

THE
CALL

OF FRENCH INDO-CHINA
AND EAST SIAM

No. 34.—1932 Jan. - March

EAST SIAM

JESUS has been promised these uttermost parts of the earth for His possession, and the heathen for His inheritance. Any day now may see Jesus come to claim His own, and this glorious consummation realised. But what of our individual part in this? Shall not we, the blood-bought, do all in our power by praying, giving, and going, that in these last days the four millions of East Siam may have an opportunity of sharing in the eternal blessedness which shall be the «inheritance of the saints» at His Coming?

May God grant that each reader of this special East Siam issue of the «Call» shall measure up to this sacred trust.

BRIEF FIELD NOTES

MISSION CHURCHES.—In future half the Mission Subsidy to each native evangelist of the Mission Churches will be paid on a *pro rata* basis, according as funds are received from the Home Board.

FURLOUGHS.—Funds permitting, Mr. and Mrs. Gunther and Mr. and Mrs. Hazlett expect to leave this spring for well-earned furloughs, D.V.

PRAYER REQUESTS.—Please pray for Mr. Olsen on furlough, Mrs. H. Curwen Smith and Mrs. Hammond in Hongkong, that the Lord may speedily restore them to full health and strength.

Pray that the evangelists and converts of the Mission Churches may be correspondingly blessed as they, owing to the financial stringency, are being compelled to assume increasing responsibility for their own finances and also for forward pioneer evangelism.

CONFERENCES.—Pray for the Cambodian Conference at Battambang, March 23-27, the Tonkin Conference at Hadong, March 15-17, the Annamese Church Conference at Faifoo, in May, and the Missionaries' Conference at Dalat, June 10.

THERE MUST BE NO HOLDING BACK!

ALTHOUGH a severe reduction has been made in the monthly funds sent by the Home Board to the field for the maintaining and developping of the work among the 25,000,000 perishing souls of French Indochina and East Siam, yet we dare not hold back in these last days preceding our Lord's Return. By faith it is planned to open up two more provinces among the almost score of still unoccupied provinces in Tonkin: **Hanam** with 421,000, and **Baegiang** with 254,000 perishing souls. **Twenty dollars monthly is specially required from the Lord's stewards for each of these provinces.** Will you not share with us in this precious privilege, so that the Lord may save many souls in these now forsaken provinces, thus rewarding your faithfulness in prayer and sacrifice?

Last year 1682 new converts were baptized in Indochina. In view of this splendid fruitage in souls, it is our conviction that at this time there is no better investment in souls than the above. The Lord has opened the door, in these momentous days, to our beloved **ALLIANCE**. We must not hold back, we must enter and give the Gospel witness ere it is too late.—C.

FRENCH INDO-CHINA

ALLIANCE STATIONS :

Tonkin (pop. 7,574,522)

Hanoi
Haiphong
Langson
Namdinh

Annam (pop. 4,933,426)

Dalat
Tourane
Hue
Quinhon

Cochinchina (pop. 3,795,633)

Saigon
Cantho

Cambodia (pop. 2,402,585)

Pnompenh
Battambang
Kratie
Kompong Trach

Laos (pop. 318,755)

Luang-Prabang
Vientiane

EASTERN SIAM

Ubon (pop. 3,000,000)
Konken



Headquarters: Rev. E. F. Irwin, Saigon

HAIPHONG :

— TONKIN

Rev. and Mrs. H. C. Smith

HANOI : 1, Rue Nguyen-Trai

Rev. and Mrs. Wm. C. Cadman
Mrs. Homera Homer-Dixon

LANGSON :

Rev. and Mrs. J. J. Van Hine

NAMDINH :

Rev. Jean Funé

DALAT :

— ANNAM

Rev. and Mrs. H. A. Jackson
Miss Arma Heikkinen

HUE :

Rev. and Mrs. I. B. Stebbins

QUINHON :

Rev. and Mrs. W. A. Pruett

TOURANE :

Rev. and Mrs. H. H. Hazlett

CANTHO :

— COCHINCHINA

Rev. and Mrs. G. C. Ferry
SAIGON, 329 Rue Frère Louis :

Rev. and Mrs. E. F. Irwin

BATTAMBANG :

— CAMBODIA

Rev. and Mrs. D. W. Ehison

KOMPONG TRACH

Rev. and Mrs. F. C. Peterson

KRATIE :

Rev. and Mrs. Gordon H. Smith

PNOMPENH, B' Doudart de Lagrée :

Rev. and Mrs. A. L. Hammond

LUANG-PRABANG :

— LAOS

Rev. and Mrs. G. E. Roffe

VIENTIANE :

Mr. and Mrs. F. G. Grobb

UBON :

— EAST SIAM

Rev. and Mrs. Paul W. Gunther

Rev. and Mrs. R. M. Chrisman

KHON KEN :

Rev. and Mrs. Peter A. Voth

ON FURLOUGH :

Rev. and Mrs. N. M. Cressman

Rev. and Mrs. P. E. Carlson

Rev. and Mrs. C. E. Travis

Rev. and Mrs. R. M. Jackson

Rev. J. D. Olsen

Miss E. M. Frost

Rev. and Mrs. D. I. Jeffrey

EAST SIAM AS SEEN BY THE MISSIONARY!

REV. PAUL GUNTHER, UBON, SIAM

THE accompanying sketch map of East Siam represents a territory of about 60,000 square miles, or more than the total area of the states of New York and New Jersey combined. It contains nearly one-third of the total area of the Kingdom of Siam; and within its limits may be counted 3,887,000 people, or one-third of the total population of Siam.

Among these millions no Protestant missionary came to live until 1929. We must thus hasten all the more to accomplish our task ere the ripened harvest perish for want of reapers.

Look at the map! All the cities marked on it must have missionaries! Three of them are already occupied, namely: KORAT, in the southwest corner, by an able worker of the Siam Home Mission, and UBON and KHON KEN by missionaries of the CHRISTIAN AND MISSIONARY ALLIANCE. There are four more large cities, strategic centers, capitals of provinces, waiting to be opened at once. With a missionary in each of the cities of SURINDR, ROI ETT, UDORN, and NAKON PANOM, we shall have merely begun our task of evangelization. Apart from the natural difficulties of primitive roads, etc., there is nothing, absolutely nothing, to hinder our entering them NOW. Siam is a free country. The missionary goes where he wants to go, and when he wants to. There are no bandits, no rebellions. NOW is the time to enter while the door is open.

Six missionary couples for six stations, one for Bible School, and one for furlough replacements. Eight couples for three millions—a low minimum—entirely insufficient, when one considers the inaccessibility of the country and the difficulties of travel. Can we have them? The answer rests with you.

But in addition to missionaries we must have a host of native workers. Ubon, for example, is the capital of a province. In it are thirteen counties or market cities, and around each of these are grouped scores and sometimes hundreds of towns and villages. To evangelize Ubon we must have a native worker in each of these county seats preaching the Gospel out in the country regions round about. Thirteen native workers for one province—and there are fourteen provinces in East Siam apart from the province of Korat. You can do the multiplying yourself.

In some of these places a home will have to be built before the missionary can enter. Suitable houses are impossible to

find. A suitable house in Siam means a wooden frame building with some sort of a veranda to protect from the terrific tropical heat.

Then last but not least. Putting wheels under a missionary multiplies his efficiency many fold. It makes two or three missionaries out of one man. A Gospel Car, so constructed that the missionary can live and sleep in it as he tours



from town to town, has been the dream of the writer for some time. Multitudes could thus be reached.

Thus, reader, you have a glimpse of East Siam and its needs as seen by the missionary. You have in a nutshell our plans for meeting those needs. Now PRAY! Pray them out of the nutshell on to the map. Change our dreams into realities. Change our plans into accomplishments.

CHAPEL PREACHING IN KHON KEN, SIAM

PETER A. VOTH, KHON KEN, SIAM

BUDDHISM'S RESULTANT LETHARGY

IN a country such as Siam, where Buddhism is the state religion, the missionary soon observes that the main result of Buddhism is a state of apathy on the part of its adherents. This is noted in their every attitude of life, and especially so in the interior parts of the country where the impress and contact of modern civilization has not yet disrupted this sluggish, listless, passive mentality. Hence, the missionary in these parts soon learns that the establishing of a preaching place on the outskirts of a town with the expectation that the people will come to listen to his message, is out of the question. The vast majority are entirely satisfied (at least outwardly) with their own religion, and are not at all greatly interested to know the truth that the missionary has to proclaim, to say nothing of accepting it as his own. So we felt led of the Lord and thought it wise to open a chapel near the market place, and there preach the wonderful truth of Salvation through the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ.

GOSPEL HALL RENTED IN MARKET DISTRICT

To find a room large enough and suitably located was our first task. All the available rooms were occupied by energetic Chinese traders. Since the railroad is supposed to come through to Khon Ken in a year or two, these Chinese traders have left no stone unturned in endeavoring to get established. Some paid occupants of rooms in the market as much as five hundred dollars for them to move out so the trader could rent the room and start his business. We took the matter of getting a suitable place to preach in prayer to the Lord.

After some days we learned that a Chinese dentist could not pay his monthly rent and might have to evacuate his place of business. Immediately we endeavored to rent the place, but were told to wait another month, for if he could borrow the money to pay his rent he could stay. We continued to pray for another month, asking God to make this place available, for it was the very best location in town. God answered prayer and we were able to secure the room for our meetings. It is located in the very heart of the market district. Right behind our chapel is the moving picture house and the municipal opium den. Here also, right in this vicinity, harlots and their mongers meet to indulge in their vice. Here, where

sin and vice of all forms abound, we are giving a witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord.

FIRST MEETINGS

There is no municipal electric plant in Khon Ken, but we are getting electricity to light our chapel from the private plant of the moving picture house. We recognize that God has truly answered prayer in the matter of securing this room, for had we rented one further away from this center, we would not have had electricity. We are glad for the opportunity He has given us to preach the Gospel in this place where men and women gather in large numbers.

The opening night the chapel was crowded to capacity, and ever since we have had large numbers listening to the preached Word. However, do not misunderstand what is meant by large numbers, for our little chapel when filled to capacity holds only about one hundred and fifty. To interest the people and make the Gospel plain to them, we use Sunday School Picture Rolls and highly colored Charts. However a service does not usually run along as smoothly as those to which we are accustomed in the homeland. At sight of the pictures or charts someone will get an idea and find it absolutely necessary to explain to his neighbor, not by whispering, but by speaking out loud. Thus the missionary must stop again and again and ask them to be quiet and graciously favor the ones who desire to listen to the message.

AMUSING MUSICAL MISUNDERSTANDING

Occasionally amusing things occur in the meeting. One night Mrs. Chrisman and Mrs. Voth sang a special song in Siamese. In the chorus I joined them singing the bass. To my surprise the whole audience was soon convulsed with laughter. I soon gathered that they were interpreting my endeavors as an unsuccessful effort to reach the tune. The only remedy was to leave the bass and sing the soprano.

FOCUSSING THOUGHTS OF QUESTIONERS ON THE GOSPEL

At the close of each meeting an opportunity is given for the asking of questions. Some of the most frequent are on this wise: If our souls go to hell must they stay there forever? What sins are small and which are great? When will you have a day for the washing away of sins (Thinking sins can be washed away only on a certain decreed day). In the sin of adultery is the man also guilty? Is it wrong to go horseback and to kill animals? If we become Christians what work shall we then do? If we become Christians do we still

have to pay taxes? To all of which the missionary seeks to reply, but endeavours to focus their thoughts on the Cross of Christ and their need of a Saviour.

PRAY FOR THE SALVATION OF SOULS

Perhaps someone would ask, Do you find it worth while? Does it pay? We fully realize that a great many people come merely out of curiosity, because this is something «new under the sun» for them. But we do believe that God is speaking to the hearts of some. During the first ten meetings four young men have prayed. How sincere they were we cannot tell, for since coming to the mission field we realize more fully than ever that the «heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it.» Time will prove whether they were serious or not.

Will you, dear friends, kindly join us in praying much for them and for the lost of Siam. We feel that we need a real Holy Ghost revival,—a revival which will cause these people to have a sense of sin. We want to see real conviction for sin, real conversion from sin, and real victory over sin in the hearts and lives of these people. We know that this will not come about by the «arm of flesh,» but by real, intercessory, believing prayers. We ask for prayer volunteers—men and women,—who will become the home forces for promoting a real revival in Eastern Siam.

THE LONG-NEGLECTED THAI RACE

IN God's good providence the ALLIANCE has been chosen to assume a very large part of the responsibility for the evangelization of the great Thai Race, so long neglected by the Christian Church. Although today divided into peoples and tribes by political boundaries and vast intervening distances,—their territory stretching like a great band hundreds of miles wide from the China Sea in the east over to the Indian Ocean in the west,—yet the distinctive language, customs, religions, and characteristics of the original race are still retained, whether among the Shans of North Burma, the Siamese of Siam, the Lao of East Siam and Laos, the «Thai,» Thô and Nung of Tonkin, or the Aborigine of South China. Pray that increasing blessing may rest upon this marvellous God-given ministry, and missionaries and means be provided so that the vast mountain regions of this great belt comprising the Thai territory be completely evangelised before Jesus Comes.

GOSPEL ITINERATING IN EASTERN SIAM

ROBERT M. CHRISMAN, UBON, SIAM

JESUS ONLY CAN REMOVE SIN'S CATARACTS

THE king of Siam has recently returned from an extended visit to the United States. He went to America with a need and a desire for that need to be met. A cataract had caused the loss of sight in one eye, but one of your most skilful men in the science of surgery performed the delicate operation which brought sight to the blinded eye. The king, his need, and appeal to American genius for relief was capitalized upon by the publicity agents until every syndicate in the land carried news items not only regarding the king, but his kingdom and subjects as well. So now you know a little more about our chosen field of service than the white elephants and the advertized popular sideshow attraction at the circus where, for a dime, one could see the so-called «Siamese twins.»

Today we have found our way to you through this publication. We have come with a great need, seeking and longing for your help, not that one might receive sight to one eye—on the contrary, that millions might feel the living touch which will remove the scales that blind their eyes from the Light of the world. Our news item is not interesting enough to the world to even be found on a back page of the dailies, although we come to you, not on behalf of a temporal king but on behalf of the King of kings, for the needs of those who were purchased by His redeeming blood in Eastern Siam. We are not asking for you to come and help us. On the other hand we would ask you to pray out five new missionary couples to occupy the remaining strategic centers in this recently made-known field. We would not ask you for the money needed for houses in these sections where no livable homes are available. However, we ask for the kind of prayer that will bring these results—prevailing, intercessory prayer.

PIONEERING EVANGELISTIC TRIP

Just three days ago Mr. Gunther, Mr. Voth and I returned from an eight day trip through pioneer territory in northeastern Siam where hundreds of thousands have never heard the Gospel story. We have come back to our duties with a renewed vision of the tremendous need and task before us. Our starting point was Khon Ken where we met Mr. Voth who had made arrangements for the transportation. A Ford truck was to be the mode of conveyance. On the morning of departure

we loaded our cots, bedding and suitcases into the car and were off on the first lap of the journey, the goal being Udorn. There we stayed in a hotel managed by an Annamese.

PREACHING IN UDORN MARKET

Early the next day we came down to breakfast with tracts, Gospels, charts and pictures prepared for an open air gathering at the municipal market. One of the hotel men saw our outfit and then hurried off to his room from which he came with a broad smile holding in his hand several Annamese Gospel portions which he had purchased while in French Indo-China from one of our native workers. He joined us at the service where Mr. Voth spoke first from a large chart designed to make the redemption truths more vivid to the listeners. The outstanding object on this chart, three yards in length, is a huge crimson cross. The very heart of these talks in the open was the message of that old rugged cross and the blessed hope made real through the empty tomb. They say the founder of Buddhism died too, but our joyous news of glad tidings echoes back that Christ, the Founder of Christianity, not only died but He arose. Praise God for:

«Up from the grave He arose

With a mighty triumph o'er His foes;

He arose a Victor from the dark domain,

And He lives forever with His saints to reign;

He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!»

GOSPELS SOLD AND TRACTS DISTRIBUTED

Then Mr. Gunther followed using one of the pictures from a S.S. roll depicting the birth of our Lord. After this short, peppy message, Mr. Voth called attention to the broad and narrow ways, and Mr. Gunther then closed portraying Jesus, the crucified One. After preaching the "old story of the cross," the only message with power in it sufficient to save from sin, salvation tracts were distributed to all who would receive, and a goodly number of gospels sold. We then bade farewell to Udorn, a large district of some 200,000 people, where a missionary couple must be stationed. We say "must" because there is no other way for these thousands to hear, for "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?"

GOOD MARKET MEETING IN NONGKHAY

In Nongkhay, a town in a region made up of approximately 100,000 inhabitants, another good market meeting was

conducted. It was only with regret that we passed on from here. Our time was so limited. Weeks and months should have been spent preaching, teaching, and selling Scriptures in each of these populous areas. There should be recruits from the home base, and money sufficient for opening these new places. Will you trust God with us? He has never yet failed!

SAKON NAKON AND NAKON PANOM

We then journeyed to Sakon Nakon, representing 180,000 people, at which place fresh contacts were made and an open air service carried on. Gospels were sold, seed was sown, yet merely a handful, out of those thousands, were reached. When will they have their opportunity? Five hours by motor car in the dry season from Sakon Nakon brings one to the city of Nakon Panom, situated on the bank of the Mekong River. In this city and vicinity 150,000 souls are still waiting to hear the good news of salvation for the first time. We are looking to God for a missionary couple and funds for a house that this important section of our field might be opened. At this point Mr. Gunther left us returning to Ubon by river boat and bus.

BAD AUTO ROADS—A NOVEL USE FOR PORK FAT

At four o'clock the following morning we were up, and before five were on our return trip to Udorn, 150 miles away. Thus far the trip had been without delay, but the foot-deep ruts and rough surface which we had to bump over hour after hour soon proved too much for the Ford to endure. The center bolt in the rear spring gave way, which caused the car to tilt until the tire rubbed on the fender. Our native chauffeur drove until the odor of burnt rubber was strong; then he stopped, and with our help tipped the car back to its original position. This process was repeated over and over again before we reached our destination.

When the day had passed and night was wearing on, there was added to the clouds of dust, bumps, and miserably slow travel the fear of being caught in the jungle country without shelter, for the oil gauge only registered $\frac{1}{4}$ full. The supply of oil being exhausted, and every effort to find more having failed, a bright idea entered the driver's mind, for what did he do but buy two quarts of pork fat and pour into the car! Can you imagine using lard for motor oil? Well, the knock ceased for a while, only to grow worse a few hours later. At midnight, when we dared go no farther, we stopped in a small village, and Providence led us to a shop where real lubrication oil could be purchased. With better spirits but weary in body,

we reached Udorn at 3 a.m., having travelled some 22 hours and covering only 150 miles.

TWO FORDS NEEDED

Friends, pray with us for two Ford cars, one for Ubon and one for Khon Ken, where opportunities are great to do effective work among the villagers. These cars would not only eliminate the transportation problem, but the even greater problem of sleeping accommodations and the food supply. In the villages there are no rest houses, and nothing but uneatable Siamese and Laotian food. With a car equipped with sleeping accommodations, one missionary could do the work of two.

SAVING SIGHT FOR THE SIN-BLINDED SOULS OF EAST SIAM

Let me call your attention to one other discovery made on the tour. Fifty years ago French Catholic priests bought a large tract of land lying on the road between Sakon Nakhon and Nakhon Phanom. The tract was subdivided, and small plots for homes and rice fields were given free to everyone who would allow the Catholics to educate their children. Today they have a village with 2,000 residents. The large brick church stands alone without a single Buddhist temple in the community. Catholicism reigns supreme, and of course the second generation will no doubt be entirely Catholic. Just think, Tha Pra is known throughout that section of the country as a Catholic village. We accept this as a challenge, and through the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives, and in answer to your prayers, we expect to influence men to follow Christ without such material inducements. We have neither «silver nor gold» to offer them—«nothing but the blood of Jesus,» the ransom price paid in full for them over 1900 centuries ago.

Recently we happened on to a news item telling of how a blind man was waiting to cross one of your city streets. Soon he felt an arm slip into his, so with a sure step followed his leader toward the other side, when suddenly they both were struck down by an automobile. This was a case where one blind man unknowingly put his trust in another blind man. «Can the blind lead the blind? Shall they both not fall into the ditch?» This illustrates the condition of the Siamese people placing their faith in Buddhism. They move onward, at the mercy of blind fate, without any help from Buddha their god. They are left in this world to shoulder their problems, their sorrows, and afflictions, for Buddha offers them neither help nor comfort. «How useless and vain is all religion without a saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ!»

PERSONAL TESTIMONY OF BOON ME DOKMAI

THE FIRST CHRISTIAN BAPTIZED IN EAST SIAM

TRANSLATED BY REV. PAUL GUNTHER

I WANT to give my testimony in witness of the Lord Jesus Christ. My original home during the first years of my schooling was in Bangkok, the Capital.

BECOMING A BUDDHIST PRIEST

According to the Siamese custom, every young man should enter the priesthood and live in the pagoda for a period of time. When about thirteen years of age, I was obliged to yield to the wish of my father and mother and become a novice (apprentice priest), and lived in the pagoda one year.



THE FIRST PROTESTANT BAPTISM IN EAST SIAM

Mr. Boon Me Dokmai being baptised by Rev. Paul Gunther at Ubon

This was in order that I might become free from sin and its punishment, and become a righteous person according to the Buddhist religion. But when I left the pagoda and began to work for a living again, I found that I continued in sin the same as before, and my wickedness was very great.

READING AND TEARING UP THE SCRIPTURES

About four years after leaving school I went to Korat to earn a living. My work there as a mechanic on a steam launch took me here and there and everywhere until I landed at Sisaket in the direction of Ubon. Up until that time I had not yet met the Lord Jesus Christ. After about six months there a friend gave me a Christian Scripture portion which he had

received. But when I had read a portion, I tore it up and threw it in the river and paid no further attention to it,—for had I not already gotten rid of my sins by living for a year in the pagoda?

Later on I came to Ubon where I worked as chauffeur and helper on an autobus. There at Ubon, they told me, was a foreigner who taught religion, but when they wanted me to go with them to visit the foreign teacher I would not be bothered. I looked down upon Christianity as a false religion which would lead us astray. It was certainly only the power of the true God that caused me to change my mind and turn to seek Him. God has helped me to escape sin and has caused His righteousness to be with me.

MEETING THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

It was here in Ubon that I met the Lord Jesus Christ. But before I met the Lord and believed in Him, I lived a life of sin. I was a rowdy, and drank alcohol and smoked; I would steal things, a little here and a little there. I drank every day.

At that time I lived in the same house with a sign painter. One day the teacher, Paul Gunther, went to hire this man to paint a sign for a chapel he was to open. One day the painter asked me to go to the missionary's house to get the exact wording for the sign. When he gave me the paper with the wording for the sign, the teacher also gave me a book (Scripture portion). I did not understand why he gave it to me, nor what it was about; but he said to take it home and read it. I returned home and when I had some spare time I read the book, and as I read I desired to know more, so I went and asked for more books; I also went and listened to the teacher preach every day, until I began to believe a little. Finally I went to the teacher's house to learn the story of the Lord Jesus in detail. He told how Christ could forgive our sins, and cleanse all the wickedness out of a sinner.

BELIEVING THE GOSPEL AND REPENTING

My faith gradually increased. I asked the teacher what I must do to conquer sin. He said to believe in Christ and pray for forgiveness, and the Lord would surely help. I then made up my mind to believe, and that day offered myself to the Lord. I had two packages of cigarettes in my pocket, but when I returned to the house I gave them away. Before that I had served the cigarettes, but now the Lord has delivered me from that, and from drinking and other bad habits. This is the truth. Those who have known me for the past year since

I became a Christian, all know that I have repented and have become a new person. All this is the gift of the Lord Jesus Christ, and was brought to pass only by His power.

NOTE:

Boon Me Dokmai was baptised last November. He has continually shown boldness and zeal in witnessing for the Lord, and has been a great help to me in itinerating, chapel work, etc. He is faithful in studying the word, and we believe the Lord is preparing him for a fruitful ministry here in EAST SIAM. Pray that God may raise up many more like him to help evangelize this needy land.

A SHOPPING TRIP IN EASTERN SIAM

MRS. PETER A. VOTH, KHON KEN, SIAM

THE SLUGGISH MONOTONE OF SIAMESE LIFE

IN this far distant land of Siam, life moves along its slow cycle with very little variation in the pattern. One day differs very little from the next in its simple routine. Life is shorn of all its trimmings here; this is true as regards the food, clothing and mode of life of these people. Even the thermometer has a sluggish bias and seems inclined to remain between «warm» and «very hot.» The most enjoyable part of the day is the early morning, when a gentle breeze blowing through the palm trees touches as a soothing balm on heat-weary bodies. Towards noon the sun rising steadily hangs like a fiery ball in the heavens, whilst great heat waves float over the plains. At three in the afternoon the sun's rays are less direct, and we find it necessary occasionally to go shopping.

SEEKING TO MAKE FRIENDLY CONTACTS

Our house is about a mile from the main part of town. Donning our cork helmets, and perhaps also holding aloft a brightly-colored Chinese paper parasol, we plod along the sandy road to town. Curious eyes gaze at us as we pass along, for we have not as yet ceased to be objects of interest and speculation. Women smile and familiarly inquire, «Where are you going?» or «Where have you been?»—and to all and sundry we take time to explain just where we are bound. We pass scores of these groups of women, sitting before their squalid bamboo homes which line the roadway, leisurely making cocoanut cakes over a small open fire. So they pleasantly spend hour after hour in the making of cocoanut cakes and continual conversation. Here and there we stop

to look at the cakes, inquire as to the ingredients used, and seek to make a friendly contact. The friendship of these people must be won before we can win them to Christ.

ORIENTAL SALESMANSHIP ON MAIN STREET

But we must hurry on for we still have a considerable distance to the market. Arriving at the main street of town, we enter a Chinese shop where a blandly smiling proprietor approaches us. On learning our wants he searches out from an innumerable quantity of boxes of all sizes and shapes the articles desired. We cautiously inquire the price, and with a side-long appraising glance at the foreigners he states it. Thereupon we quickly calculate and offer about half the amount asked, knowing that we are thereby approaching somewhere near the real price. This is always to us a disagreeable part of shopping, for we Americans are not used to Oriental bickerings and bargaining. But to them no sale is worth the name where there is not considerable discussion back and forth as to prices, and therefore the price is doubled and trebled to begin with. So in true Oriental style we discuss the value of the article and firmly hold to our first price. Finally we reach an agreement and purchase the desired article, having increased our proffered price a little, but inwardly feeling that we have arrived somewhere near the real value of the goods. The Chinaman also is equally gratified, for he has undoubtedly made a good percentage on his sale, which he probably attributes to his good salesmanship.

THE TOWN MARKET

Soon we reach the market, the center of the town's activities. Early each morning very nearly the whole population congregates at the market, and throughout the whole day as well a continual stream of buyers and sellers throng the place. Now, if you have lived in the East for some time you may have an inward shrinking towards approaching this place, and much prefer to have your native cook make all your purchases. But cast aside your scruples and enter with us. As we enter, practically every eye in the place is turned upon us, and all our movements are closely observed. What will the foreigners buy? Each seller sits beside his little basket of goods or behind a table on which he has arrayed all his wares. To the left of us is a great display of native roots and leaves, very few of which we have as yet found to be edible.

The simple Lao, in whose regard labor is an evil to be altogether shunned, troubles himself very little to till his

ground, outside of his small patch of rice sufficient for his family's use. Anything else which he may need he gathers from the jungle or swamp. A few leaves, very often uncooked, spread over his rice and then dipped in strong fish-water, comprise for him an ample meal. Now, what has this woman to sell? We peer into the basket and see hundreds of huge beetles. Are these to be eaten? She hastens to assure us that they are most delicious! However, we shall not sample them as long as we can graciously refrain from doing so. If we should meet them at a feast, that would be different, we might then not have the courage to pass them up. The next woman is enjoying a thriving sale of whole roasted frogs, strung like beads on a stick, their stark, bulging eyes gazing pathetically at the eager buyers bidding for their purchase.

And now we reach the meat counter. Of course, you will not recognize the cuts here, for various reasons. First, meat is meat, and the cutting of it makes very little difference; secondly, the huge green flies swarming over the whole make it quite unrecognizable. However, we pick out the slab we desire, and the Chinaman ties it up in a banana leaf or ties a cord-like vine around it, and so we carry home our meat for dinner. Germs, microbes? Oh well, we are in a land where these are neither admitted nor recognized, and moreover a good boiling or roasting will take care of them. This is always the happy thought that salves our germ-conscious appetites.

THE PRIESTS AT EVENING DEVOTIONS

So ends our shopping tour. The sun is already low in the west, its setting glow shimmering through the distant palms and casting long soothing shadows over the plains. We must hurry home, for with the sun's disappearance darkness falls almost immediately. We pass one of the twenty or more Buddhist temples of this city, and through its open doors see the squatting forms of scores of long-robed priests, at their evening devotions. How weird this monotone of prayer! A curious jangle of sound issuing with tremendous rapidity. A chill creeps over one's soul at the thought of these benighted human beings kneeling before a hideous idol to which they offer the worship and adoration belonging to God alone. Like Paul of old our spirits are moved at such sights and burn with an intense desire to reveal to these darkened souls of East Siam the God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, and Who hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus.

«GO YE INTO THE HIGHWAYS!»

A WEEK-END OF WITNESSING IN LUANG PRABANG

REV. G. EDWARD ROPPE, LUANG PRABANG, LAOS

IN June 1931, we received official papers from both the French Administration and from His Majesty, the King, duly authorizing us to carry on evangelistic work unhindered throughout the realm of Luang Prabang, Laos. While we thanked God for this, we also realized that after months of much-delayed and much-handicapped effort at language study we were incapable of taking full advantage of the opportunity thus presented to us.

SECURING TEMPORARY NATIVE HELPERS

However, we felt strongly that the Word should be going forth, since restrictions had been removed, and so we wrote to the leader of a small group of Swiss Brethren missionaries, which has been working in southern Laos since 1902. Their work, established in three small centers about six hundred miles south of us, though limited in extent, has been intensive, and they have grouped a number of Christians about them. The Bible has been translated into the Lao tongue; the New Testament has been off the press for several years, and now the Old Testament is being set up at our Mission Press at Hanoi under the direction of the translator, Mr. Audetat.

In our letter we asked if they could loan us a man who would be well versed in the Scriptures and who would be willing to come and spend several months with us fulfilling the task of a colporteur-evangelist, at the same time aiding us with the language. We were willing to trust the Lord to meet the expense of his travelling and to pay him a stated monthly sum. This involved a pure venture of faith on our part. Some weeks later we learned by wire that two men were on their way and in due time they arrived. One was a man of sixty-odd years, whose radiant face gave abundant evidence of his twenty years of humble walking with the Lord. The other, a younger man of twenty-two years, was the school teacher for the Christian children in the village of Ban Lao which I visited last February. Two men, instead of one, meant extra expense—and a call for extra faith; but our extra needs never find God in an extremity and so faith falters not.

MEETINGS STARTED IN MISSIONARY'S HOME

All attempts to rent a hall suitable for meetings were fruitless, so we have been holding a service every Sunday

morning in our home. During the week we continue with our studies, sometimes go out to witness here and there with our men, while at other times they go out to sell the Scriptures and tell the «Old, Old Story,» at the same time inviting the people to the Sunday service. The first two or three Sundays people came, and then gradually the attendance dwindled to next to nothing. The reasons were numerous. First, these men, coming from a different region, have a distinctly different accent, although still speaking Lao. Then in addition they speak much faster than the people of Luang Prabang. This rapidity of speech, coupled with the confusing accent and the difference in words and expressions, made it hard to understand them. Second, and more important than the first, is a fact that our men stated: when inviting people to the meeting, almost invariably people would reply that they were afraid to come to our, a foreigner's, house. This is easily understood in the natural, and more easily understood when one realizes that the Devil is infinitely interested in using all the means in his power to keep the people from hearing the Good News, for he knows that, «Faith cometh by hearing.»

GATHERING PEOPLE FROM FAR AND WIDE

After praying for guidance we felt led to do two things. There was a portable blackboard which was idle. We decided to put it out before the house on Saturday morning and let it announce to all passers-by the day and hour of the meeting, inviting them to come in and hear the Word of Life. Second, we felt sure that we must go on Saturday with our men and personally invite as many people as possible. It is surprising with what facility people forget what day of the week is Sunday, so we wanted to prompt them the day before and also to let them get a chance to see that we wished them no harm, in short, that we invited them with the simple aim of giving them the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So a suitable announcement is written on the blackboard and this gives a silent invitation all day Saturday. In the afternoon (for in the morning people are away to market), we start out to enter homes and invite the people. At the first corner we invite a group, mostly women, who are buying and selling dainties. A store is entered and the invitation given. Next door we find great preparations being made for a religious festival, and we have a chance to invite many people. Here and there we find those who have read the notice on the blackboard; they inquire to make sure which day the meeting

is to be; others state that they are afraid. Afraid of what? They are at a loss to explain, but the fact remains that the Devil uses every means at his disposal to hinder people from hearing the Gospel, be it groundless fear or appalling indifference. We remember Christ's parable of a certain man who, having made a supper, sent his servants at supper-time to invite those that were bidden. «And they all with one consent *began* to make excuse;»—and there appears to be no *end* to the really trivial excuses that the Devil can cause people to fabricate. On the other hand many people listen with seeming attention, assert fervently that they will come to hear more—and we never see them again!

We climb up the steps of a high substantial house, the property of a prince; here we find four or five women gambling with cards on the verandah. They give us a casual, almost contemptuous glance, and acknowledge indifferently our invitation. The next house is that of a man we find to be dumb and we believe him to be deaf also, for those who converse with him use a small slate to pass their thoughts back and forth. One woman refuses absolutely to come—she readily tells us that she worships the spirits who protect her home and, should she even come in to listen, the spirits would in all probability kill her. Nevertheless, we urge her to come, assuring her that Jesus has defeated «him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.»

INTERESTING INCIDENTS OF THE MEETINGS

Sunday morning we have a crowd of thirty or forty in our house. Among them are faces that have been seen before, but there are new faces as well, thanks to our blackboard and personal invitations. Hymns are sung, prayer is offered, and the Word is given forth. One old woman listens, nods her head in agreement with what is being said and, at the close, asks when the next meeting will be. She wants to come again—but so far has not been seen since. Another ready listener is a young prince who formerly was in the Native Administration Civil Service but lost his job through addiction to the opium habit. Now he is down and out and came to the house one evening to tell us he wanted to become a follower of Christ. He prayed and has since been coming regularly, as well as attending week-night classes for inquirers. Pray for this intelligent young man that he may become an instrument in God's hands for the evangelization of his people.

At the close of the service the dumb man, referred to

above, made his appearance and gave us customary offerings of flowers and a few eggs. I got the blackboard and started to write out the simple details of the Gospel story. We found out that he was not deaf, so we preached to him and he asked questions by writing them. He wanted medicine but we read him the story of Peter and John giving the impotent beggar, not silver and gold, but such as they had. We prayed definitely for him, and he went home saying that he would consult his family as to whether he should abandon his spirit worship, and get rid of his fear of them by putting himself under the protection of the Saviour.

Just as he was going we were surprised to see one of the women gamblers whom we had invited the day before. She was very late so we told her shortly what it was all about and she wanted to know when the next public meeting would be. She came the next Sunday and after hearing the Gospel for the first time declared her desire to pray. She prayed and expressed a desire to come to learn to read that she might learn more from the Scriptures.

VISITING A VILLAGE ENQUIRER

After dinner we saddled the two horses that the Lord had at last provided for us, and started out to a village several miles away—a small village situated in the midst of rice fields. One household in this village, Ban Na Sang, told our houseboy that they wanted to become Christians. A word about our houseboy. In an article by Mrs. Roffe that was published last February, mention was made of this boy. John's Gospel had been given to him and prayer was requested for him. The first meeting in our home found him asking us what he must do to be saved, and soon we had him on his knees. For several weeks he seemed no different and then, as we continued to pray for him, he suddenly evinced an interest in the meetings we were holding, and when opportunity presented itself, he was eager to go along. So this Sunday afternoon we find him accompanying us to Ban Na Sang to sing with us one or two hymns he had learned, and to lend the aid of his presence while he at the same time listened. He also attends an inquirers' class during the week.

Our horses picked their way across the narrow dykes that separate the different levels of rice fields. A green clump of bamboo and trees in the midst of the fields proves to be the village of our destination, and we soon find the family in question. They appear to want to leave spirit worship in or-

der to be released from the costly sacrifice of animals demanded by their medicine men. The Gospel is outlined to them, and then an evangelistic service is held for all the villagers who want to come and listen in response to our invitation. We arrive home in time to hurriedly prepare an evening meal, and then are soon ready for bed when sweet rest reposes our weary bodies.

A PLEA FOR PRAYER PARTNERS

And now we have said good-bye to our two colporteurs. We had hoped they would stay another month but they expressed a desire to go home. This means that the burden of the task is, under God, upon us. Three months ago I could scarcely have preached so as to be understood; but now, thank God, after listening to these native brethren, I can carry on. Already I have preached with the Lord's blessing.

This description of a week-end's activities will give you some idea of how we are trying to get the message of life and love out to these sin-enslaved, dying-without-hope people. Pray, oh pray, that our knowledge of the language may be perfected; pray earnestly that these babes in Christ may feed on the Lamb and the Word and become stalwart sons and daughters of the living God capable, by His grace, of usefully serving the Lord Jesus; pray above all that the preaching of the Word may indeed bring down deep conviction of sin upon all who hear, and that a soul-hunger for salvation may lead hundreds to Jesus. Our task is to pray and labour—your's, dear friend, is to labour in prayer. May God give us the vision that will cause us to determine that nothing will hinder us from fulfilling, by His grace, our God-appointed task. —Editor: This article is included in this special East Siam issue as it is the same people, the Lao, in both Laos and East Siam.

PRAYER REQUESTS FOR EAST SIAM

PRAY that the missionaries be constantly filled with the Holy Spirit, be divinely helped in the speedy acquisition of the Siamese and Lao languages, and their witness be with such unction and power that from the beginning there shall be «signs following»: souls soundly saved and sanctified.

PRAY the Lord to send consecrated missionary couples to occupy the strategic centres of Surindr, Roiett, Udorn, and Nakhon Panom, so that East Siam may speedily be evangelized.

PRAY the Lord to send TWO FORD AUTOS for evangelistic work. The time is short, so we must employ every means to give these millions the Gospel before Jesus Comes.