

For the sake of friends who are not familiar with the geographical location of French Indo-China, we may state at the outset that this neglected land lies to the south of China. It is that peninsula sometimes called by its ancient name, Annam. It lies directly opposite the Philippine Islands.

Indo-China has five divisions, namely, Tonkin, Annam, Cochinchina, Cambodia, and Laos.

No Protestant missionary society save THE CHRISTIAN AND MISSIONARY ALLIANCE has opened work in Indo-China, except the Plymouth Brethren who have one station in Laos. We thank God for the material help and cordial cooperation of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

The Paris Evangelical Association has French pastors at some of the ports who work, however, only among the French residents of the Colony.

The year 1917 was one of steady, material progress in our work, and since the beginning of the present year definite advance steps have been made for which we desire publicly to praise God.

Foremost among them is a forward step which it has been possible for us to make very recently,—namely, the purchase of a permanent site by the Mission at Hanoi, the capital of Indo-China. It will, perhaps, be difficult for friends at home to fully appreciate what this means to the work as a whole on this difficult field. We regard it as a great victory. Much prayer has been going up to God for a long time concerning this important matter.

The money for the purchase of this property, through the generosity of the Milton Stewart Fund, has been in hand for a year, but there has been continual opposition on the part of the enemy to the accomplishment of our end. After having considered several properties, more or less suitable, and finding it extremely difficult to deal with private individuals, and having been distinctly prevented in each case, it finally seemed clear to us that the best way was to try to purchase a vacant lot in a suitable part of the city, central and accessible to the Annamese population, from the French Colonial Government. This we well knew involved much risk of being check-mated and out-bargained by our enemies, as such a purchase, according to law, would have to be made at a public auction sale.

To make a long story short, however, we may say, to the glory of God that, while naturally speaking there was not the first shadow of a hope or the remotest prospect that we should succeed in getting the property, yet by the goodness of the Lord, the property today is actually in our possession. From the beginning of our negotiations we have felt quite sure that if we succeeded in securing this property it would be nothing short of a miracle; that unless the property were directly given us from God, our chances for securing it were *nil*.

Mr. Cadman was on hand at the City Hall at nine o'clock, Tuesday morning, May 4th, the day on which the sale was to take place. The Mayor of Hanoi and several other officers of the Government sat at the table, the former acting as auctioneer. The bidding is conducted in a very fair, impartial manner by means of lighted candles which last on an average of about one minute before going out. When the third candle burns out the opportunity to bid again is past.

A number of lots were sold and the Mayor then turned to Mr. Cadman and asked whether he would like to have the lot in which he was interested put up for sale at once. Mr. Cad-

man of course agreed. The Mayor stated the lowest price at which this property could be bought. Bidding went on for twenty minutes in which Mr. Cadman participated, raising the price of the property about \$350.00; our competitors were a group of Annamese gentlemen. Mr. Cadman written his last bid says:

"The first candle was lit and went out; the second, too. During this time I saw that the clique of Annamese competitors was not decided as they were talking over matters. The third candle was lighted. I tilted my chair and looked in prayer for further guidance. All along we have been prepared to let this property go, and in our morning prayer ere leaving home, we had asked the Lord to definitely let us if it were not His will for us to have this property. That third and deciding candle seemed to me to burn an unusually long time! I fully expected to hear a voice bidding a price. At last the candle went out and the Mayor said the property was ours."

The price of the property was \$5,600.00 Mexican money, a reasonable figure for the lot.

The interesting and almost amusing sequel to the story is the fact that while it is customary to sell lots by auction in regular rotation, yet on this occasion the Mayor, for some unaccountable reason, having disposed of the lots up to Lot No. 22, turned abruptly to Mr. Cadman and asked if he were willing to have the lot which we desired to purchase put up for sale. The number of our lot was 23. Mr. Cadman, of course, was willing, and Lot No. 23 was put up for sale. It seemed that this was quite contrary to custom and expectation, was the method the Lord used to cause our chief competitor to be absent at the moment that the sale was on. He must have gone out for some other matter, expecting to be back in plenty of time to bid on the lot the Protestants were seeking to buy. He returned to find it had already been sold.

Under the title of "A Friend of Justice" he aired his opinion and complaint in the newspaper the next morning, saying that "partiality had been shown to certain persons." As far as we are concerned, the fact remains that had our prayer worked for us in answer to prayer, things would never have come to pass as they have done.

Our friends will rejoice to know that the piece of land which has been secured is located in the very best possible place for our work, in the heart of the Annamese section of the city of Hanoi. The church and missionary residence to be built on this site will be easy of access to the thronging multitude of Annamese.

We praise God the more in connection with the purchase of this property, inasmuch as it is not merely a local victory for our Hanoi station, but as Hanoi is the capital of French Indo-China, and as this is the first time property has been sold by the French Colonial Government to a Protestant Mission, it opens the door of opportunity and victory for the whole land. Under circumstances forbid our writing as fully or as freely as we should like, but let us "thank God and take courage." We may ask our friends to unite with us in prayer more than ever in the past, for the progress of the gospel in French Indo-China.

In order to lay the needs of this most important work before the hearts of our friends and supporters in the home land

we again draw your attention to a few items concerning the field as follows:—

1. It is still true that there are over 20,000,000 souls without Christ and without hope in Indo-China.

2. The extent of pure gospel witness in Indo-China up-to-date consists in two stations with foreign missionaries in charge, namely at Tourane and Hanoi, an outstation at a village in the Tourane district, an outstation at Haiphong in connection with the Hanoi station, a colporteur at work alone in the city of Saigon and a station conducted by the Brethren Mission in Laos.

3. We still have but five missionaries in the work of the Indo-China field, namely: Mr. and Mrs. Cadman, Mr. and Mrs. Irwin, and Miss Foster. Miss Russel was obliged to return home on furlough, and the condition of her health, we regret to report, is such that we fear unless the Lord does a mighty work in her body, there is little hope of her returning to the field. Her place has been filled by Miss Foster, who arrived on the field in October, 1917, and is making good progress in the study of the language.

4. We are earnestly looking for reenforcements during the present year, and the hearts of our missionaries are going out in believing and fervent prayer for the opening of a new station in the near future in the great center of Saigon, the capital of Cochinchina, which is the most southerly section of Indo-China.

Mr. Cadman made a trip to Saigon in September last. The whole of this vast region is now open to the gospel. "A great door and effectual is opened unto us." What if "there are many adversaries," we may say with Caleb of old, "We are well able to overcome." When shall these who are still left without the pure gospel hear the glad sound? The answer, at least in a measure, lies with you!

5. The number of baptisms during 1917 was seventeen as compared with eighteen in 1916. The total membership at the end of 1917 was forty-two. A goodly number of earnest inquirers are reported from Tourane and Hanoi. The Annamese Christians are being taught in the truths of the gospel and built up in their most holy faith. They are growing in the grace that is in the Lord Jesus Christ.

6. A real work is being done among the children both in Tourane and Hanoi, and over four hundred little ones are gathered regularly in Sunday School classes. Besides this, special children's meetings are held by Mrs. Irwin at Tourane.

7. In connection with the Tourane station a chapel has been built by the voluntary offerings of the Annamese Christians of the Tourane church in a populous village in the district. Reg-

ular meetings are held here, and souls are being brought to Christ. It is most encouraging to note this effort made by the Annamese Christians on self-supporting lines. Mr. Irwin writes that the general spiritual tone of the Tourane church has been deepened during the year. The membership is thirty-eight. Mr. Thua, the Annamese preacher at Tourane, continues to be blessed in his ministry. He has had some sore physical testings, but we trust that he will ere long be fully restored to health and strength, and that he will be used in larger measure than ever before in the work.

8. At Hanoi four have been baptized, three men and one woman. A faithful witness of the gospel is given from the splendidly located street chapel which has been rented in the very heart of the Annamese section of the city, and a very intelligent class of people is hearing the gospel continually. Thus far the preaching has necessarily had to be done by Mr. Cadman alone. The establishment of our work in the new property will greatly strengthen our mission in Hanoi.

9. The translation of the Gospels, which is largely the work of Mrs. Cadman, is going on steadily, and we hope soon, with the splendid cooperation of the British and Bible Society, to have all the Gospels ready for a wide circulation among the people. The Bible Society has also agreed to the printing of a bilingual edition of John's Gospel in French and Annamese, which ought to have a very good circulation among the more educated Annamese.

10. The Alliance Press at Hanoi, in Mr. Cadman's care, has been set up and work begun. Tracts have been printed and an Annamese Hymn Book has just been published which we believe will be a great blessing and help to the little Church of Christ in Indo-China in the ministry of praise.

In closing, we desire to repeat the opening sentence of our last report. May its solemn truth sink down deeply into our hearts and bring forth real effort in the name of Christ, resulting in the speedy evangelization of Indo-China: "There is no one portion of the world which at once has so wide an area and so great a population, that has been so totally left without the pure gospel as French Indo-China." This being so, is it not incumbent upon every child of God to do his or her full duty, whatever that part may be, in helping to give the tidings of great joy to those who have not yet heard it? Whether it may be yours to "go" or "give," may no reader of these lines fail in doing his or her "bit," and may all unite in earnest, effectual prayer that His blessed Word may "run and be glorified" and His glorious coming hastened. We are working, thank God, in the conscious enjoyment of this blessed hope. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus. Amen."