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# CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY ALLIANCE

FOR THE FULNESS OF JESUS  
AND THE  
EVANGELIZATION OF THE WORLD

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ON THE MEKONG RIVER, ANNAM.

## THE EVANGELIZATION OF ANNAM.

The kingdom of Annam is about the size of France. It is a narrow strip of land lying along the China Sea and, with Cambodia and Cochin China, has a population of nearly twenty millions. It is entirely without Protestant missionaries. It is under French protection and is being rapidly developed as a colony. Its principal river is the Mekong or Cambodia, which rises near the table-land of Thibet and flows through Anam and Cambodia to China. It is subject to an annual rise like the Nile. The Tonquin, which is navigable, and runs up through the province, is being developed as a highway of commerce and a railway system is under French control, with a view to opening up communication with the provinces of Quensi and Annam in China.

The natives are Mongolians. They are a short and clumsy looking race, darker than the Chinese in complexion, with low foreheads and large mouths. Their language is probably a corrupt dialect of the Chinese and is mono-syllabic like that language. The people are idle and destitute of energy. The women are under more than the usual degradation of heathen lands.

The prevailing religion is Buddhism. The Roman Catholics introduced their religious system into the country in the seventeenth century and, through the Jesuit priests, French influence has been steadily increasing, until, in 1882, France claimed a protectorate over the whole country. This resulted in a very bitter war with the Black Flags of Tonquin—a Chinese military society—who fought with great determination. They were at

length subdued and the treaty of peace concluded with China giving France control of Tonquin on condition that she should subdue the pirates and outlaws on the rivers. The French priests are very numerous and powerful and have half a million professed converts. There have been several massacres of the Roman Catholics, in which over thirty thousand have perished.

There are many important cities in Annam, including Hue, Saigon and Hanoi, capitals of the three principal provinces. Our South China missionaries have had it upon their hearts to extend their work into this neglected land, and, as will be seen by the following article, Mr. Reeves, one of our missionaries in Southern China, has recently been able to enter the country and reports that the field is open and the people apparently friendly.