the place shows the influence of the foreigner upon Oriental life, although here where there is no distinct foreign community one never loses sight of the native conditions and ways.

We went from the boat to the livery stable in rick-shas pulled by Annamese coolies, and there took a French turn-out, a real old time barouche, with a pair of small but fine ponies of European and native breed.

We rode about the city and then out into the country by the "Route de Circulare," passing through immense rice fields. Much rice is raised about Haiphong, some of the land producing three and even four crops a year.

The next day found us on shipboard, with the exception of Mr. and Mrs. Jaffray who have gone to Hanoi for the day. In the afternoon as we were going to the railroad station to meet Mr. and Mrs. Jaffray we passed a large company of Annamese soldiers on their way to the "Armand Behic." Some were going to France to work in the munition factories. Some eleven hundred of them were stowed away between decks on shipboard and on the second class deck where bunks had been prepared for them. Later, we found that these men slept by night and day relays. Their food was cooked at the end of the ship and brought to them in large pans and buckets. We were glad to know that it was well cooked and served in liberal quantity. All were very quiet and orderly.

We left Haiphong early January 26th, and as the boat moved from the dock, a few farewells to "the boys" were spoken. One Annamese family, mother and two children, came aboard with the father. All through the day they sat in Annamese fashion huddled into a corner of the deck. At meals when the food was brought to the men, this little group went to the soldiers' quarters and soon came back with a quantity of hot rice in an old newspaper. They sat down in this place for their evening meal. Just another instance of contentment with little, and that little such as no one would think decent ideas of living could endure.

As the boat was to reach Tourane early in the morning we were up betimes watching the approach to the port. Tourane is on Tourane Bay, an arm of the China Sea.

As soon as the anchor was dropped, we saw Mr. and Mrs. Irwin from the Mission Station coming, and we were planning for getting on shore with our baggage, which suddenly seemed to increase in bulk and number. Before long, however, we were all stowed away in an Annamese sampan at our way.

We were soon at the Irwin home, so pretty and inviting that we realized at once what a pleasant stay was before us. Our visit of five days was such that does not often come into our life, not only the fellowship of friends, but the Christian fellowship with many who had recently found Christ and were seeking earnestly for greater light.

We were permitted to realize here in Tourane the power of the Holy Spirit in the hearts and lives of those lifted out of darkness into light.

Tourane is a city of many Annamese villages and about seventy-five French people, largely Government officials and their families. They live in well built, comfortable homes but not luxurious homes.

As in all Oriental countries, the children are quite numerous in such numbers as might explain the scant attention nothing to speak of. One sometimes felt an indignation which soon gave place to pity. These children, like their parents, have rather interesting faces, good features with dark eyes and hair, but the faces are disfigured by the blackened teeth. The Annamese are smaller than the Tonkinese. One begins pitying the little ricksha coolies, but forgets to do so when one sees how strong they are.

These people are very erect with a graceful walk, own

the habit of carrying burdens on their heads and also to wearing low shoes or going barefoot. *AW. Feb 2, 1918 p. 281*

Some of the French people are very friendly to missionaries. One of the ladies sent her carriage and driver to take us for a ride through one of the large Annamese villages and out into the open country beyond.

Evening was coming on as we drove out where only the uncultivated land lay between us and the mountain. The sunset glows came faintly upon the clouds which threatened rain. The deep blue shadows around the mountains and the clouds in piles above them were so like those of California that for a little one almost forgot the present in the old associations. Our homeward way lay through an avenue lined for at least two miles by rubber trees which were only for shade, and not commercial purposes.

In the evening all gathered in the reception room with the Annamese Christians for a meeting when Mr. Jaffray gave them a helpful talk.

These Christians, with few exceptions, have been converted since Mr. and Mrs. Irwin began their work here last Summer. As they came in and the room became crowded, several sat on the floor. It seemed like the apostolic times of Scripture.

Old and young, those of the royal family, and the poorer class were there, and the interest written on every face was something never to be forgotten. One old lady, a devoted Bible woman belonging to the royal family whose husband is in the palace at Hue, and several young men of high rank were all seeking with simple earnestness to know more of the truth.

Accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Irwin and Miss Russell we boarded a train at six o'clock one morning for Hue, the ancient capital of Annam, where we arrived about three hours later.

The streets in all the Annamese cities are equal to any in the world. The French have been wise directors and the Annamese faithful laborers in bringing about a great change from the native conditions in the matter of roads and buildings. One almost forgets the prevailing conditions in this land of darkness and superstition when in the midst of these evidences of civilization.

Our way was over a long bridge of fine structure as all French bridges are. This bridge crosses the Rue river near its mouth.

The citadel and the king's palace which we were planning to visit, had been in sight for some time before crossing this river, and at that distance presented a rather formidable appearance.

At the gate of the citadel we presented tickets which had been secured in the city, and were permitted to pass the outer guard of two soldiers with fixed bayonets, one on each side of the gateway, and at the entrance to the palace the same formality was required.

The palace now stood before us consisting of one story building of brick covered with cement, all of the prevailing French yellow color.

As we entered the palace coming first into the living room, we realized that what in the years gone by had been a grand thing in the eyes of the Annamese people, now spoke only of past greatness in its gorgeous decorations of red and gold upon walls and pillars and often upon the furniture.

In the throne room we stood before the empty throne, only occupied upon the first day of the Annamese New Year, when the king receives obeisance of all the Mandarins of his realm. In this throne room were thirty pillars of red with gold or gilt decorations of dragons, and many panel decorations of the same color. The throne on a large dias decorated after the fashion of the room, was disappointing in its square, massive

construction and lack of any beauty, but it was after all in keeping with the other furnishings of the room, which contained thirteen tables and two tabourettes, some of which were richly carved and decorated.

Crossing the large court to another part of the palace, we came to the museum containing the possessions of the former kings. This museum has many rooms where women of the royal family are appointed as keepers. There is no air of royalty about these attendants who as they move about in the dimly lighted rooms seem more like menial servants than people of any courtly position, although this is regarded as a position of great honor.

At the back of these rooms are deep recesses, shut in by heavy portiers. These are closely guarded by the women who take good care that no visitor finds entrance.

The present palace of the king is a modern French house of moderate size, quite unpretentious but for its French and Oriental decorations of roof and cornice and gables. The king is no longer an independent ruler, and holds but little authority over his people. He can only leave the city by permission of the French officials.

After our breakfast, we again took rickshas for a ride of several miles to the tombs of the ancient kings. There was little here to speak of even past greatness.

Before sunrise the next morning, we were on our way to the train, leaving Hue at 6:40. We had enjoyed a sharp discussion with the crowd of ricksha men, all forcing themselves upon our attention, clamoring after the fashion of a metropolitan station in the homeland. Our Tourane friends were to return to their home and we to take the train for Dong Ha going from there by auto to Vinh, about 300 kilos farther north. We reached Dong Ha at 7:30 a. m. and found the auto waiting for us. The packing of our baggage required much skill, but when this was accomplished there was plenty of room for the five passengers and chauffeur. A boy who was to go to Gong Hoi rode on the suitcases at the side.

The chauffeur proved to be fine, the roads equal to the best in the world, and the day perfect. At six different points we were obliged to ferry across the river or an arm of the sea, and this was done in a most primitive manner. As we neared the ferry, a rudely constructed raft was brought up to the bank and a stout bridge of planks placed from the road to the raft. Across this the auto, after the passengers had left it, was driven on to the raft. We waited until the machine was on the raft and then safely over, when we followed. When the loading on the opposite shore was accomplished, we took our places for an undisturbed ride to the next ferry, where the same process was repeated.

At noon, after a ride of about eighty-five miles, we reached Gong Hoi. Here we stopped for the chauffeur to dine, and soon found what the absence of French influence makes. The streets of the village were wider than those of China, but this only allowed a larger crowd to gather around to stare and comment. When we were ready to alight, it was difficult to make our way to the sidewalk and inn. We found an Annamese inn not much in advance of those in China in neatness and comfort. As we started away, the shouts of the crowd followed us, for they gave us a real campaign send-off.

All through the afternoon we sped along, our chauffeur keeping up the same rapid speed. We drove into Vinh at half past nine, after a ride of fourteen hours with less than an hour of intermission, and were not overwheeled by the trip. All the way there had been so much that was novel and interesting that the day had seemed short.

The contradictions of the way were many. We were riding through a heathen country where the people gave evidence of

of being very low in the scale of humanity, and yet speeding over the finest roads, through rich farming lands, almost entirely utilized, with a chauffeur in whom we had the greatest confidence, but all the time feeling that heathenism prevailed. Beggars of the most wretched sort were always seen in the crowd which gathered about us at each stopping place. Every little while a heathen temple or shrine appeared under a tree, on a hill, or in a mountain cave. The villages, like those of China, seemed hardly fit for cattle. *AW Feb. 2, 1918*

After crossing our last ferry over the primitive launch, we soon drove into the wide well-kept streets of Vinh, and by electric lights saw that the residences and other buildings were of fine appearance. We were driven into the courtyard of the Grand Hotel, and were soon ready for our night's rest before the morning's early start. We left the hotel in the early dawn.

As we neared Hanoi, we became interested in the different processes or stages of rice culture. This is the great rice section of Annam producing three and four crops in one year. We reached Hanoi at noon, were met at the station by Mr. Cadman and were soon at his home among fellow-Christians again. This realization of the universal bonds between Christians of all countries and climates is indeed a pleasant joy and strength, and earnest of the life beyond.

One afternoon we rode around the city and began to understand the needs and the possibilities of Christian work there.

It is a city of 80,000 Annamese, but the dominant influence is French.

Here we found a fine market like those of our own little cities, a large department store, and several other smaller French ones, and many Annamese shops or trading places after the fashion of the Chinese, a large theatre, hospital, military barracks, museum, street cars, and rickshas like those in all the French cities for the foreigner; while another less luxurious grade was allotted the lower caste of natives.

After three delightful days at Hanoi we left on Wednesday morning to begin the travel of our "record day." Taking an early train we travelled until noon, when we reached Langson where we stopped for tiffin at Hotel D'Post. Then by the same train to Nam^{Canh}, the terminus of the road at the Annamese border of China. Here we found carriages waiting to take us to Ap Taai Tan, where we were to take a boat for Lungchow. What a vision met our eyes! The most amusing collection of vehicles and ponies we had ever seen. All the carriages were two-wheeled, box bodied, with buck-board springs, high backed seats with low arms, while the broad mud-guard gave them an air of comfort. The ponies were small and seemed to promise ability for one hour's travel instead of seven. Both ponies and vehicles had been sadly neglected, a la Chinese, while the harness had evidently been collected from fragments of former things and was a non-descript combination of string, rope, rags, and weather-worn leather. The baggage was packed in one carriage; the three ladies and child in the other three. Mr. Worsnip had met us at Hanoi, having come from Lungchow on his wheel the day before, and was directing our start which he had arranged for on the previous day. Mr. Jaffray rode a horse, Mr. Worsnip his wheel. The usual crowd of on-lookers, Chinese and Annamese, watched while we prepared to start, and no wonder! From the rags flying from the first bridle to the last piece of baggage in the rear, there was an air of inelegant comfort. The drivers walked beside their steeds at times, but when weary would spring into their respective chariots where they had a seat reserved. These men were not beauties in face or attire, and when one occasionally secured a comprehensive view of the entire procession, they might as well laugh and be done with it! Sometimes one would be reminded of the New York apple carts,

again of Flemish dog-carts, again one would think of the change could the ponies have a good scrub.

All went well and very comfortably, and we were indeed a happy company, and well might be, for the day was one to be happy in. By occasional walking we broke the monotony of the long ride, and when at 9 p. m. we reached the river, we felt that the whole ride had been one of enjoyment.

After this we were soon on board our house-boat and at 9:30 started down the river, and after a few hours reached Lungchow.

The next day was one of writing, visiting, and planning about the work. Friday morning we started for a trip up the Hatong River to visit a sacred cave high up in the mountain. Our sampan was still different from those we had been in, and the beauty of the river and shore, as well as the perfect day all made our ride delightful. We landed at the foot of the mountain, and by a climb of over 400 steps, we reached a large cave where we stopped for rest. In this cave was the home of the keeper. Various shrines had marked the way up, but this cave was fitted up for a restaurant where the several niches were used as private rooms for eating, so that those who made the long ascent to worship in the temple at the top might stop for rest and refreshment. Mrs. Worsnip had provided an elegant lunch which we spread on the restaurant table, ordered tea of the cave proprietor (as in a foreign cafe), and ate in one niche of the cave while we looked across the main room with three other rooms, natural recesses in the solid rock, then on the other side into the living room of the cave family.

After lunch we continued our ascent by a climb of about 600 steps in all. We entered a wonderful cave near the summit. Here we found many caves containing many altars of worship; one room after another deep into the side of the mountain. Not many devotees were there, but on special days hundreds climbed to this height to worship the miserable idols found in all these recesses. Much had been done in the way of ornamentation, but over it all, as well as in the sacred cave farther down the mountain, was the stamp of decay, all so clearly indicative of the final decay of heathenism.

The next day we took tiffin with the English Consul at noon, and at evening enjoyed a Chinese meal with the Native Pastor and two of his fellow-workers.

Sunday, after the morning service, we prepared for the beginning of our homeward journey. Again we took the house-boat for Ap Teai Tan which place we reached in the early evening. We slept in the boat and at five in the morning we went on shore to take carriages for the Annamese borders. We arrived about 1:30, and at three o'clock reached Langson, where we enjoyed our hot bath, good dinner, and bed, and at 5 o'clock in the morning arose for another day of travel.

Arriving at Haiphong we went to the hotel for dinner, and then to the Steamship "Hanoi" which was to leave early next morning.

Our trip to Annam can never be called "a thing of the past." The enjoyment of it will always be a delightful memory. The inspiration of the face to face days and hours on the mission stations, the deepening sense of God's love and watchful care over the work is just beginning in this great and needy land, the longing that the gospel might be spread throughout its length and breadth, and the consecration of the few who are bearing the burden of work and responsibility have entered into our life thought as a great and mighty cry for more earnestness in prayer, more devotion to the needs of those who are reaching out so eagerly for the truth as it is in Him who will save them and lift them out of the darkness into light. Never has the transformation from heathenism to Christianity seemed more wonderful—where are the needed workers?