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## The First Native Church Council in French Indo China

The story of the first church council at Jerusalem, or the first council at Nice, belongs to history, but church history is not yet finished. The first native council of the Protestant Church in French Indo-China was held at Tourane, Annam, March 15-30, 1924.

### Delegates

The gathering of the delegates has been described as follows, "One warm, sunny day last week, twenty Annamese, Cambodian, and Chinese delegates left Saigon en route for Tourane, to attend the first Indo-China Native Conference. There were workers from all of our stations in Cochin-China and Cambodia, and represented Annamese, Cambodian, and Chinese work. Three days later, after travelling one day by train and two days by auto, they arrived at Tourane, a weary, shivering, rain-soaked but happy crowd. The next day, the northern party arrived from Tonkin; they had also traveled overland for three days. And that night Mr. and Mrs. Jaffray, with Mr. Wong, arrived by boat, after a five-hundred-mile voyage from Hongkong. What did it matter that the weather was wet and cold and miserable, and that it has continued so without a let-up? (It became warm after the first week.) Over sixty-five delegates and workers were gathering together, and were praying that God would reveal Himself in the coming meetings."

### Speakers

From the first day God set His seal to the ministry of Brother Wong and Mr. Jaffray. Mr. Wong is a graduate of the Wuchow Bible School; his messages are clear and forceful, and he is a Spirit-filled man. Mr. Jaffray's messages were very

helpful, covering the entire New Testament; while those of Mr. Wong pictured the Christian life from every conceivable angle. Our greatest joy lies in the fact that these messages were no mere picture paintings, but Christ Himself stood in our midst, and every one knew He was present and working mightily.

Mr. Quoc, one of our students who is part Chinese, and Mr. Olsen translated for Mr. Jaffray and Mr. Wong. Some of the testimonies had also to be translated from Cambodian, French or Chinese. We had quite a variety of languages, but it seemed as natural as though there was only one.

Each morning there were three sessions, a prayer meeting, an address by Mr. Jaffray, followed by an address by Mr. Wong. The afternoons were set apart

and is it any wonder that many were filled?

### Experiences

The beginning of all true revival lies in conviction and confession of sin, and so it was in this case. After the first few messages, there came a day when the air was charged with feeling and things didn't look at all bright, but the next day one and another began to confess their sin, and to cry to God for help. There were no dry eyes that day, and there was no time for a business session.

One man who was greatly blessed in the morning, came again in the afternoon with various books on hypnotism. These he tore up in front of the audience, and later his joy was too much to contain, so that he acted like an old time Methodist.

Another man had to pay back eight dollars that he had stolen, another had to confess to lying to a missionary concerning a certain matter, before they had peace and joy in their souls. And not only men but women were moved upon by the Spirit of God. It was a very refreshing time.

The most extraordinary experience was that of a student from Cambodia. The day before, he had a very bitter feeling in his heart against another student, but God convicted him and he confessed his sin. A little later God showed him



NATIVE MEMBERS OF THE FIRST COUNCIL IN FRENCH INDO-CHINA

for reports, testimonies and business sessions which were conducted entirely by the Annamese. In the evenings evangelistic addresses were given by Annamese workers. Mr. Chao, the pastor of our Chinese church in Cholon, also spoke a number of times and his messages were greatly appreciated by the Council.

In all, we listened to more than forty addresses which were eagerly received,

another matter, and just before the meeting closed he asked permission to speak again. As he stood up he bared both fore-arms, which were tattooed with Buddhist designs. Then he pinched the skin, revealing a lump on each arm. "These lumps," he said, "are two gold needles which were embedded in my arms to give me the strength and protection of the  
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devil ; but I cannot have them any longer."

Only one who knows the awful reality of heathen superstition can realize what this meant to our brother. He said further, "I must cut these needles out, I have felt that I could kill a man without any fear because of these charms."

Yesterday I watched the doctor open the arms, remove the needles and then sew the flesh together again. After the operation, Mr. H. said to the doctor, "Sir, I have had these needles removed because I am no longer a servant of Buddha, but am a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ."

#### The Future

What is going to be the future of the church in French Indo China? That we don't know, but we do know that God did not reveal Himself to these men and women for nothing. As Mr. Wong put it, Christ took the disciples to the mountain top that they might be examined as to their knowledge of Him. He revealed Himself to them and then sent them down to minister to the crowds below. Shall we not pray with our Annamese brethren that the crowds shall know Him, not only 1,500 as now, but 5,000, 10,000, 20,000, 30,000; and does God even want us to stop there?

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