

CHURCH GROWTH IN VIETNAM.

D. I. J. story/account
as a missionary 1.

My missionary career began just after the First World War. With a desire to obey the Divine commission to reach those who were without the Gospel of Christ, ~~was~~ ^{WAS LAID ON MY HEART.} ~~balanced~~ by the pioneer need in what was known as French Indo-China, like many young missionaries I was interested in the policy of establishing an indigenous church and was familiar with the writings of Roland Allen and others. Then as now, the familiar slogan was, 'self-support, self-government and self-propagation'. Although this ~~can~~ ^{can} say over-emphasize 'self' its purpose and principles are important.

^{we arrived in the by ---}
We reached Hongkong early in 1919 after a pleasant voyage on the 'S.S. China'. Among fellow passengers was a grandson of Titus Coan, ^{EARLY MISSIONARY TO HAWAII.} it was a privilege to be met by Rev. R.A. Jaffray pioneer missionary in Quang Si, South China, and superintendent of the new Alliance Mission ^{WHICH BEGAN IN 1912} in French Indo-China. Dr Jaffray was known not only by his publication ministry in China, his Bible Magazine and his connections in Canada, but later he pushed on beyond the borders of Indo-China to open work in Indonesia and Borneo. He stood with the group who came out on the company launch to meet our ship which was anchored in the lovely busy bay. I had no trouble picking him out in the crowd, even though I had not ~~met~~ ^{PREVIOUSLY} met him.

^{by story of}
Chinese New Year was being celebrated in the city with great noise and pageant. We spent several days in a Japanese hotel in Hongkong. In spite of it being a holiday Mr Jaffray took me to Tak Cheong the tailor to be measured for a tropical suit. It was very cold ~~indistinguishable~~ but weather would soon warm up farther South. At Tak Cheong's I first learned to eat watermelon seeds after cracking the tiny ^{shell} ~~seed~~ between the teeth. This skill, like eating with chop sticks had to be acquired. All day long and throughout the night, conversation was maintained by shouting due to the din ^{thousands} of ~~millions~~ of fire crackers suspended in long strings from downtown buildings.

^{PORTAUS}
We embarked for Haiphong on the French mail steamer 'Andre Lebon'. ^{Each} evening Mr Jaffray walked the deck when the sea was calm, sometimes with me and frequently with a noted Chinese diplomat, Dr Wong, who was en route to Versailles for the peace treaty. Mr Jaffray, I recall, had clear ideas of what should be done with respect to the Far East. Many times in later years I observed that Dr Jaffray usually travelled with a suitcase ^{of} books and when weather was rough he worked constantly in his bunk preparing material for publication.

^{Policy.}
During these days and later, after we were met in Haiphong by Rev Wm C. Cadman and Rev R.M. Jackson, Mr Jaffray clearly stated his convictions on the nature of Church Beginnings and Church Growth. We faced a unique opportunity in Indo-China. The Alliance was the only Protestant mission, except for the Swiss Brethren Mission in Laos, working in an area of responsibility that soon would comprise more than 25 million people. Our location between China on the North and India with its neighbors

to the West, was strategic. Mr Jaffray was familiar with missionary policy in China and desired that we should avoid any mistakes that had been made there. Institutional work should take its proper place, with primary emphasis on the planting and growth of an indigenous Church. There must be direct Gospel preaching with an aim to secure converts to Christ. The bible must be translated in the vernacular. A Bible Training School should be established as soon as possible in order to train christian pastors and evangelists. Publication of Christian literature should be given great emphasis. Mr Cadman already was laying the foundation for our Publication Department. He had come to South China originally as an experienced printer to assist Mr Jaffray. Mrs Cadman was a student of Greek and Hebrew and was deeply interested in the preparation of literature.

It is noteworthy that in the call and selection of Alliance missionaries, there usually are men and women available for special ministries. Thus when we extended missionary work to Cambodia, Thailand and Laos, translators were available, Rev G.E. Roffe in Laos, Rev. A.L. Hammond and others in Cambodia and Thailand. Additional specialists have followed in their train.

BIBLE INSTITUTE

At our annual missionary conference held in Tourane 1920, Mr Jaffray urged that we begin our Bible Training School immediately. The small group of missionaries on the field was committed already to individual ministries and some felt it was not yet time to open the School. ^{Rev.} ~~Mr.~~ and Mrs Wm C. Cadman in the North and Rev. J.D. Olsen in the South were occupied with bible translation in addition to station ministries. Rev and Mrs E.F. Irwin, Rev. I.R. Stebbins and Rev E.M. Jackson were engaged in evangelistic ~~work~~ ^{work} and I was left as the only available appointee. Messrs Irwin and Stebbins were teaching a class of young men and some of these became the nucleus of our Bible School which was opened after my marriage to Ruth Goforth in June 1921. This institution had humble though ambitious beginnings. Mr Irwin's horse stable, with manger intact was classroom for the dozen beginners. These young men represented students, secretaries, artisans and peasants. Some ^{were} ~~had been~~ educated in French schools others had received the old ^{CHINESE} classical training. We had the Scriptures in Vietnamese, Chinese and Latin. Today some of the original group are leaders in the Church of Vietnam. There is a real contrast between ^{WHAT WE HAD IN} those early days and the present beautiful Seminary compound farther South at Hhatrang. I taught four years and was succeeded by ^{and Rev. Mrs P.E. Carl} ~~and later by~~ Rev. J.D. Olsen ^{and later by} Rev. H.H. Hazlett. A competent staff of Vietnamese teachers ^{was added, Rev. Ong van Huyen, Rev. Le nguyen Anh, Rev. Doan van Mien and Rev. Vu van Cu.} Today Rev. Ong van Huyen is dean of the Seminary with a combined staff of Vietnamese and American teachers.

Our Bible School program emphasized the building of an indigenous church. Each student signed a paper indicating that he was being trained for a self-supporting church ministry. Even though he might have sold possessions to attend school there was no guarantee of a job. It required serious effort and time in a colonial

atmosphere for this to register. We persisted in the Bible School and in the districts to make effective the indigenous program. Mr Jaffray sometimes used an illustration of a ladder with rungs. Each ten giving members should take care of one tenth of a worker's support. This was never applied literally but it was used to challenge the men in their achieving the goal. Churches became self-supporting long before they had one hundred giving members. One student now a long time pastor in a self-supporting church was shocked when I asked that he eat at home in order to reduce expenses at School. 'Do you mean to say', he enquired, 'that I am going to be shut out from sharing in the grace of God? In one sense he was right, for the fellowship of students on an austerity basis was indeed a place for grace. Until a break through occurred it was necessary to use constant heavy pressure to reach our ^{objective.} ~~goal.~~ ~~missionary~~ ~~pastors~~ ~~Many~~ ^{Some} men preferred to be under missionary oversight rather than work with and under their own local church committee. One pastor insisted that his church was unable to fully meet his support. When I talked with his committee they said they were quite willing to meet his full support but the pastor did not desire to be fully obligated to them. Next week he was. When worked out in love the missionary insistence on the right program does not promote discord. Once the Vietnamese church realized that it was truly an indigenous movement under the direction of the Holy Spirit they assumed responsibilities in a delightful manner. For many years no Church program or conference has been carried ^{on} ~~out~~ by missionaries, other than to co-operate as requested.

At first the curriculum was arranged so that ^a student^s spent one year in School and one year in the work, until he had completed three years of study. There was a preparatory course for those who were not ready for the regular studies. Later the rule became two years in School, then one year in the District before the final school term. It was difficult to maintain our schedule because missionaries were unwilling to release a valuable man after one year. It required much pressure to get the men back but it had to be and the School succeeded in getting them ~~back~~.

Student preachers were sent North to Tonkin and South to Cochin-China. Originally most of the men came from Tourane and nearby districts but before long we had students from Tonkin and Cochin-China. This contributed greatly to the unity of the Church. As in all countries there are sectional rivalries and differences in dialect. We had several problems but these were solved by the grace of God.

It was a red-letter day when the first group of students came from Cochin-China, including a fine group from Rev. H.A. Jackson's ^{and Rev. J.A. Stebbins} districts. They were enthusiastic and sometimes a bit aggressive and before long there was trouble between them and one of the student monitors. The Southern men claimed that the monitor was too severe and one day he himself broke School regulations. The Southern group came to me and insisted that the man in question be dismissed from school because according to their custom

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he was guilty of immorality. We dealt with the matter and while it was clear that he should be disciplined and removed from his position as monitor, there was no proof of immorality. I asked the men to pray about the matter and to trust God to work things out. The leader, Mr Le dinh Tuoi came back a few days later and said that after much prayer their ultimatum was, I must dismiss the accused and if not they would return to their homes in the South. This was a serious problem, just when the field was increasing in unity. Finally I had to insist that unless the leader obeyed School regulations he would be sent home. Mr Tuoi was adamant in his insistence but during this time Mrs Jeffrey continued to teach him the organ and acted as though everything was quite normal. It was one of the hardest things I had yet had to go through in the school, and when the day came that Mr Tuoi was to embark for Saigon he asked permission to say a word to the students. As he stood up the Lord came down on the entire group and Mr Tuoi broke down in weeping, confession and prayer. Frequently in years after he became president of the Vietnamese Church Mr Tuoi reminded pastors that in order to serve God and be used of Him, we must yield wholly to His will. 'It may be' he said, 'like me God will have to break you by the power of His love'. He was deeply convicted, he said by the fact that Mrs Jeffrey showed such a spirit of sympathy and love even though he was resisting school authority.

Another student came to us from Cambodia. One day in class he stood up and showed the veins in each forearm where several gold needles were embedded. They could not be seen but we could feel them. 'These needles' ~~he~~ said Mr Heng, 'were put in my veins in the name of Satan to protect me from my enemies. The Lord has told me to have them cut out'. So we went down to see the French doctor. At first the doctor was surprised and said the needles would cause no harm but when he listened to Mr Heng's testimony concerning his reason for having them cut out, he said to me, 'You surely have a Gospel that changes the hearts of these nationals'. X

PUBLICATION WORK

I have already mentioned that Mr Cadman was an experienced printer and had begun to publish literature. At first he had only a small hand press but later a large machine was secured. Early publications included a catechism, a popular tract translated from Chinese on the 'True and the False'. Then a bible magazine was added, the Gospels, New Testament and finally the entire bible in Vietnamese. The bible was translated and published under the auspices of The British and Foreign Bible Society. Mr Cadman surrounded himself with Chinese and Vietnamese translators. ^{Mr Olson also had competent helpers.} ~~Assisting~~ the Bible translation was a noted Vietnamese scholar who though not a Christian was deeply interested in the Scriptures. One of the young men who worked with Mr Cadman is today a translation expert active in getting out Christian literature. Others who worked with Mr Cadman now have their own printing establishments.

While missionaries were interned for more than two years during the second World War, the Press continued to operate under the direction of the Vietnamese Church president, Rev Le van ~~THAI~~ and Rev Tran van De District Chairman in Tonkin. The

Later ~~Homera~~ ^{Homer}-Dixon who had opened a number of street chapels in the city of Hanoi began a Short Term Bible School. This developed as a splendid preparatory course for students who later went to Tourane. ~~Mrs. Dixon~~ ^{Ho-Mera} was a gifted bible teacher and a keen student of Vietnamese. She engaged also in literary work and ministered to a group of ^{Upper} Tribes' people in Tonkin.

Another important Short Term Bible School is being held regularly at Chuahlay, South Viet Nam.

Vinh-long, South Viet Nam

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young man mentioned in the preceding paragraph, Mr Do duc T_hi, edited the Bible Magazine. The war situation forced the closing of the Press and later after Mr Cadman's death it was moved South to Dalat. Here again labor troubles necessitated our closing the Press and our use of local presses in Saigon. In order to keep within our budget and avoid excessive costs of French owned presses in Saigon, it was necessary to use and train men who would meet our requirements. By hard work this succeeded and competent work is being done. The objective of a private owned press with adequate space and equipment has not yet been achieved.

During several years before the Press was moved from Hanoi, publication ~~work~~ was undertaken by Mrs Jeffrey doing mimeograph work. This was made possible by the Bible Meditation League who sent regular shipments of paper to the field. Many of Dr Simpson's books were translated and mimeographed. The 'Dawn' magazine for young people and non-Christians was begun in 1947. Bible Meditation League has continued to send regular funds for publication work in Vietnamese and for the Tribes.

Several missionary couples have contributed to this development. Rev. Mr. Jean Fume, Rev. Mr. R. H. Raskin.
The development of a competent publication department since the war has been slow but steady, and a major effort is now being made to reach this objective. A recent Literature Conference, February 1963, in Hongkong convened by Rev L.L. King Foreign Secretary of the Alliance, with delegates from several fields has laid solid plans for expansion. Many years ago the Vietnamese Church committee was urged to set apart a specialist to represent them in Publication Work. Various things combined to hinder this but now men with necessary qualifications are in sight although the present full scale war requires such men for military service. From the Mission standpoint every effort has been made to avoid a Western slant on publications. Good team-work between the Mission and the Church is opening the way to improvement. This applies to Sunday School publications, Devotional books Preacher's Helps and books for a Preacher's Library. Not every preacher is a writer whether he be in America or Vietnam and we do rejoice that such men are being raised up. Among those who have been active in preparation of Vietnamese literature are: Rev Ong van Huyen, Rev Doan van Mieng, Rev Nguyen van Van, Rev Nguyen thanh Hang, Rev Phan xuan Tin, Rev Le van Thai, Rev Le hoang Phu and Rev Tran thu Quang. Of these Mr Tin who for years has been a missionary among the Tribes has carried on faithfully with very little support behind him. Other talented young men are contributing and there are great possibilities for the future.

Colporteurs.

One very important method of Church extension was by the use of colporteurs. Sometimes men travelled alone and in other cases they worked as a boat team. Many churches were established by these colporteurs, often in isolated locations. Some of the colporteurs became pastors of churches. Rev. Huynh van Nga with his boat and team of colporteurs was instrumental in opening many churches in Cochinchina. Men trained in pioneer work under Mr Nga knew what it was to sacrifice. Rev Doan van Mieng now president of the Evangelical Church in Viet Nam began his ministry

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as a young voluntary colporteur working with Mr Nga.

The Church Universal.

The Vietnamese Church profited by contact with national leaders and missionaries from China, India and other speakers from abroad. The memory of these meetings is fragrant with a spirit of unity, love and absence of criticism. There were visiting evangelists, men like Silas Wong, Leland Wong, Andrew Gih, Timothy S.K. Dsao and more recently Pastor Chavan, Philip Teng and others. Noteworthy was the arrival of Dr John Sung in 1938. Mrs Jeffrey had read of his campaigns in China and urged that he be invited to Indochina. Dr Sung's ministry still bears fruit. His choruses continue to be sung and witnessing bands have continued ~~until~~ to this day. I believe his ministry had a great deal to do with establishing a desire for strong spiritual national leaders in the minds of Vietnamese pastors and Christians. Perhaps more than any other he gave impetus to an indigenous church policy. Other European and American speakers have contributed to the spiritual development of the Church.

Obstacles.

An attempt was made in colonial days in 1926 to block the growth of the Church. It was claimed that Protestants were permitted to work only in certain Vietnamese treaty ports and in Cochinchina in the South. A number of preachers were imprisoned, including Rev Ong van Huyen now dean of the Bible College in Nhatrang. In the city of Nhatrang pastor Lieu, now retired, was arrested and sent out to work with the road gang and to sweep the streets of the city where he had been a pastor. He witnessed to fellow prisoners and to his guards. He won converts and soon was promoted by them to be water-carrier and preacher. Always possessing a keen sense of humor Mr Lieu wrote me one day and smuggled the letter out somehow. Would it be all right he asked if he baptized by effusion instead of immersion because he only had a pail of water. Would the use of a poor grade of tea in serving communion be in line with the constitution? His official board comprised ex-criminals of every sort including murderers. When news of the imprisonment of Vietnamese pastors reached France, Protestant members of the French Chamber of Deputies used their influence and the men were quickly released. Quite unexpectedly I was met in Tourane by Mr Lieu with his infectious smile. How did you get out? I don't know, they just sent me out but the group in prison wept when I left. This testing was in God's plan to prepare the Church for greater trials that lay ahead.

Growth.

It has been a joyful privilege to watch the development of maturity in Church leadership. In early years the workers insisted that we take the lead and we equally insisted that they must do so. Today no such situation exists. Again and again by patience and good timing problems were solved in their own conference sessions. The Vietnamese Church is respected for its integrity by Government and

other agencies throughout the country. A real victory was gained when Church leaders stood firm against intrusion in Church government by zealous government youth leaders who insisted that each local church must have an official Te Cao group--- investigation group against communist propaganda. I* was quietly but firmly pointed out that while all citizens must be loyal and abide by government regulations yet the Church must remain a spiritual organisation apart from any official government ~~xxxx~~ ~~xxxx~~ organisation.

Constitution.

The need for a Church constitution was suggested by the Foreign Department of ~~the~~ our society and ~~the~~ ~~need~~ also was recognized on the field. Dr A.C. Snead on behalf of the department laid down the principle that the local church and its requirements should be basic, everything ^{must} guarantee the freedom of the local church group. Our Vietnamese leaders had no definite suggestions to offer so I took the constitution of the Presbyterian Church and our own Alliance constitution as a basis and adapted it to local ^{later} district and national church requirements in Vietnam. Considerable detail was added, ^{and} this was strongly criticised by some as going too much into detail. Approved by the Foreign department the constitution was studied, revised and adopted by the General Council of the Vietnamese Church. There were some attempts to mis-use this document but gradually a proper balance prevailed. Later when an attempt was made by a small dissident group to take over the Church and imprison its leaders, the constitution was a bulwark to prevent the attempt. The false charges were carried even to the courts but were completely disproved. Some have maintained that a constitution is a hindrance to spiritual development but like any form of law the trouble lies with the flesh rather than with the regulations. The Church sometimes has paid too much attention to the 'letter' or taken an ultra conservative stand. Nevertheless it has avoided grave dangers of lawlessness. The Church constitution was and is helpful in furthering self-support and self-government. Only those churches that ^{are completely} ~~are~~ self-supporting are entitled to all the privileges of the National Church.

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A recent attempt to abolish the present constitution and substitute another in its place. It was suggested that instead of the local church being basic, everything should work from the top down. This would allow for one leader with assistants with everything under their control. This is an attempt to introduce the idea of 'Big Government' and it has been presented very persuasively. The Vietnamese National Church assembly thus far has stood strongly in favor of the democratic procedure in spite of strong pressure in favor of excessive centralisation.

Ordination.

Ordination of pastors is provided for in the Church constitution. It was necessary and still is, to avoid delaying the ordination of men who are qualified

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and who are pastors of self-supporting churches. Here is where the mind needs wisdom and patience when it feels the pace is too slow. The Holy Spirit alone can give true balance when unnecessary delay and 'laying on of hands suddenly' are equally to be avoided.

Indigenous.

Because it was the only evangelical group in Vietnam and entirely autonomous the Church was not organized as part of a Western denomination. Actually the question of its being an Alliance Church did not come up for consideration as it has in some of our fields where there are other denominations already in existence. There are close ties with the Mission and with its doctrinal position clearly expressed in the Church constitution. Originally the ideal of the Church and of myself was that any other group coming to Vietnam would work with and through this United Gospel Church. This has not been realized but the desire for true fellowship and unity is there. There could be of course a danger of developing along monolithic lines but this need not be. With a membership of less than one hundred thousand the Church in Vietnam is still in its youth.

Ecumenical Ecumenicity

Steps were taken by representatives of the World Council of Churches in Geneva to bring the Vietnamese Church officially into its fellowship. An official representative was sent to Viet Nam and considerable relief help was provided which was greatly appreciated by the Church. Being committed to a clear-cut evangelical and bible program the Vietnamese Church, while recognizing true fellowship, is not committed to membership in the ecumenical organization.

Missionary Vision.

Early in its history the Church in Vietnam developed a missionary vision. This desire was implanted by the Holy Spirit in the hearts of missionaries and Vietnamese alike. Rev H.A. Jackson and Rev G.H. Smith were leaders in this missionary thrust among the Tribes people inhabiting a large territory and presenting an urgent challenge. The ~~Mission~~ may have made a mistake in developing the Vietnamese ~~missionary~~ ~~missionary~~ as under Mission supervision rather than a Church controlled program. Nevertheless important advances were made by Vietnamese missionaries as well as the work carried on by workers from among the Tribal groups. Vietnamese workers have served with distinction in areas out from Saigon, Dalat, Banmethuot, Danang, Hue and Quang Tri. And now in re-settlement villages and strategic hamlets there is true missionary activity by young student workers. The pressures of war have added difficulties to the missionary program but the fire of love is still burning. A strong Tribe's District under their own leaders is being developed but there are still large sections of the country unreached with the Gospel.

The Church missionary outlook has extended to Cambodia and Laos. Rev Nguyen

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hau Nhuong and his wife who for many years accomplished a great work in Ban-methuot area have been sent by the Church as missionaries to Laos. After attending the third South East Asia missionary conference held by the Alliance in Zamboanga, Rev Doan van Mieng president of the Vietnamese Church has constantly urged the church to move forward in its missionary effort. A substantial offering was taken at the General Church Conference in Saigon in June 1963 for the support of a missionary among the Cham people in Vietnam.

Relief and Subsidy

Before the recent World War the question of self-support in local churches was virtually assured. During more than two years of missionary internment the churches carried on effectively. Later when fighting was savage between French and Nationalist forces, many congregations were greatly weakened materially. Congregations were dispersed and the economic situation deteriorated. One day Rev Le van Thai president of the Church came to me and said, 'Mr Jeffrey we must have some temporary financial help for the preachers, probably not for more than one year'. We discussed the danger of permanent subsidy and the need for maintaining the principle of self-support. Mr Thai assured me that the men understood clearly that this was emergency relief and not subsidy and that it was definitely a temporary measure. ~~Headquarters approved~~ ~~Head~~ Mission headquarters approved but this temporary 'relief' lasted more than a year. In every district a small group and gradually all of the men began to feel the pull of nationalistic propaganda. The Church must be subsidized, America is well able to do it and owes it to us. The older leaders understood the true position but were helpless against the rising tide of nationalistic feeling. I met with the preachers, North, South and Center. Feelings were very intense. The men said, 'If you were not an old friend, we would not even meet with you'. For days during hours at a time I was under great pressure. When I insisted that neither those at our headquarters in America, nor the field could forsake the principle of an indigenous church, its very existence depended its being self-propagating, I was answered by the full weight of an emotional appeal and the charge that we were not acting in love. In the end the crisis was passed. We did have to relieve pressure by forwarding their appeals to headquarters but the Foreign Department stood firm. A few attempts were made later to revive the issue but the Church had voted to take an immediate withdrawal of subsidy and not, as they said, 'a gradual cutting off of the dog's tail'. During the change from older to younger men in Mission and Church leadership the Church has continued to grow in grace.

It is sometimes claimed that missionaries on the field, especially as they get older, are unduly susceptible to emotional financial appeals. There is a danger but ~~this~~ constant administrative responsibility usually works the other way. One handicap on our field was conference insistence that national workers be given an allowance for each child. This was praiseworthy on the ground of fair remuner-

ation but it did not fit in with a program of turning things over to a church congregation as soon as it came into being. It was up to the Church to set its own standard. It was beneficial on the other hand for congregations to understand that ~~they must~~ a preacher was worthy of his hire. From a spiritual standpoint it is encouraging to note the steady growth of the Church in realizing its financial responsibility.

Evangelism

The Vietnamese have a vigorous program of evangelisation and of reaching pioneer districts. When ~~in~~ the Church committed itself officially to the policy that each local church must be responsible for its pastor, even in times of emergency, it believed that stronger churches would help those that were weaker in times of distress. The Mission was requested to give some financial assistance in four areas: Bible School, Publication, Evangelistic teams and Pioneer advance in areas totally unreached. Young student preachers have gone into settlements and strategic hamlets to establish churches under very difficult conditions. Evangelistic teams are penetrating new territory in constant danger and also are helping in local areas. In all districts groups of churches are working together in evangelistic effort with regular monthly programs. This is entirely a national Church affair *as in the 50-70 W. program.* except where missionaries are in a position to assist. The financial needs are great and whenever possible we share with them on a personal basis. We know that if suddenly every missionary were withdrawn the Church would remain, 'Steadfast, unmoveable always abounding in the work of the Lord'. But this fact is no reason for our withdrawal as long as it is possible to share with them in a struggle against overwhelming odds.

Sects.

The Church has maintained its bible doctrinal position in relation to national sects. One of the leaders of the Cao Dai movement was for ~~ina~~ a time in contact with Rev J.D.Olsen as an enquirer but ~~he did not go on~~ ^{expressed}. When Mr Olsen was killed in an accident this religious leader ~~showed~~ his sympathy in a telegram. In Cochinchina a sect was founded by Mr Bo Dai and named the 'Banana Cocanut Society'. This group was vegetarian and the members used to go into trances and speak in tongues. Mr Bo Dai and his group of several hundred asked to join the Church as believers in Christ. This did not work out because Ong Bo Dai claimed to be a prophet of God quite apart from his relationship to Christ. He was a remarkable character but quite tied up to his own claims. Many of his followers still have their bibles and hymnals and still hold to their own peculiar beliefs. A former colporteur has been ~~trying to~~ witnessing recently to members of this group.

Institutions.

For many years the Church has felt the need for High Schools and some are beginning to talk of a University. Had there been no war it seems likely that the

Missionary Contribution.

Basic in missionary contribution to Church Growth is the regular district ministry of the missionary. Teaching, preaching, visiting, Short Term Bible School session, Daily Vacation Bible Schools, Classes for women and many other avenues of service are included. Some also have been called to serve with the Bible Society in the vital task of Scripture distribution.

Constant evangelistic effort was conducted by Alliance missionaries in Tonkin prior to World War 2. We were greatly understaffed and when in 1954 the country was divided at the 17th parallel, there were fewer Protestant Christians in Tonkin than elsewhere in Vietnam. Approximately half of the workers and believers moved to the South. In Saigon Northerners frequently enquire about Mr and Mrs Pruett, Mr and Mrs R.M. Jackson, ^{Mr & Mrs VAN ANE} and Mr and Mrs Curwen Smith. And Southerners often ask news concerning Mr Ferry. The list of missionaries in Vietnam who have served with distinction in basic district ministry is too long to enumerate here. There is a day coming when the entire story will be unfolded. Without this major contribution to Church Growth by missionaries and by national pastors, evangelists and colporteurs all other special ministries would be largely ineffective.

The Church in Vietnam and missionaries are not unmindful of the essential ministry of the Foreign Department of the Alliance ^{with respect} ~~in connection~~ to Church Growth. In fact all pastors, workers and Prayer Groups of the Society are vitally involved in that growth. Church membership abroad exceeds that of Alliance churches in America. And that is a major reason for our existence as a Society.

High School program might have materialized. Subscriptions were taken in each of two districts. Other programs have been carried forward. The Orphanage at Nhatrang under the sponsorship of the Christian Children's Fund is a model of national efficiency. Rev Le van Thai has been the key man in developing this orphanage which was originally sponsored by Rev E.F. Irwin, field chairman at the time. Other such institutions are contemplated. Mennonite doctors and nurses and builders assisted in the Leprosarium at Bannethuot. Later they opened a clinic at Nhatrang under the auspices of the Vietnamese Church and this may develop into a hospital in that area. The growth of christian institutions is normal procedure as the Church grows and believers are able to contribute to the social and educational need of its own constituency and of the community.

Church Buildings.

The importance of attractive church buildings is sometimes minimized. For many years church buildings in Viet Nam showed a sad lack of any sort of architecture. The Society had no sample plans, so on one furlough Mrs Jeffrey and I decided to secure a plan for a contemplated church building in Saigon. One day in Ohio we saw a Lutheran church that looked right so we took a picture and later a Saigon architect adapted this plan. As a result almost all new churches built by the Vietnamese have basically followed this building plan. Today in most of the world there is no such thing as an absolute indigenous pattern, the whole world is contributing, sometimes its best and sometimes its worst. It is just as true abroad as in America that an attractive though unpretentious building can be of great help in Church growth. In Viet Nam buildings are important in order to emphasize the permanence of the work as well as the true dignity of the Church. Meetings in private homes are not permitted by the government because they fear political activity. There are dangers of course from undue emphasis on outward material growth which must be kept secondary to the building of the spiritual body of believers in Christ.

Faithful unto Death.

Many Vietnamese christians have been called to lay down their lives during years of bitter fighting in Viet Nam. I refer not only to those who have been called to military service. Many have been put to death because of their loyalty to Christ and His Church. Without cause other than vague suspicion men, women and children have been shot or beheaded with the heavy hoes used in the country. They suffered with Christian courage and gave clear testimony of their faith in Jesus Christ. One Christmas three deacons from Truong An district decided to meet for worship at Tourane where they would meet many friends whom they had not seen for a long time. They set out with bibles and hymnals but as they passed through French lines they were stopped and without trial were taken to the river bank

and shot. They were given time to kneel in prayer. Several pastors including in one instance husband, wife and son have been put to death by anti government forces. In 1962 at Thach Ban Mr Truong Len deacon of the local church was beheaded with a hoe. He had remained in the area to encourage and strengthen local believers even though others had left. When condemned to die he requested time to pray after which he asked that word be sent to his wife and children urging them to be faithful unto death and never to swerve from their allegiance to Christ. Our Lord said, 'Upon this rock I will build my Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it'. Truly the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church. in every land.

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Chinese Work (Add 10 a or somewhere)

There are several thriving Chinese church congregations in Vietnam. Originally Chinese work began in Cholon, now amalgamated with Saigon; under supervision from Wuchow ^{South China} and assisted by Rev J.D.Olsen. Mr Wai (check his full name) the present pastor was trained in Wuchow and is very popular with our Vietnamese pastors. Before him other Chinese workers had been sent from Wuchow. This church is now officially linked with...(see official name of Leland Wong's group. This organisation really was established by Dr Jaffray....) Another congregation was organized by Rev Hua hong Long who was trained at Tourane. This group is chiefly from among those who speak the Swatow dialect. (Or Chieu Chieu?) Alliance missionaries transferred from South China are carrying on a vigorous program among Chinese speaking Vietnamese. A strong Alliance Chinese church in Saigon is working in full fellowship with the Vietnamese Church. Other Chinese speaking congregations have been organized in Central Vietnam and in Cambodia and Chinese speaking Alliance missionaries are working with them. The Overseas Missionary Fellowship (Check official name of C.I.M) have also begun work among Chinese in Saigon. Although there is no United Chinese Church in Vietnam, the several groups are working together in real fellowship.

Youth Work.

Youth Work and a vigorous Sunday School program were stressed in ^{Quang}~~Quang~~ Nam District under the direction of Mrs E.F.Irwin and later by other missionary ladies. This ministry has been developed throughout the field by the Church and by missionaries alike. ^{VIETNAMESE} Leaders have been appointed ^{by the CIPRAH} to develop Witnessing Bands, Radio, Childrens' and Youth Work. The Mission is assisting in the important ^{and Radio} program by allocating a number of younger missionaries to Youth work in many important centers.

In 1941 the first Youth Conference was held in the South in connection with the annual Southern District Conference. The following year it became and continues to be a regular ^{is} Youth Conference representing the entire field and fully organised on ~~Sixty~~ National, District and Local levels. One of the greatest encouragements in Church Growth in Vietnam is the vitality of Youth activities under ^{VIETNAMESE} youth leadership in full fellowship with the overall Church program. Without this thrust the Church could easily have begun to shrivel. Quite a number of young and old are active in Youth ministry including Rev Nguyen son Ha a third generation christian, Rev Pham xuan Tin and Rev Pham van Hieu. Laymen also are taking part in Youth extension work including Mr Huynh minh V who is a member of the Vietnamese National Assembly.