

HOW TO STRENGTHEN THE NATIONAL CHURCH
IN VIET-NAM

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INTRODUCTION

The assumption is made in this paper that the ministry of agricultural, educational, and vocational missionaries has an important place in the purpose and plan of our Lord Jesus Christ and that this type of ministry, if applied in greater measure in Viet-nam would greatly strengthen the National Church.

This subject means much to me, for, as the son of missionary parents, I spent the first sixteen years of my life in Viet-nam and saw the Spirit of God at work there. I am convinced, however, that there are more effective methods which might be used. Is it not one of our responsibilities to consider the past and to benefit by it? I believe that we should experiment with those means which have proved to be effective elsewhere, that the hope of eternal life might be realized by as many as possible before the doors of opportunity are shut to the Gospel.

It is my purpose, then, in this paper to present the possibilities of such a program to strengthen the National Church in Viet-nam. To this end we shall consider the history, geography, natural resources,

peoples, the past and present missionary effort in Viet-nam, and the success of various methods used in other lands.

Viet-nam is a part of a former colony of France, French Indo-China, which included five states within its boundaries; they were Tonkin, Annam, Cochin-China, Cambodia, and Laos. It is one of the three former French Indo-Chinese Associated States, situated in south-eastern Asia, bounded on the north by China, on the east and south by the South China Sea, and on the west by Cambodia and Laos. It consists of the former French protectorates of Tonkin and Annam, and the former colony of Cochin-China.

There is little printed material on the subject of missions in Indo-China or Viet-nam. Rev. E.F. Irwin has written one book, "With Christ in Indo-China," which gives general information on the work of the Christian and Missionary Alliance through 1935. However, according to the printed material available and correspondence with missionaries presently on the field, it would appear that the program and approach of the Mission has not changed to any great extent since that time.

I am greatly indebted to the Mennonite Central Committee for details of their advance on their mission fields, to several American universities and libraries

for suggesting sources of information and furnishing data,
to missionaries of Viet-nam and other countries who, by
correspondence, stated their opinions on the subject, and
to others interested in the progress of the country, in
particular to the Vietnamese Consulate. To all who
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CHAPTER I

THE NATIONAL HISTORY OF VIET-NAM

I. The Dawn

It was during the early years of the Christian Era that Chinese and Indian cultures were introduced into the Indo-Chinese peninsula. The impact of the Chinese civilization affected strongly the peoples in eastern Tonkin and in northern Annam, especially the province of Thanh-hoa. The Indian civilization spread rapidly over the southern portions of the country, affecting particularly southern Annam, where the Cham civilization originated, and Cambodia, the birthplace of the Khmer civilization.

The Chinese extended their political domination over the peoples of northern Indo-China, chiefly Annamese, up to about A.D. 1000, when national dynasties began to rule the country. Most important of these dynasties were the Le, Ly, and Tr-an. Subsequently, for a short period, the Chinese managed to take over political control, but during the last millenium their influence has been chiefly of a cultural character, up

to the establishment of the French protectorate in 1883-84. The civilization of the Celestial Empire, before it became stagnant, was most beneficial to the local population, which rapidly adopted Chinese customs and administrative systems.

Once the Annamese had gained their independence and were able to organize themselves on a Chinese pattern, they gradually started their own move southward, overrunning first the once-mighty kingdom of Champa in southern Annam, which was defeated in 1471. This victory permitted the Annamese to invade and occupy the coast of the present southern Annam and portions of Cochin-China. Here they came in contact with the ancestors of the Cambodians, the Khmers, who now suffered from the repeated aggression of their enterprising northern neighbors. The history of the Annamese is made up chiefly of dynastic rivalries and wars with their neighbors. The latest King of Annam, Bao Dai, belongs to the Nguyen family.

The Chams, who played an important part in the ancient history of Indo-China, once ruled over a country stretching along the coast of Annam from the region of the Gate of Annam (La Porte d'Annam) in the north to Cape Ba-Ke (province of Binh Thuan) in the south.

By the second century A.D. they had established a state in the region of Nha-trang. However, the "Far East was unknown to European writers until the time of Pliny the Elder (23-79 A.D.), who mentions a 'Golden Chersonese' located far to the east of the Roman Empire, which has been identified as Indo-China."¹

The first report of Champa and its fabulous wealth reached Europe through Marco Polo, the Venetian traveler, who possibly visited the country at the end of the thirteenth century. Shortly afterward, under the repeated blows of the Annamese, the Cham civilization collapsed and sank into oblivion, until a group of French scholars brought to light and studied a great many ancient Cham monuments, eloquent witnesses to a glorious past. The political history of Champa is largely a succession of wars against the Chinese, the Annamese, and the Khmers. For some time the Indonesian Jarai and Radhe tribes in Annam were subjected to the domination of the Chams.

The origins and earliest history of the gifted Khmers are little known. Their kingdom, which once extended not only over the present Cambodia, but also over neighboring areas, was preceded by a state called

1. A.J.H. Charignon, Bulletin de la Societe des etudes Indo-chinoises de Saigon (Saigon, 1930), p. 194.

Fouman, the existence of which is chiefly known to us through some old Chinese documents. In the first centuries of the Christian Era this state dominated the area around the lower Mekong. It still existed in the middle of the sixth century but some time later was succeeded by the Khmer kingdom.

The civilization of Fouman developed under strong Indian influence, and the cultural monuments of the country were highly praised for their artistic value. Unfortunately, only a few documents pertaining to Fouman or its civilization have been preserved up to modern times. We are much better informed about the Khmers, whose rulers were Hinduized, if not of Indian blood. Sanskrit was the court language, and the ceremonials recalled those of ancient India. Brahmanism was the prevalent religion, but Buddhism had its devotees also. The impressive ruins of Angkor and other localities in Cambodia are silent testimonials to the high development of the local art, inspired by Indian sources. This famous art flourished from the ninth to the thirteenth century, when the Siamese started their conquest of the country and brought death and destruction to the Khmer civilization.

II. Earliest European Contacts and the Modern Period

As previously mentioned, the first knowledge of Indo-China to reach the western world came from Marco Polo, who returned to Europe about 1295, after a long sojourn in East Asia. Trade with Indo-China was carried on by Chinese, Japanese, Siamese, and Malayan junks before the entrance of the white man into commercial activities on the peninsula.

During the sixteenth century the Portuguese, Spanish, and Dutch destroyed most of the native shipping and gradually made themselves masters of the trade routes. Despite the rivalries between the Western powers which made commercial undertakings precarious, the fact that Indochina was not neglected indicates the value of the region as a trading center.²

Later, in the middle of the sixteenth century, several missionaries and traders--Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, French, and English--arrived in Indo-China. One of the best known of these pioneers was a French Jesuit, Alexandre de Rhodes, who completed and improved the quoc ngu, the transcription of the Annamese language in the Romanized characters commonly used today. He also initiated negotiations in Rome resulting in the creation of the "Societe des Missions etrangeres," which has

2. M. Montyon, Exposé statistique du Tonkin, du Cochinchine, du Cambodge, du Siam, du Laos, du Lac-Tho (London, 1811), I, p. 126.

played an important part in the conversion of the people to Roman Catholicism; there are approximately two million Roman Catholic converts. Another famous pioneer was Pierre Poiure, who traveled extensively over Indo-China and other countries in southeast Asia in the eighteenth century as a representative of La Compagnie des Indes.

"It is significant that the first French trading company to enter Indochina was organized in 1665 with the avowed purpose of having missionaries combine commercial and religious activities."³ A certain ship-owner of Rouen, named Fermanel, cites the main objective of the association. As outlined in the articles of incorporation, the glory of God was to be promoted by transporting priests, who in turn were to encourage commerce by supervising trade negotiations.

Today we could adopt this idea in reverse and send Christian business men to the country who could also act as lay missionaries.

It is difficult to describe briefly the events which led to the establishment of French rule over the Indo-Chinese Union, created in 1887, but the principal developments may be summarized as follows:

3. Charles Madrolle, Histoire religieuse a la Chine. (Paris, 1916), p. 5.

Until about 1800, Annam, Tonkin, and Cochin-China, mainly inhabited by Annamese, and to a lesser extent Laos, inhabited chiefly by Laotians, were ruled by the court of Hue, Annam. Bloody struggles between rival dynasties filled the history of the countries until Nguyen-An, under the name of Gia-Long, mounted the Annamese throne supported by the French, under the leadership of Pigneau de Behaine, Bishop of Adran. As a result of this support, Gia-Long (1802-1826) granted France certain trading facilities in the country and the right to conduct missionary work among the local populations. Gia-Long kept faithfully the agreement he had reached with the French, but his successors failed to live up to its terms, instigating an anti-foreign policy and encouraging cruel persecution of the Roman Catholic converts--actions which resulted in repeated warnings from the French and the Spanish. Finally these two countries decided to send an expeditionary force under Admiral Rigault de Geniully to Indo-China in 1858 to bring pressure upon the court of Hue. Tourane, the port of Hue, in central Annam, was shelled and Saigon occupied. As a consequence of this intervention, a treaty was signed in Saigon in 1862, by which the King of Annam ceded to France a part of Cochin-China. Tourane and a few other parts were opened to French trade.

In 1867 the French occupied the whole of Cochin-China, and by several treaties concluded in 1883-84 between the French, the King of Annam, and the Chinese Government, the French protectorates of Tonkin and Annam were officially recognized. Thus all the countries inhabited chiefly by the Annamese were placed under French suzerainty.

Meanwhile, King Narodom of Cambodia (1860-1904) had accepted a French protectorate in 1863, thus escaping both Siamese overlordship and Annamese threats of domination. In 1907, Spain ceded to Cambodia the three western provinces of Battambang, Sisophon, and Siem-reap, where the famous temple ruins of Angkor are located.

In 1887, Cambodia, together with Cochin-China, Annam, and Tonkin, were politically grouped into a confederacy, l'Union Indochinoise, ruled by a French Governor General.

In 1893, Laos--divided into several principalities, the kingdom of Luang Prabang being the most important--joined the confederacy. Previously Laos, like Cambodia, had been disputed between the Annamese and the Siamese.

Finally in 1899, the Chinese Kwangchowan territory on the Luichow Peninsula, opposite Hainan

Island, was leased to France for a period of ninety-nine years and placed under the jurisdiction of the Governor General of Indo-China.

During the initial stage of French intervention, Indo-China was ruled by the Ministry of the Marine. All governors were admirals, and this period, which lasted until 1879 when Le Myre de Vilers was appointed the first civil governor, is referred to as the "Rule of the Admirals." It was during this period of time that the authorities were concerned chiefly with the pacification of the country. As a logical result of the development of democratic principles in the mother country, a policy of rapprochement and gradual emancipation of the local population has since been pursued by the French civil administration, endeavoring to establish an adequate educational system adapted to the needs of the local population. (Before the outbreak of the War there were more than half a million pupils in primary and secondary schools.) They granted the people a greater share in the administration; increasing respect was paid to local customs, laws, and traditional forms of local self-government.

Among the foremost Governors General whose contributions have been particularly remarkable in furthering the general development of the confederacy, the following names should be mentioned: Paul Doumer (1897-1902), Albert

Sarrant (1911-1914, 1917-1919), and Pierre Pasquier (1928-1934). The present Governor General, Vice Admiral Jean Decoux, appointed in 1940, has so far (1944) managed to prevent the Japanese from taking over the control of the confederacy in spite of terrible odds.⁴

III. Japanese Occupation and its Aftermath

Japanese pressure of the French administration increased with the Soviet-German pact of 1939 and the outbreak of war in Europe. Threats soon led to aerial attacks on the Yunnan railroad, and on February 29, 1940, the strategic Chinese island of Hainan was seized, bringing Japanese planes one hour away from the coast of Indo-China.

The absence of the British fleet from Far Eastern waters and the hesitancy of American policy left the French without support; with France's defeat in Europe, Japanese pressure against Indo-China became irresistible.⁵

The colony was a major Japanese objective. Its occupation would shut off the traffic on the Yunnan railroad and make vital materials available; it would furnish a base of attack against Chungking and, more important still, against the rich British and Dutch

4. Olov R.T. Janse, The Peoples of French Indo-China (Washington: Smithsonian Institute, June 12, 1944), p. 11.

5. Mills, Lennox and Associates, The New World of Southeast Asia (The University of Minnesota Press, 1949), p. 229.

possessions in the southwest Pacific. Vice-Admiral Decoux acceded to Japanese demands: Japan would land troops immediately at Haiphong and establish three air bases in Tonkin, garrisoned by six thousand men. This capitulation did not satisfy the Japanese commander of the Canton army group which was being hard pressed by the Chinese army in South China. Japanese troops attacked the French "Little Maginot Line" on the Chinese border and were repulsed. French forces were immediately attacked from the rear by Japanese troops which had landed at Haiphong, Indo-China. The Japanese broke the border defenses and occupied the fortified town of Langson.

Synchronized with these Japanese moves was a Thai offensive to regain territory lost to the French years ago. The Japanese mediated this dispute to the advantage of Thailand. This Japanese-instigated Siamese attack on Indo-China led to the occupation of the whole country by Japanese troops. The Japanese occupied the whole of Indo-China by July 25, 1941. "The chief prize was Cam Ranh Bay where the Japanese promptly concentrated men and equipment and excluded all visitors."⁶ Cam Ranh Bay is a natural harbour surrounded

6. John R. Andrus and Katherine R.C. Greene, Recent Developments in Indo-China: 1939-1943 (London: Oxford University Press, 1944), p. 361.

by high cliffs and providing an excellent naval base. The French had spent much money and time in preparing this base for their own use. This base was used by the Japanese, and it was from there that hundreds of ships left with their troops and cargoes when Japan attacked in December, 1941.

The Japanese slogan of "Asia for the Asiatics" appealed to the Annamese, who recognized the ability and prowess of the war machine of Nippon. They began to say to themselves and to missionaries, "We Asiatics are as good soldiers as Europeans when we have the same military equipment." The Japanese helped inspire contempt for the Europeans, and a feeling of inferiority was replaced by that of superiority.

The Japanese realized in 1945 that they were not winning the Pacific War and deliberately decided to leave political and military confusion in their wake.

The Japanese suddenly interned French troops and administrative personnel on March 9, 1945, and enabled Emperor Bao Dai to declare the independence of what was soon renamed Viet-nam (People of the South).⁷

Bernard Newman correctly appraised the situation:

The Japanese persuaded the Emperor Bao Dai to declare the independence of Vietnam. This was a typical Japanese move--to sow confusion

7. Allan B. Cole, Conflict in Indo-China and International Repercussions (Cornell University Press), p. 21.

among the Allies by delegating power to Nationalist movements. In particular it was designed to alienate U.S.A. from France, for the American dislike of colonialism, even if somewhat antiquated, was proverbial.⁸

IV. Political Developments in Viet-nam (1945-1958)

Vietnamese nationalism is a product of the West. Once the tools, techniques, and especially the ideas of the West were assimilated by a native minority, the myth of western superiority was no longer acceptable. This was especially true as a result of Japan's early success in the Pacific War. The early inferiority complex and passive resistance were replaced by a vigorous assertion of claims that derived from a new consciousness of national identity.

Wherever the impact of the West was superficial, as in Laos and Cambodia, the Nationalist movement was also weak. Native leaders were inclined to maintain their privileged position under French rule.

Nationalism was much more vigorous in the coastal provinces where there was a middle class of intellectuals and professional men. It had democratic and socialist overtones. The fact that Rousseau and Karl Marx impregnated the national aspirations of the discoverers

⁸ Bernard Newman, Report on Indo-China (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1954), p. 34.

of the West explains why so many well-to-do Vietnamese, identifying their interests with continued French rule, felt indifference and even hostility. This lack of social solidarity was a source of weakness for the early Nationalist movement, which was further handicapped by the apathy of the poverty-stricken peasants.

The first World War gave a new impetus to Vietnamese nationalism, which, until then, had been the monopoly of a few educated young men whose ill-coordinated efforts were easily suppressed by an efficient police. New conditions were created by the war that stimulated the desire for liberation. One hundred thousand Vietnamese had been sent to France as soldiers and workers, often against their will; many came back with revolutionary ideas. Promises made during the hour of peril were not kept. The Nationalist movement between the two wars lacked the necessary dynamism and discipline to challenge French domination. The only revolt, the Yen Bay affair of 1930, was easily and ruthlessly crushed.

"The various Nationalist groups ebbed, flowed, and subdivided, with the Communist elements showing the only signs of preserving vitality."³ The Revolutionary

3. Virginia Thompson, French Indo-China (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937), p. 73.

Party of Young Annam, created in 1915, was soon weakened by the jealousy of its leaders and by the opposition between its Nationalist and Communist wings. It died in 1929 when the Communists left the party. The Nationalist Annamese Party, which was a replica of the Khomintang, was a terrorist organization made up of young people, mainly students; it never had more than fifteen hundred members. Some of its leaders were arrested after the Yen Bay meeting, and by 1933 the party had disintegrated. It had been unable to keep discipline among its members or to arouse the masses.

The interest of Communist Russia in the colonies of other powers was manifested in 1924. "The Third International had organized its forces and made preparations to attack the capitalistic powers through their colonies."¹⁰

The Vietnamese party, born in 1925, was more successful. By 1931 the party had some fifteen hundred members and perhaps one hundred thousand sympathizers. This was due partly to the able leadership of Nguyen-Hi-Quoc, alias Ho Chi Minh. He was born in Annam some fifty years ago. Before the first World War, he went to France and there joined the Communist party. After the

¹⁰. Thomas E. Ennis, French Policy and Developments in Indochina (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1936), p. 142.

armistice, he represented Indo-China at the World Peasant Conference in Soviet Russia and remained in the U.S.S.R. for some time, studying revolutionary techniques. He spent several years in underground activities in Indo-China. The party continued its underground activities and became the backbone of the Viet Minh, or League for the Independence of Viet-nam, which was created in 1939.

Vietnamese revolutionary elements noticed the progressive weakening of French power in Indo-China under Japanese encroachments. Several uprisings against the French occurred in 1940 but were quelled swiftly. Thereafter various Vietnamese nationalist groups and members of the outlawed Indochinese Communist Party (I.C.P.), or Dong Duong Cong San Dang, began to assemble in China under the protective wing of Marshal Chang Fa-kwei in order to create a common liberation front against both the French and the Japanese.

In May 1941, the Communists met at Chinghsue in a 'congress' together with representatives of several other less important groups: the New Vietnam Party; the Vietnam Revolutionary Youth League; elements of the old Vietnam Nationalist Party, Viet-Nam Quoc Dan Dang, or V.N.Q.D.D.; and various National Salvation--Cu'u Quoc--organizations. During the course of this meeting all these groups banded together to create the League for the Independence of Vietnam, or Viet Nam Doc Lap Dong Minh Hoi, better known as the 'Viet Minh'.¹¹

11. Bernard B. Fall, The Viet-Minh Regime (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University, April 1954), p. 1.

Nguyen Hai Than, a Vietnamese who had resided in China since 1908 and who held a general's rank in the Koumintang Army, was chosen leader of this Nationalist government in exile. Nguyen Hai Than proved ineffectual as a leader, and Nguyen Ai Quoc (Ho Chi Minh) became organizer and leader.

The program of the newborn government-in-exile was brief: (a) liquidation of both the French and Japanese grip on Viet-nam; (b) independence for Viet-nam with the help of the Koumintang. The new government, however, had no armed forces with which to intervene on the Vietnamese soil. Only the Communist Party (I.C.P.) possessed the necessary network of agents and bases to expand its operations in Viet-nam with any chance of success.

The Viet-Minh showed an amount of political foresight which the other Vietnamese parties did not possess. Ho Chi Minh was the only cabinet member of the Nationalist government-in-exile who volunteered to enter Viet-nam in 1944 "in order to intensify the struggle."

The Japanese coup de force of March 9, 1945, eliminated French political and military power. The Japanese occupied only the strategic communication lines, leaving the countryside to itself. Practically without firing a shot the Viet Minh could boast of having liberated North Viet-nam.

The Potsdam Conference decided to split Indo-China along the sixteenth parallel into a northern, Chinese-occupied zone, and a southern zone to be occupied by British forces.

On August 7, 1945, Ho Chi Minh threw off whatever ties he still had with the government-in-exile and established a "Viet-nam People's Liberation Committee" of his own. Eleven of the fourteen representatives were members of the Communist party (I.C.P.). However, the impending arrival of the Kuomintang occupation troops with rival Vietnamese nationalist leaders forced Ho Chi Minh to temporize. The "People's Liberation Committee" was dissolved, and a new "Provisional Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam" was formed in Hanoi on August 29, 1945. This new government was politically more representative than the Liberation Committee, but Ho Chi Minh had retained the presidency and the foreign ministry for himself and had handed the key cabinet posts of the interior (police) national defense, finance, propaganda, education, and youth to his party or Viet-Minh stalwarts.

In Hue, the ancient capital of Viet-nam, the puppet government supported by the Japanese under Bao Dai, the once French-protected Emperor of Viet-nam, had shed both French and Japanese overlordship. On August

25, 1945, Bao Dai abdicated with his government and transmitted his powers to the newly-constituted Provisional Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-nam.

Once again the Provisional Government under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh was farsighted enough and appointed Bao Dai as "Supreme Advisor" to the government. The Viet-Minh now had scored a double victory; it had succeeded not only in becoming a controlling power holding the governmental apparatus, but also had obtained for its government all the appurtenance of legality.

Ho Chi Minh made a declaration of independence on September 2, 1945. He signed a decree providing for general suffrage in Viet-nam and for the convocation of the first National Assembly following general elections.

The election was held eventually on April 13, 1946. The French and Chinese were negotiating for the evacuation of Chinese armed forces from northern Viet-nam. All the Nationalist parties, except the Communists, became extremely violent in their opposition to the French. The Communists even carried on negotiations with the French, implicating the other Nationalist parties during the negotiations.

On March 2, 1946, Ho Chi Minh immediately handed to the National Assembly the resignation of his government. Ngo Tu Ha, the President of the Assembly and a

Catholic, then proposed that Ho Chi Minh be entrusted with the mission of forming a Government of National Union.

This new government was called the "Government of Union and Resistance." Ho Chi Minh gained control of this government, as the Chinese forces which had protected the other Nationalist parties left the country. These same Nationalist parties had become strongly anti-French while the Communists carried on negotiations with the French. These circumstances tended to make the Communists the strongest political force in the new government.

The Communists controlled North Viet-nam, most of Central Viet-nam, and most of the countryside in South Viet-nam. The Secret Police started to arrest all those who opposed the Communist cause.

Negotiations between the French and the Viet-Minh had broken down at Fontainebleau, and both sides realized that difficulties were to be solved only by open warfare.

The attack broke out on December 19, 1946; it was a marvel of coordinated planning. All French garrisons in North and Central Viet-nam were attacked, and the Government of the Republic of Viet-nam "took to the bush."

The French and the Democratic Republic of Viet-

nam grimly settled down to a war that was to last longer than World War II.

In 1951, the Communists, who controlled the Viet-Minh resistance, recreated their party--the Viet-Nam Dang Lao Dong (Viet-nam Workers' Party) was born in March, 1951. Actually this party had never been dissolved.

It was during 1953-54 that the military aspects of the struggle reached a climax, and the tide turned decisively against the French, at least in North Viet-nam. After the fall of the fortress of Dien Bien Phu in May, 1954, the government in France realized the futility of continuing the struggle. It was at the Geneva Conference that Communists won substantial gains from these negotiations and also insisted on free elections for 1956. However, the United States and the free government of Viet-nam under President Ngo Dinh Diem did not take part in these negotiations and refused to sign any agreement.

The Communist Viet-Minh occupied Northern Viet-nam and Central Viet-nam to the sixteenth parallel.

There now exists in Indo-China an unfortunate division of the country, such as has existed in Korea. Indo-China and Korea will always exist as explosive centers until the countries can be united as they once were politically, economically, and socially.

CHAPTER II

THE GEOGRAPHY AND NATURAL RESOURCES OF VIET-NAM

I. Geography

In order to realize the potential of a country, it is necessary to consider its geography.

A. Physiographic Regions

From a geographical point of view the most striking feature of French Indo-China, of which Viet-nam is a part, is the extreme contrast between the wild, mostly forest-clad, and sparsely-inhabited mountains and the densely populated, extensively cultivated fertile lowlands.

"The physiography of Indo-China is dominated by the uplands which cover more than one-half of the total area of the region."¹ These uplands lie all across the northern section and extend southward through the center of the land. A second, smaller upland lies close to the southwest coast of Cambodia. There are two lowland regions of great importance: the Red River (Fleuve

1. C. McCune, "The Diversity of Indochina's Physical Geography," Far Eastern Quarterly, Vol. VI, No. 4; 335-344 (August 1947), p. 335.

Rouge, Songkoi) valley and delta, and the Mekong valley and delta. The Annam Cordillera, really an elevated, tilted plateau, slopes abruptly to the east coast with a more gradual slope westward to the Mekong. The Cambodian mountains, of similar structure, also rise abruptly from the Gulf of Siam, sloping gently to the Tonle Sap lowland.

B. River Systems

There are three main drainage basins in Indo-China: the Red River system and some smaller rivers drain into the Gulf of Tonkin; the rivers of eastern Annam drain into the South China Sea; the Mekong and its tributaries also drain into the South China Sea, but the basin of this system lies west of the Annam Cordillera; a few short rivers drain from the Cambodian mountains into the Gulf of Siam.

C. Climate

Indo-China is situated in the heart of the world known as "Monsoon Asia," which extends around the margins of the continent from India to the Kamchatka Peninsula.

Practically all of the territory within "Monsoon Asia" is characterized by summer maximum and winter minimum of rainfall with seasonal reversal of wind direction--from the ocean toward the Asiatic highlands in summer (the summer monsoon), and vice versa in winter.²

2. V.D. Wickizer and W.K. Bennett, The Rice Economy of Monsoon Asia (Food Research Institute, Stanford University, California, 1941), p. 1.

The winter monsoon in Indo-China lasts from mid-September until March, the summer monsoon from late April to June.

Tonkin (North Viet-nam), northern Laos, and the higher parts of the Annam Range have temperatures in the coldest month (January) below 65°F. These areas do not, therefore, have the "tropical" climates of other regions. Temperatures are high enough, however, for year-round rice production.

Spring, and particularly April, is the warmest period of the year in much of Indo-China. Elevation, latitude, and the influence of coastal position cause the temperatures of the plains of Tonkin and Annam to fall below 80°F., but in the Mekong Valley temperatures are warmer, rising in the lower portion to over 85°F.

Precipitation is a vital climatic factor in Indo-China because of the cultivation of rice. The mountainous regions of the interior have the greatest amount of rain, while the densely populated coastal areas receive less. Rainfall on the Annam coast varies according to the direction of the coastline. The north-eastward-facing coasts have an annual precipitation of over eighty inches, whereas along the south coast of Annam, where both summer and winter monsoon winds parallel the coastline, the rainfall may be less than forty inches a year.

The climate has a great influence on the rice-growing regions--as little as ten days' drought in the growing season may cause a failure in the rice crop; on the other hand, excessive rainfall may cause floods.

II. Natural Resources

Any consideration of professional and vocational missions involves not only the study of the geography but of the natural resources as well. The natural resources available in Indo-China dictate to us the type of missionary endeavor we can suggest.

A. Soil

The Europeans have utilized the natural resources of Indo-China in a manner vastly different from that of the native inhabitants. This is true of the soil, which is the greatest single resource of Indo-China, because of the overwhelming number of people engaged in rice culture. The Europeans have sought to preserve this resource by the use of fertilizer, drought and flood control, and irrigation ditches. They have also used tested rice seed to produce better crops.

The most valuable type of soil in Indo-China is recently deposited alluvium. If alluvial deposits are not renewed by fresh layers of sediment, the heavy rain-

fall, in conjunction with the prevailing high temperatures, tends to leach the soil. This results in laterization.

B. Vegetation

"About 120,000 square miles, or somewhat more than forty percent of the country is forested."³ Little of the forest cover remains in its original condition, owing to exploitation by the people. Industrial development in the deltas has hastened the cutting of accessible forests.

Destruction of vegetation cover is carried on by the tribes and is called "ray" or shifting cultivation. Fields are cleared by burning the underbrush in order to grow crops. In a few years, the soil is exhausted, and a new patch is cleared. About sixteen percent of the forest area has been affected in this manner.

The tropical rain forest is found in areas having an annual rainfall of approximately eighty inches or more distributed fairly evenly throughout the year. The rain forest, in its natural state, exhibits three layers of vegetation. The first is made up of trees from seventy-five to ninety feet tall. Below them grow trees

3. P. Gourou, L'utilisation du Sol en Indochine française (Paris, 1940), p. 359.

trees whose mature height is about fifty to sixty-five feet. The third layer is composed of young, immature trees.

C. Fisheries

"The fisheries resources of Indo-China are of major importance to the country, exceeded only in their value to the general population by rice cultivation."⁴

Fish is the chief supplement to rice in the diet of the people and also forms an important item of export. Fortunately for the dense lowland population, fish abound in the shallow seas, rivers, lakes, canals, ditches, and flooded rice fields.

D. Minerals

It was only after the French occupied the land that the mining industry increased its scope.

"Previously some mining was carried on by the Chinese and Annamese, using primitive methods."⁵

Coal is the principal product of Indo-China's mines. However, most of the coal is located in Tonkin (North Viet-nam) and is in the hands of the Communists.

4. Department of Mines and Technical Surveys, Indo-China, Foreign Geography Information Series, No. 6 (Ottawa, Canada, 1953), p. 21.

5. E.W. Miller, "Industrial Resources of Indo-china," Far Eastern Quarterly, Vol. VI, No. 4; 396-408, p. 401.

Tin is found in the Nam Patene district of Laos. The Laotians were developing these mines with the aid of the French.

Alluvial gold deposits are found in many mountainous areas, but the chief source is the hard-rock mine at Bong Mieu in Annam.

On the coasts of Annam and Cochín-China, salt is prepared by brine evaporation. Some of this is exported.

It would appear that, with the presence of coal, iron, limestone, and alloy metals, Indo-China is in a favorable position for the development of an iron and steel industry. There are certain difficulties which exist, however, and are hard to solve. The terrain and climate are hard on Europeans employed in such an industry, and there has always existed an inadequate labor supply and poor transportation. Also, the country lacks good coking coal, which is so essential to any industry of such a nature.

CHAPTER III

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS IN VIET-NAM

I. French Accomplishments

The economic life of Viet-nam and its social structure are predominantly based upon rice culture. The life of the great mass of Vietnamese peasants closely resembles that led by their ancestors. Since the beginning of French occupation, however, widespread social changes have occurred.

The chief problem of the region is still the unequal distribution of the population with regard to the need of developing the resources, including rice lands. The French had expected some effort toward the solving of flood and drought conditions.

Projects undertaken have included the improvement of farming methods and of seed quality, the opening up of new rice lands, through large-scale irrigation and drainage projects, the introduction of new crops in the hinterlands, the improvement of communication, and the development of mining and manufacturing.¹

1. C.A. Micaud, "French Indo-China," The New World of South-east Asia (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1949), p. 220.

The development of new crops, of mining, and of industry have not been on a scale sufficient to raise the standard of living greatly throughout the country. The progress of road and railway building has been slow and costly, hindering the movement of the population and the distribution of rice from the areas of surplus.

Economic development has met with many difficulties; nevertheless, it has effected many social changes in the lives and attitudes of the Indo-Chinese people. Perhaps the most profound change has come about as a result of the impact of European thinking upon the traditional structure of Vietnamese life.

"Recognition of the individual's importance has grown at the expense of the two basic units--the family and the village."² The breakdown of family and village ties has been felt most keenly in the coastal lands, where Europeans quickly settled. The mountain villages vary greatly in social organization but, because of their inaccessibility, have been less affected by recent changes.

Vietnamese village life reflects that of China. Strong religious and social obligations are laid upon the family members, in keeping with the cult of ancestor

2. Charles Robequain, The Economic Development of French Indo-China (London: Oxford University Press, 1944), p. 12.

worship. Each member feels himself a part of the family and village group, because the family is an integral part of the village. In order to fulfill the necessary religious and social obligations involved, it is also required to live on the land of one's ancestors, a fact which partly explains the lack of success in making large-scale, sudden transfers of population.

The conflict between individualism and collectivism arose as a result of Western intervention.

During the first period of administration, the object of French rule was pacification of the country, but later policies were based to some extent upon the individualistic trend of French political thought.³

"The concept of the value of individual life has led to the suppression of many old, harsh laws, but has weakened the authority which guided the people."⁴

This does not mean that the Vietnamese have not assimilated, superficially at least, many of the aspects of French culture. The adaptability which enabled them to seize upon many elements of Chinese culture has operated upon Western culture as well. The effects of assimilation have seen the breakdown of Confucianism and of many superstitions with regard to the soil. Other effects have been the growth of urban communities, the

3. O.R.T. Janse, The Peoples of French Indochina (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1944), p. 15.

4. Micaud, op. cit., p. 226.

formation of new social classes, and the rise of Vietnamese nationalism.

It was only with the arrival of the French that large towns were established. There are several urban centers within the delta areas, such as Hanoi and Haiphong in North Viet-nam, and Saigon-Cholon in the Mekong delta. These cities act as focal points for the further concentration of population in areas already densely peopled.

"One class which has grown considerably in Vietnamese society is that of the 'landless proletariat'--those who own either no land or insufficient land to provide a living."⁵ This group is composed of two types--the wage earners and the landless farmers, from whose rank the former emerge. In earlier times, land was not held in equal amounts, but the communal organization of community life lessened the effects of this discrepancy. The breakdown of village organization has removed this source of support from the small landholder, and, at the same time, the rapid increase in births has reduced the size of family holdings. Therefore, this has led to large estates and landless tenants, managed by an intermediate group and worked by

5. Robequain, op. cit., p. 226.

tenant farmers. The tenants have become involved in a cumulative process of borrowing against future harvests from the landlords, to some of whom, interest on such loans has become a major source of income. "The French authorities, through the formation of agricultural credit organizations, have attempted to alleviate this situation."⁶

The increased rates of population growth, resulting from the French medical and engineering projects, the improved transportation facilities, and the growing need for labor in mines, on plantations, and in industry have combined to bring the wage-earning class into being. "These people enjoy better living and working conditions than at home, but feel themselves to be lacking in moral and social compensations."⁷ For this reason, many return home upon the expiration of their contracts, or even earlier. Thus, although the total wage-earning group is small, large numbers must be recruited to fulfill the requirements for labor. The instability of the wage-earning population has delayed the development of a conscious "working class," but the great change from farming to wage-earning has been

6. Andre Masson, Histoire de l'Indochine. Que sais-je? (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1950), p. 109.

7. Ibid., p. 109.

experienced by a proportionately large group of the population.

Another social class to emerge in Indo-China is that of the wealthy and intellectual "new elite." The impact of western ideas and education, the weakening of traditional hierarchies, and the intellectual traditions of Confucian Annam (Viet-nam) and Buddhist Cambodia have accounted for the rise of this class.⁸

The wealth of these people is founded upon their ownership of rice lands, especially the newly drained areas in Cochin-China. Associated with land ownership is the lending of money to tenants. "Some have invested in a variety of industrial and commercial enterprises; rice lands continue to form their main source of wealth."⁹

It is from the wealthy class that many of the intellectuals appear, because they place great value upon education and western culture and have the means to satisfy their wishes. Since 1938, the French permitted the Indo-Chinese to take responsible administrative positions, but this did not allay the sense of frustration in the wealthy intellectual class.

Nationalism has flourished in those regions of Indo-China where the western impact has been strongest, because it is based on western political concepts. The

8. Masson, op. cit., p. 108.

9. Robequain, op. cit., p. 86.

supporters of the movement originally came from the professional and intellectual classes, which arose as a result of westernization.

II. Education

The greatest change brought into Indo-China by the West is unquestionably that connected with education.

In Annam, Cochin-China, and Tonkin, the educational system was based primarily on the study of Chinese philosophers, such as Confucius and others.

As we, in our civilization, respect and honor the doctor, the teacher and the scientist, so the Indo-Chinese admire those who are familiar with the philosophic writings of the past.

The French, on their arrival in Cochin-China, needed interpreters and not philosophers. Although the national system provided a solid basis of moral education, it seemed of little value "pour les besoins de la vie pratique." In any case, the French could not take over the system, as it broke down when the Emperor of Annam, on ceding Cochin-China, recalled all the officials, including educational officials. Few French could speak Annamese, and it seemed easier to teach the people French. This agreed with the prevailing colonial doctrine of assimilation.

The instructions of the first civil governor were that no sacrifices could be more useful and fruitful than those which the colony should make to familiarize the Annamese with French ideas on morality, science, and economics.¹⁰

When the southern provinces were ceded to France in 1862, stipends were granted to those who would attend the missionary school, Ecole d'Adran, in Saigon to be trained as teachers in Franco-vernacular schools. This raised the problem of writing Annamese. The current use of Chinese characters enhanced the difficulty of the language, and the government decided to adopt a system known as "quoc ngu," devised by Roman Catholic missionaries in the seventeenth century for writing Annamese in Roman characters. In 1864, Franco-vernacular schools opened in the larger centers, but the Annamese, zealous for traditional learning, remained indifferent and hostile to the new secular schools. It was only gradually that the people learned that schooling led to promotion. This led to the problem of mass education. "By the end of the nineteenth century there were about ten to twenty thousand children in village schools learning 'quoc ngu'; there were about five thousand in the Franco-vernacular schools."¹¹

10. J.S. Furnivall, Educational Progress in Southeast Asia (New York: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1943), p. 55.

11. Virginia Thompson, op. cit., p. 286.

The Lieutenant Governor said in 1900 about the general result of educational progress in Cochín-China:

A few hundred natives could speak French adequately, a few thousand could gabble it well enough to earn a living as servants, cooks, coolies, and so on, and the rest were more illiterate than their fathers had been before the French occupation. Meanwhile the curves of crime and European education rose concurrently.¹²

It was when Paul Beau became Governor that the foundations of the modern educational system were laid. Vocational training was stressed as well now because the government, the planters, industrialists, and merchants all wanted cheap assistants. Governor Paul Beau founded the "Conseil de Perfectionnement de l'Enseignement Indigène" in 1906. It was created to play a vital part in educational reforms. The main idea was that natives were to begin their education in vernacular schools. The more intelligent students were to pass through French vernacular primary schools to the secondary stage. Those who still manifested an ability and appreciation for study were given courses in Science, and some of these students would attend Normal School later with all probability of becoming teachers. In 1915 the competitive examinations in which the Chinese classics figured largely were abolished. This was the death sentence for traditional culture.

12. J.S. Furnivall, op. cit., p. 59.

The apex of the whole system was the establishment of the University of Hanoi in 1907 by Paul Beau as a concession to the new spirit of Nationalism. This was to counteract the alternatives to higher education found in Japan or Hong Kong. In 1925 the University of Hanoi had schools of Law, Medicine, Fine Arts, Education, Commerce, Public Works, Agriculture, and Forestry.

In Indo-China female education, vocational training, and technical education is backward.

In Viet-nam itself, that region which is not within the Communist orbit, we have the most recent statistics made available by the Statesman's Year Book of 1957. There were 2,137 public primary schools (461,362 pupils and 9,105 teachers), 701 private primary schools (117,634 pupils and 2,783 teachers), 157 public and private secondary schools (67,706 pupils and 2,266 teachers), twenty public and private primary, secondary and higher vocational schools or training workshops (2,743 pupils and 178 teachers). The National University located at Saigon has five faculties with 2,841 students and 125 teachers.

The training of medical doctors and nurses has been neglected. It was only with the entrance of the French army in Indo-China that Western medical assistance was rendered to the people. The French have established

hospitals and clinics in most of the larger cities and towns. These were of great help to those who could afford to pay for their hospitalization. Usually the Annamese preferred to go to their native "doctors," who had no formal medical training and who, therefore, were not as reliable.

III. Economic Factors

A. Agriculture

No recent statistics regarding the number of Vietnamese engaged in agriculture can be quoted, but the proportion is known to be extremely high. Nearly every member of peasant families is engaged in some aspect of agriculture at some time of the year.

The total area of cultivated land in Indo-China in 1936 was probably about thirteen million acres, or about 20,000 square miles. "Tonkin had 2,915,000 cultivated acres, Annam 1,878,000, Cambodia 1,947,000, and Cochin-China 5,579,000."¹³

The importance of the cultivated land in each state can be judged by its nutritional density, that is, the number of persons supported by each square mile of cultivated land. In 1936, the average nutritional

¹³. International Labor Office, Labor Conditions in Indo-China, Studies and Reports, Series B, No. 26 (Geneva, 1938), p. 217.

density in Tonkin (North Viet-nam) and Annam (Central Viet-nam) was almost 2,000. In Cambodia and Cochin-China, where the population was comparatively low, the nutritional densities were about 1,000 and 500, respectively. This has, of course, changed as a result of the War and with the immigration of one million refugees from the Communist North. These are the areas from which surplus crops, particularly rice, can be obtained. In the province of Quang Yen in Tonkin, nearly 6,000 persons were supported by each square mile of cultivated land. "The problem of rural over-population is further complicated by the system of land tenure. In Annamese communities, it is customary for property to be divided equally among all children of the family."¹⁴

In densely populated areas this custom has led to the development of minute farms. In many parts of Tonkin and Annam many of the farms are considerably less than one acre in extent. In Tonkin sixty percent of the farms have less than one acre, while in Annam seventy percent are 1.2 acres or less in extent. In Cochin-China and Cambodia, most of the newly developed rice lands are bought in fairly large blocks, and the average farm size is larger. The proportion of small size farms

14. K.J. Pelyer, Economic Survey of the Pacific Area, Population and Land Utilization, Part I, International Secretariat, Institute of Pacific Relations (New York, 1941), p. 136.

appears to increase with the proportion of the Annamese population in a state, a reflection both of the proprietary customs and of the prevailing high birth rates of these people.

Although individual land holdings are relatively large in Cochin-China, most of the farms of more than twenty-five acres are subdivided into lots of 12.5 to 25 acres in size and leased to tenants. Thus, over thirty-five percent of the farms in Cochin-China are operated by tenants. These tenants, or *ta dien*, are expected to clear the land themselves, to dig the necessary ditches for drainage and irrigation, to erect the farm buildings, and to supply all implements. As rent, the landlord receives forty to fifty percent of all the harvest.

The tenants are usually forced to borrow money from the landlord, against the harvest, at high rates of interest. These circumstances cause wide-spread poverty and perpetual indebtedness among the tenant farmers.

The economic difficulties of the peasant farmers constitute one of the greatest problems in Indo-China, and, at the same time, present the greatest obstacle to any satisfactory solution of that problem.

1. Rice

"In Indo-China about 86 percent of the cultivated

land is devoted to rice."¹⁵ There are two main rice-growing areas--the deltas of Tonkin and northern Annam, and the delta and plain of the lower Mekong. Within these areas, not all the land surface is cultivated, and the intensity of cultivation varies greatly from region to region.

Throughout Indo-China, as in all Asia, many varieties of rice have been developed to meet the varied conditions of climate and soil. Some varieties are known as "upland" or "mountain" rice, and are grown by dry-farming methods. Most rice, however, is grown in irrigated lowlands, by methods which vary only in detail in different localities.

Rice cultivation requires a great deal of exhausting hand labor. Sowing, transplanting, and harvesting are all performed by the peasant and his family, assisted by neighbors or hired helpers at transplanting and harvesting times. In most parts of Indo-China scoops are used to flood the fields and to drain them again before harvesting. Oxen or buffalo may be used in ploughing and cultivating the land, but in overpopulated areas the food requirements of these animals may make their employment prohibitive.

15. V.D. Wickizer and M.K. Bennett, op. cit., p. 31.

The climatic requirements of the rice plant are exacting. Flooding of the seed-beds and fields retards sowing and transplanting. Drought may prevent the maintenance of a sufficient water level during the growing period. A period of dry weather is necessary at harvest time, and rains can ruin the crop. "Indo-China is not one of the great rice-producing nations of Asia. Since 1947 production of rice in Indo-China has ranked about eighth among Asiatic countries."¹⁶

The gross annual production appears to vary between four and eight million tons. The importance of Indo-China as a rice-producing country, however, lies in the volume of its surplus crop which enters into foreign trade.

Within Indo-China itself, the state of Cochinchina leads in production with 2,450,000 metric tons, followed by Tonkin with 1,760,000 metric tons, Annam with 1,100,000 metric tons, Cambodia with 800,000 metric tons, and Laos with 300,000 metric tons.

2. Other Food Crops

Rice forms about ninety percent of the diet of the Indo-Chinese peasants, but other crops are grown as supplementary food sources. Maize or corn is the chief

¹⁶ United Nations, Economic Survey of Asia and the Far East (New York, 1948), p. 50.

supplementary crop grown. In 1944, 600,000 acres were devoted to corn; this produced 200,000 tons of the product. About fifty percent of the corn acreage is located in Cambodia along the Mekong.

Other food crops grown by the people are sweet potatoes, haricot beans, soya beans, taro, manioc, yams, and millet. Few are produced in quantities sufficient for export, but are used as subsistence food crops.

3. Cash Crops

Certain crops are grown in Indo-China to supplement the farmer's income from rice, but few are of great importance or are cultivated as successfully as they might be. "After the failure of cotton as a plantation crop, encouragement was given to native growers in an attempt to supply the French demand for cotton."¹⁷ Cotton, however, is grown as an off-season crop during the dry months. Its quality is poor, and it cannot compete with imported fibres.

In Annam, Cambodia, and parts of Tonkin, some families did grow mulberry trees to feed their own silk worms. The government provided experimental stations and supervisory personnel for the industry, but the silk is produced under poor conditions and remains of low quality.

17. Robequain, op. cit., p. 232.

Tobacco is grown locally; it is a dark, strong type which the natives prefer. The Europeans prefer light tobacco, but there is little of this type grown.

Sugar is grown in Indo-China, and this is produced on about 85,000 acres. The yield is very low, averaging two tons per acre. Little sugar is used by the natives, but it does have to be imported.

Other cash crops include peanuts, sesame, lac, and tung, used in varnish, kapok, and jute. Coffee, tea, and rubber are also grown, but these crops are chiefly grown on European plantations.

B. Livestock

Livestock does not form an important part of the agricultural economy of French Indo-China. The hot, moist summers are not well suited to the healthy development of domestic animals, and also encourage the spread of many diseases. Natural grassland is rare, and the grass which grows in savanna areas is too coarse for pasturage. Most important of all is the need for land to produce food crops rather than fodder and pasture. Only pigs and fowls are much used in the native diet. Cattle and buffalo are used as draught animals in the rice fields and are less important as food.

C. Plantation Crops

The term "plantation agriculture" implies large-scale production of a single commodity for sale, and usually for export. In Indo-China, plantations were generally financed and managed by the French, employing Annamese labor.

Today most of the plantations are located in the southern parts of the country. The prevailing narrow annual temperature range favors the growth of the tropical plants usually cultivated on plantations.

1. Rubber

Rubber has become the most successful plantation crop in Indo-China. The soils and the climate are suitable for this crop. France has generally provided a good market for Indo-Chinese rubber. "In 1897 'Hevea brasiliensis' from Malaya was planted in the Saigon Botanical Garden. It was not until 1915 that rubber from this plant outranked the production of wild rubber."¹⁸

The world demand for rubber encouraged the development of new areas. The Indo-Chinese government assisted the planters with subsidies and other financial concessions. The industry enjoyed a prosperous period prior to the Second World War.

18. Robequain, op. cit., p. 202.

The industry in Indo-China is almost entirely in the hands of a few large companies. Two-thirds of the 300,000 acres of rubber plantations are in Cochin-China.

2. Tea

Tea is indigenous to Indo-China and was cultivated in gardens by the natives before the arrival of the Europeans. "In 1943 there were about 40,000 acres of plantations in Indo-China, and production amounted to about 10,000 tons of tea; this figure included both plantations and gardens."¹⁹

3. Coffee

Coffee has been less successful as a plantation crop in Indo-China. The main difficulty was that the product had to compete for the French market with the coffee of other French colonies.

D. Mining

The mining industry of Indo-China was concentrated in French hands, through the operation of a few large companies. The natives seldom have the capital available to undertake the great financial risks involved. Most of the mining activity is confined to Tonkin (North Vietnam), which is now in Communist hands. The division of Indo-China into two zones has greatly hindered the future economic development of a strong industrial nation.

¹⁹. Indo-China (Ottawa, Canada: Dept. of Mines and Technical Surveys, 1953), p. 46.

B. Manufacturing

The traditional industries are carried on in the homes of peasants and supply the local needs for food, clothing, implements, buildings, and many other things. Most of the manufacturing only supplements agriculture. There are few villages composed entirely of landless artisans. The crafts are usually pursued in the off-seasons for rice-growing, and during the scanty leisure time of the peasants. Most require elementary skills and little capital. Simple tools are used, and small reserves of raw materials are maintained.

The preparation of foodstuffs is one of the major traditional industries, including the husking of rice, and the preparation of various types of food from rice. Sugar, molasses, and various oils, such as coconut oil are prepared in Annam. On the southeast coast of Annam, the preparation of fish sauce, nuoc mam, engages a labor force which raises the industry to the scale of modern manufacturing activity.

Textile-making employs one of the largest groups of artisans. Factory-made cotton thread is woven into coarse cloth for clothing. In northern Annam, both spinning and weaving are done by artisans. Ropes and mats are prepared from coconut fibres on the Annam coast.

Basket-work has a variety of uses in Indo-China, and is an important craft in most parts of the country. Hats and capes to protect the rice-field workers from the rain, receptacles of all kinds, implements for irrigation and for fishing are all woven of reeds, rattans, bamboo, or latania leaves.

A considerable number of artisans are engaged in the construction industries. The larger village buildings are all erected by specialists in various types of wood-work. Other craftsmen concerned with construction include masons, stone-cutters, and brick-makers.

Many workers produce jewellery, paper articles for religious ceremonies, and pottery. Some of their products are sold in small shops in the towns and cities, but the greater proportion is for use in the villages.

Indo-China is the most highly industrialized of the French overseas colonies, and has considerable possibilities for future industrial development. Many of the natural resources and the raw materials which could provide a basis for industry are present. The power resources, still largely undeveloped, are capable of considerable development. In addition, the dense lowland population provides a large potential labor supply. The industrial future of Indo-China is related to that of Southeast Asia as a whole and depends upon the raising of standards of living and purchasing power of the people.²⁰

20. Robequain, op. cit., p. 269.

CHAPTER IV

HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN AND MISSIONARY ALLIANCE WORK IN VIET-NAM

I. Early Mission History

Dr. A.B. Simpson, one of the founders of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, was very much interested in seeing the Gospel carried to all areas of the earth, especially to the neglected Asian countries of China and Indo-China.

In 1887, Dr. Simpson wrote in the magazine, "Word, Work, and World": "The southeastern peninsula of Asia has been much neglected. The great kingdom of Annam should be occupied for Christ."

Rev. David Lelacheur, who was closely associated with Dr. Simpson in the beginning of the Alliance work, visited Saigon. He impressed Dr. Simpson with the opportunity to reach out to these people with the Gospel.

In 1894, in an editorial in "The Christian Alliance and Foreign Weekly," he mentioned the Sudan and Annam as two of the outstanding unoccupied mission fields of that day.

In 1897, Rev. C.H. Reeves of the Alliance was permitted to cross the border from Lung Chow, South China, and entered Tonkin as far as the city of Langson.

Rev. R.A. Jaffray managed to enter the country from South China in 1889 and travelled south from the Chinese border to Hanoi, the capital. He was not permitted to stay and establish any permanent work then, but finally gained permanent entrance in 1911 with two other missionaries of the Alliance, Rev. Paul Hosler and Rev. G. Lloyd Hughes. They landed at Tourane and were allowed to purchase property for the Alliance.

The mission field in Annam was opened as a subsidiary of the South China Conference until it was visited by the Foreign Secretary, Dr. R.H. Glover, in 1915. There were nine missionaries located at Tourane and Faifoo. An Annamese Field Conference was organized, and Rev. Isaac Hess, Chairman of the South China Field, was appointed Superintendent. Four missionaries remained at Tourane and Faifoo, while five others opened new work at Haiphong, the main seaport in Tonkin, and also at the capital, Hanoi. It appeared that the work would progress satisfactorily with missionaries stationed on the field and capable of speaking the language.

The First World War caused the French to be suspicious of all foreigners, even of missionaries.

Five of nine missionaries had names which appeared to be of German origin; they were all American citizens but were asked to leave the country. The other four were refused authorization to do any work among the Annamese.

II. Mission Success at Hanoi

In the spring of 1916 Rev. R.A. Jaffray again visited Indo-China and had an interview with the French Governor-General, concerning the reopening of the work. Authorization was granted for work to be carried on in Haiphong, Hanoi, Tourane, and in the provinces of Cochinchina and Laos. A missionary conference was held at Haiphong in the fall of 1916. Rev. Jaffray was the Superintendent of the new field. Hanoi was occupied with its 300,000 souls; it is located in central Tonkin province which has a population of eight million. Land was purchased in the center of the city in a strategic location. A printing press was set up, which has been used in printing the Bible in the national language, as well as printing church literature.

The first converts were a celebrated sculptor and a university graduate. These two were part of that nucleus which made the Hanoi Church a means of blessing. This church was responsible for the establishment of five other churches in the district.

The first language teacher of the missionaries was a capable translator, who for ten years assisted in the translation of the Bible. He later became Editor of the Annamese newspaper of Hanoi.

The Mission Press, in cooperation with the British and Foreign Bible Society, did a great work in printing all types of Christian literature for this new work.

At Haiphong, the main seaport for Northern Vietnam, a new church was established in 1915. The Vietnamese and the Chinese cooperated in establishing this work. This is a good example of the way the grace of God has worked, as it is not natural for the two races to associate with each other in any public meeting.

III. Tourane Beach-Head Expanded

The return of the missionaries to Tourane, after the French Government lifted its ban, resulted in a rapid increase in the number of converts. A Bible School was opened there in 1915 and has been one of the strongest educational institutions in the area. Many of the leaders of the Vietnamese church have had their Bible training at this institution.

The natural result of this work was the spreading of the Christian witness to many areas surrounding Tourane. Invitations were accepted by some who desired to know more about Christ.

The Lord blessed at Paifoo, just fifteen miles south of Tourane. A strong group of believers resided in this small village. They were filled with enthusiasm for Christ, and their vigor and joy attracted many to hear of their new Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. This was the first self-supporting church in Viet-nam.

It is interesting that the acceptance of the Gospel meant the acceptance of stewardship. Soon the Gospel witness was carried by believers to points further south at Tam Ky, Nhatrang, and Nuih Hoa. The French government officials had to give permission for the opening of any new work in any town or village; however, the Spirit of God cannot be limited to the decrees of men.

"There were over two thousand Christians in these churches before they were officially authorized, although from the beginning they were countenanced by the government officials."¹

IV. Work in Cochín-China

In 1918 work was established in Cochín-China at Saigon. A missionary residence and receiving home was purchased in an ideal location. Another missionary station was opened at Mytho near Saigon. Twenty-five

1. E.F. Irwin, With Christ in Indo-China (Harrisburg, Penn.: Christian Publications, Inc., 1937), p. 68.

years later all the missionaries were to reside in this town as prisoners of the Japanese.

It was at Mytho that a wealthy layman approached one of the missionaries and asked him to explain a gospel portion he possessed. The Spirit of God worked in this man's life in a wonderful way, and he dedicated his wealth and talents to his Heavenly Father. He was responsible for the first Alliance Church built in Cochin-China.

The work in Cochin-China was most successful, as so many converts visited Saigon and Mytho on business and then returned to their villages with the Gospel. The Lord blessed His work, and many new churches were established.

V. Growth of the Vietnamese Church

When Rev. A.C. Snead, Foreign Secretary of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, visited the field in 1927, just fourteen years after the opening of the first Vietnamese chapel, a great national church was organized. There were already more than five thousand Christians in many congregations scattered over three of the Vietnamese-speaking states, Tonkin, Annam, and Cochin-China. "A great factor in this rapid growth was the Bible School at Tourane."² The school includes a Women's Bible School as

2. Ibid., p. 88.

well. God called students to this school from Tonkin and Cochin-China, as well as from the immediate vicinity of Tourane. There were over ninety students attending with seven teachers, four of whom were missionaries.

The first objective of the Mission had been to evangelize as much territory and to win as many converts as possible. The next important step was the establishment of a self-supporting, self-administring, and self-propagating Vietnamese church with a congregation in every community.

In 1935, there were thirty ordained Vietnamese pastors and eighty-five unordained preachers and evangelists serving in the National Church. The National Church held a conference each year at Tourane; it was encouraging to witness the ability and spiritual discernment of many of their leaders. Two of the special projects were the purchasing of a gospel boat and the decision to take the Gospel to some of the Mois tribes inhabiting the interior. The new church had a missionary zeal.

VI. Work in Cambodia

Buddhism is the religion of Cambodia. It is the hope of every father to have one son in order to give him to the Buddhist priesthood. In this atmosphere, the first missionaries had very little success during the

first few years. However, in 1925, the Cambodian Bible School was opened with five students. The Cambodian students had much less secular education; consequently their course was more elementary. The missionaries showed foresight by adapting to the particular features of Cambodian life. The people who are employed mostly in agriculture work are busy during two seasons of the year, seed-time and harvest. The short-term Bible School has intensive Bible study during these two free seasons and allows the students to return home when their crops demand attention. This increased the number who attended the school and allowed also for the students to be self-supporting.

VII. Work in Laos

The next field to be entered by the Alliance was Laos. This is the only state of French Indo-China in which there were Protestant missionaries before the advent of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. The Swiss Brethren had three stations in southern Laos, and the Presbyterians had crossed over from Siam and had done some work near Luang Prabang. The Presbyterians had several hundred converts among the Kha tribespeople. There were still large areas, however, with many tribes who had never heard of Christ. The Alliance felt that

this was truly a needy section. There are various languages spoken in Laos, as there are so many different tribes. Only after three years' work did the first convert make his decision for Jesus Christ.

The Bible had been translated into the Laosian language by one of the Swiss Brethren. It was published by the Mission Press at Hanoi and was a great help, as the Laosians read for themselves of God's love for all.

VIII. Work Among the Tribes

The last field to be entered by the Alliance Mission is located in the highlands of all the states. The aboriginal inhabitants of the land were driven back into the mountains when the Vietnamese migrated south from China many centuries ago.

"There are eighty-two tribes. Each lives its own life with distinct customs, dress, and language."³

"The tribal people themselves are not friendly to strangers; the Annamese call them 'Mois,' which means savage and conveys a good description of their attitude toward the outside world."⁴

The first contact with tribal folk was made by a Vietnamese pastor, Mr. Thua, in the mountainous region

3. Ibid., p. 144.

4. Ibid., p. 145.

behind Tourane. He found a tribesman who could speak Vietnamese, and so his message was translated to the tribe. In a very short time there were thirty-three converts in this area.

The work among the Vietnamese at Langson in North Viet-nam was successful, and, as the Vietnamese witnessed in the market place, members of the Tho tribe became interested. One member of the Tho tribe invited the missionaries to speak to his tribe at the village of Dong Mo. Twelve of those who heard the Gospel accepted Christ as their Lord. This work has been very successful.

In October, 1932, another station was opened at Hoabinh in North Viet-nam for the Muong and other tribes. A student from the Tourane Bible School was placed there as an evangelist. Since that time many villages throughout the area have the Gospel, and there are numerous converts.

At Dalat in South Viet-nam work was established among the Mois. This is one of the largest areas inhabited by the tribes and has Short Term Bible Schools for the tribal folk.

Mr. Xol, the Mois evangelist, fortunately spoke five languages, including Vietnamese. He, with the assistance of a Vietnamese Bible student reduced one of the tribal languages to writing and translated the Gospel of Mark.

As the Vietnamese Church became stronger, it assumed more responsibility and took an active part in tribal work. Soon the Gospel was carried to different tribes in Cambodia, Cochin-China, Central Viet-nam, and Northern Viet-nam.

IX. Recent Events

Since 1935, there has been no history recorded of Mission work in book form. The Mission work in Viet-nam has been disrupted since the fall of France in 1940 and the invasion of the country by Japanese forces that year.

The Japanese, upon their surrender in 1945, left their weapons in the hands of Vietnamese Nationalists, who used them in the war of independence with France which has just recently been resolved.

The recent period of calm which has come to this war-stricken land has divided the country into two sections at the seventeenth parallel. The result has been that the Nationalist Church has been divided into two sections, in the Communist North and in the Democratic South. Rev. D.I. Jeffrey, Chairman of the Viet-nam Christian and Missionary Alliance field and Dr. Krabill of the Mennonite Central Committee estimate the number of Protestant Christians in South Viet-nam to be between 25,000 and 30,000 in number.

An orphanage has been established in Nha-Trang, which now has fifty children from the ages of four to sixteen who were left orphans or without financial support following the war. Another forty children are soon to enter this orphanage.

The orphanage is manned with Christian personnel and the children are taught many handicrafts which will enable them to be self-supporting as they grow to maturity, as well as being taught their regular school lessons.⁵

A Gospel Book Room has been established in the Saigon-Cholon area. This approach has been a means of blessing to the many who have been won to Christ by its ministry.

There is an attempt being made by Miss Bowen and Mrs. George Irwin to teach members of the Koho tribe to read by the use of Dr. Laubach's teaching method. Dr. Laubach visited Saigon himself and managed to have the charts printed in booklet form. This method of teaching has appealed to the tribal folk, and the Mission believes that it will be successful.

5. Mrs. J. Sawin, The Call of Viet-nam (Saigon: Saigon Gospel Press, 1956), p. 3.

CHAPTER V

SUCCESSFUL METHODS USED IN INDIA AND BURMA

Agricultural missionary work has proved itself successful in India and Burma. These countries, as well as Thailand and Indo-China, constitute the great rice-surplus region, not only of Monsoon Asia but of the world. "Each of the three countries is something of a replica of the other in climate, topography, and land utilization, a similarity of conditions with important economic implications."¹

I. India

Dr. I.W. Moomaw, in his book, "The Farmer Speaks," gave an impressive list of what could be done to improve the agriculture of the great land of India, where ninety percent of the population is rural. There was poor farm equipment, poor land distribution, too high an interest rate on money, much land erosion, a need for chemical fertilizer and diversified farming, a need of

1. Wickizer and Bennett, op. cit., p. 56.

feed for livestock, veterinarians, cooperatives and credit unions, a need for improved seed and selective breeding of poultry and cattle.

No one can understand India who ignores this degrading, debasing poverty which is one inseparable link in the vicious circle of ignorance, superstition, oppression, ill-health, infant mortality, lack of sanitation and the continued persistence of such epidemic diseases as cholera, dysentery, plague, enteric, malaria, hook-worm, small-pox, and other preventable diseases. It is poverty which robs manhood, womanhood, and childhood of all that is best and worthwhile in them.²

It is natural to find most of the Indian Christians employed in agriculture, as ninety percent of the population is rural. Their economic plight was the same as that of their neighbors--desperate--until the institution of agricultural missions.

It was obvious that if the average church member was living at a rate of from one to three cents per person per day something would have to be done to increase the earning capacity and the income of the church membership. What looked like a purely ecclesiastical problem had an economic aspect that could not be ignored.³

Today in Asia there is a great stress on nationalism. Every Mission Board, therefore, would be wise to recognize the need of a self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating church.

2. Sam Higginbottom, The Gospel and the Plow (London: Oxford University Press, 1926), p. 18.

3. Sam Higginbottom, Ibid., p. 35.

Sam Higginbottom states that investigation shows that education is an investment which in general pays the largest cumulative dividend on the largest investment. The education of the Indian Christians in the field of agriculture is of vital importance, since the whole country depends upon it for its very life. This is also true if the church in India is to be nationalistic, otherwise it must always remain dependent upon the West.

There has been a great stress on the part of most mission boards on the saving of the soul. This is rightly considered the chief end of the missionary effort, but it is most doubtful to assume that the less the missionary has to do with the body and the material things which the body demands in order to be strong, healthy and efficient the better for him. It is of the most vital importance to save the soul; however, it is wise and spiritually and economically sound to preserve that soul and body for the future propagation of the Gospel. We are saved to serve Christ. This involves the taking care of our bodies, which are the temples of the Holy Ghost. In I Corinthians 6:19 and 20 we read, "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought

with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Sam Higginbottom stressed Agricultural Missions in India, and we are listing some of the more important reasons as to why they are necessary:

1. Agriculture is today the main occupation in India, as it is in Indo-China.
2. Agriculture is likely to remain the main occupation of India, because of its climate and the long growing season.
3. Improved agriculture is the simplest and most direct way to give India enough to eat.
4. Improved agriculture, taught to the convert, will give him enough to eat and will provide him with a surplus with which he can purchase clothing, pay the doctor, educate his children, and contribute reasonably to the support of his church.
5. Improved agriculture provides an occupation for sons of Christians, not fitted to be mission teachers or preachers.
6. Those Christians who have not become evangelists but have worked on the mission farm for two or three years and have learned how to use iron plows, harrows, rollers,

seeding, mowing, and threshing machinery, and silage cutters are in great demand at wages three times as great as the average village wage.

7. There is a great call today for more technical and industrial education in India. Therefore the development of industries related to and subsidiary to agriculture, such as, the making and repairing of modern farm implements and machinery, modern dairying, the canning and preserving of fruits and vegetables, sugar processing, oil pressing, tanning, and rope making, is important.
8. There is a need for agricultural engineers to develop irrigation and to drill wells.
9. India needs roads, railroads, canals, schools, colleges, libraries, and hospitals. Sixty-two percent of the people of India are beyond the reach of any medical aid whatsoever.

We also note that the proceedings of the Fourth and Fifth Meeting of the National Missionary Council, Coonoor and Benares respectively, endorsed the view that (1) "agricultural and industrial missions are an

integral part of the presentation of the Gospel to India at this time." (2) the mission should aim at the establishment of central institutions for the training of teachers in agriculture and allied industries in the various language or climatic areas. (3) the mission plan for adequate instruction in agriculture and allied industries, such as, silk, poultry, the making and repairing of agricultural tools and implements.

Dr. Moomaw listed five ways to assist the Indian farmer. First, the attitude of the farmer must be changed; he must care for his cattle. Second, selective breeding must be instituted to improve the quality of cattle and the quantity of milk. Third, the feed supply of the cattle should be enriched and improved. Poor feed has been the cause of slow maturity in Indian cattle. Fourth, there should be a determined effort to control pests and disease among cattle by the use of vaccines and antibiotics. Fifth, money should be made available to farmers at low interest rates.

There is much illness in the land with few doctors and hospitals to handle the many types of fever, cholera, dysentery, malaria, and other diseases. Hospitals and clinics have proved themselves successful in alleviating the suffering and pain of many. The

clinics have helped as well by their stress on the sanitary conditions and hygiene of the rural people.

It has been mentioned that investigation has shown that education is the primary need in order to train Indians to be of help and assistance to their own people.

In 1921, William Carey, a learned missionary and distinguished botanist, founded what later became the Indian Agricultural Association, in an effort to relieve distress among rural people through providing improved methods of husbandry.⁴

Education, however, must utilize the villagers' past experience and take account of their present attitudes. As education cultivates the self-esteem of the villager, it may become the most potential factor in rural improvement.

The school's goal is to assist in the mental, physical, moral, and spiritual growth of the children. It is when the village teacher and the people take up the task of improvement of rural life together that success is attained. The teacher should emphasize soil improvement, livestock improvement, and the increase of crop yields.

One Indian official suggested the following school schedule for rural youth. The first year of study considered the village fields and gardens; the second,

4. I.W. Moomaw, Education and Village Improvement (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 7.

the study of different birds and animals; the third, the study of the homes and the employment and occupation of the family members; the fourth, the health and recreation of the village; the fifth year, the activity of neighbors and their employment was considered as related to those residing in the community.

The Presbyterians purchased two hundred and seventy-five acres of land at Allahabad, India. The land purchased was eroded and unfertile, yet it was deliberately purchased to show how it could be redeemed and made profitable. When the land was purchased, the most the Indian farmers would pay to rent an acre was eight cents. Seven years later, after the Agricultural School had cared for this land, the Indian farmers were willing to pay eight dollars an acre to rent it.

The poultry-raising was a success, especially with improved breeds which were brought in from the United States. The improved breeds ate one and a half times as much feed as native poultry; however, they produced three times as much. Poultry husbandry offers more immediate hope of economic relief to farmers than any farm enterprises.

A new type of plow was constructed which is able to plow deeper and faster than the plow which has been in use for generations. The Indian farmers were thrilled

with this new instrument which saved them and their oxen much extra work and effort.

Suggestions were made on how to improve the health of the villagers. There should be the construction of more windows and doors in the houses to allow more light and air inside. Sanitary latrines should be placed at various spots in the village. Hook-worm, cholera, and dysentery persist where lanes and open spaces are used instead of latrines. The water supply of the village should be improved or purified by the use of chlorine. The food should be of a more nutritious nature, and this would assist the body in the preventing of low resistance to infection. Education should be given, telling why and how to handle disease. Illiterate people do not cooperate well in the control of disease.

II. Burma

Our Baptist work in Burma has been noticed and praised. Lord Curzon, in laying down a new educational policy noted "the absence of agricultural instruction in Burma except for that of the American Baptist Mission."

The love of Christ constrained Brayton Case to do four things: to preach, to teach, to heal, and to feed. He believed the whole Gospel was for every man and for the whole man. He believed that "man cannot live by bread

alone," but man must have bread to live. The soil and the soul are inseparably interwoven in the lives of rural millions.

A. Mission Farm

The mission demonstration farm at Pyinmana was a great success. Sugar cane was grown on half the acreage and produced a much greater yield than that in adjacent fields. The plants were spread further apart and buried deeper in the soil, as well as having adequate fertilizer. The yield from this amazed the Indian farmers. On the rice land three crops were grown--sesamum oil seed or corn, at the beginning of the rains; followed by rice, transplanted from the nurseries; and then, shortly before reaping the rice, a certain native bean, which was broadcast on the moist ground and matured within four months. In this manner missionary Case had crop rotation which fully utilized the soil and kept it fertile.

B. School

The curriculum of the school was designed to train the Indians to become effective and efficient farmers by the use of the implements which were part of their culture.

During the first year, the students' main subject is gardening and learning how to use hand implements.

They also learn bamboo and cane work in manual training. In the second year, the main subject is farm crops, and students learn the use of ox-drawn implements. Each student grows one acre of crops as his project while carpentry is taught in manual training. Animal husbandry is the main subject of the third year, and for his project each student rears a group of animals; carpentry and iron repair work is taught in manual training. The fourth year, the student does special work in one of the three departments of agriculture he has previously studied, as well as farm management and simple farm engineering.

C. Promotion

The students also study the Bible and go into the different villages, presenting the Gospel of Christ and the gospel of the soil. By their witnessing, they have won many to Christ. They have used lantern slides to show new methods in agriculture which are successful; the students make excellent witnesses concerning these projects shown in the slides. Pamphlets are also distributed with titles such as "Ten Commandments for Rice Growers," "How to select a good fowl and how to care for it," "Buy a College Plow and Plow your land twice as fast and twice as well." These pamphlets written by Rev. Case were very successful.

"The greatest encouragement to our agricultural

plans has come from the fact that the government of Burma is willing to help us develop an agricultural school at Pyinmana."⁵ The native Christian leaders all say that the school of agriculture is along the line of their economic salvation---this is good promotion for the school.

D. Animal and Poultry Husbandry

Berkshire hogs were brought to the farm from the United States. They reproduced themselves successfully, and the litters were asked for even before birth. These pigs resisted disease and weighed more than the Indian pigs.

As in India, the American White Leghorn Chickens were much better producers than the native chickens. There has always been a long waiting list for eggs.

E. Selected Seed

Improved seed was used, and the sugar cane yield was considerably larger. This was due to better methods of plowing and soil preparation, as well as to better seed. Corn, selected according to scientific methods, was planted in rows with a seed drill and cultivated with oxen instead of hoeing by hand. This saved much labor and produced the best crop of corn ever seen.

Purebred rice seed was drilled in place instead

5. Brayton C. Case, Lazy-Man-Rest-Not (Philadelphia: The Jordan Press, 1946), p. 27.

of transplanting by hand from the nurseries according to the usual native method. An excellent crop was produced, and it matured earlier than ordinarily. It was cut by mower with reaper attachment. By the method used on the mission farm a saving was made of one quarter the value of the crop in planting and another quarter in harvesting it. Threshing by machine reduced the cost even more.

The mower cleared the field so quickly that, while the ground was still moist, it could be harrowed and planted with gram (a field pea) and also with grain sorghum. Thus, a second crop was to be had, where the Burmese usually got only one, because he took two months clearing the rice off his land with a sickle. Then, at the rainless season, it was too dry for a crop.

A pump was installed for irrigation, and this reduced the labor involved in watering and caring for various crops. The pump more than repaid its cost and running expense.

F. Co-operatives

In 1934, the Pyinmana Mission School of Agriculture organized the Co-operative Poultry Societies, Limited, and the Pyinmana Village Co-operative Bank, Limited. The villagers were being assisted economically without having to pay the excessive interest rates charged by private money-lenders.

Brayton Case summed up briefly his goal in the following statements:

I am trying to express my concept of Christianity and make it function in terms of life through agriculture. I am constantly finding that some of the greatest obstacles to better agriculture are spiritual obstacles--lack of motive for persistent effort, lack of love, lack of honesty, lack of faith in one another, and lack of unselfish service.⁶

Brayton Case believed in Agricultural Missions. He had a college major in Agriculture at the University of California, a Master's degree from Columbia University, and study at Union Theological Seminary.

A balanced ration was given to the Burmese, who attended the School. Their course included Bible study, evangelism, religious education, as well as agriculture. The School carried forth in its curriculum the four-point program of its founder--preach, teach, heal, and feed. Truly this was teaching and practising the full Gospel of Christ.

6. Case, Ibid., p. 64.

CHAPTER VI

POSSIBLE METHODS OF STRENGTHENING THE NATIONAL CHURCH IN VIET-NAM

Viet-nam has emerged from a grim and arduous warfare which has exhausted her people, upset her economy, and divided her politics.

It was with the emergence of President Ngo Dinh Diem that South Viet-nam gained political stability. As a new country, which has gained its liberation from the French, Japanese, and Communists, Viet-nam needs much aid morally, spiritually, and economically.

I. Present Needs in Viet-nam

The Ambassador of Viet-nam to the United States, Mr. Tran Van Chuong, stated before the Far East-America Council of Commerce and Industry, in New York City, April 11, 1957, "Only aid and investments can fill that vacuum caused by war and cure our present vulnerability and weakness." The government of Viet-nam is "vitally interested in private investments as they are absolutely necessary to give an under-developed country a minimum of industrial equipment without which it cannot raise the

living standards of its people." President Ngo Dinh Diem gave an address before a joint meeting of the Congress of the United States in Washington on May 9, 1957. In this speech he mentioned some of the conditions and problems confronting his country.

The Asian people, long humiliated in their national aspirations, their human dignity injured, are no longer, as in the past, resigned and passive. They are impatient. They are eager to reduce their immense technical backwardness. They clamor for a rapid and immediate economic development, the only sound base for democratic political independence.

The leaders of Asia, whatever their ideologies, are all faced with the tragic urgency of the economic and social problems of their countries. Under the strong pressure of their peoples, they are compelled to adopt economic planning.¹

President Ngo Dinh Diem, before the Council on Foreign Relations, expressed on behalf of the Vietnamese people their appreciation of American aid and encouragement in the dark days of nationhood. He also went on to list some of the problems with their resultant needs:

Our country inherited a bankrupt political system, a disorganized administration, a crumbling economy, an empty treasury We also had nearly one million refugees to be received and settled.

Our problems, however minor, can be solved only by extraordinary efforts of imagination

1. Press Office, Saigon, 1957, The Emergence of Free Viet-nam, p. 8.

and will-power. We cannot therefore solve our problems by Western methods without profound modifications. The West had at its disposal plenty of time to achieve and digest revolutions. We do not.²

The President mentioned in other speeches that the economic and social problem which faced this new nation was tremendous. A planned economy was not considered to be truly democratic. Yet, politically, a planned economy was the only means of preserving the economy of the land. Outside investments would create more jobs, more industries, and increased employment. All this would be a vital contribution to a stabilized economy.

Viet-nam has appreciated the work of internationally famous relief organizations, such as the Catholic Relief Services, the International Rescue Committee, CARE, and the work of several Protestant relief workers, and the Central Mennonite Committee.

We need leadership on other levels than the political--for leadership in the cultural, technical, and economic fields. In order to build a stable economy, which is the necessary basis for democracy, we do indeed need such leaders whom we now so desperately lack. This is why we welcome your technical advisors, whether they come from your government, from private industry, from universities or from foundations.³

2. Ibid., p. 24.

3. Ibid., p. 33.

The "Viet-Nam Times" of February 28, 1957, listed many items and services which are in need of assistance from either the Government or private investors.

In the agriculture of Viet-nam there is a shortage of livestock, agricultural implements, farm machinery, tractors, good seed, fertilizer, farm technicians and advisers, farm cooperatives and credit unions.

Industry needs business men and those with investments to stimulate the industrialization of Viet-nam. There is need for the skilled workman, technicians, mechanics, architects, and engineers.

The Medical Services of the country are in a sorry plight, and not enough nurses and doctors are being trained to alleviate the suffering of the people who live in the rural areas.

Miss Hoang Van Phi, a Christian Vietnamese, is now in training as a nurse at the hospital at Independence, Missouri. She was sent over here on a scholarship by the government of Viet-nam. She has stated that there is a great need for medical assistance, for doctors and nurses. We see there is definite room for agricultural, industrial, and medical missionaries. Mr. Du Phuoc Long, a Christian diplomat attached to the Vietnamese Embassy in Washington, has stated that there

is an opportunity for those who have training in agriculture, industry, or medicine, or in any other field to be of service to Viet-nam.

II. Present Progress in Viet-nam

After the phase of political consolidation was completed, the government of Viet-nam was in a position to attend to economic and social problems.

A. Agriculture

As a result of aid and advice from the United States, rice production has increased, and two hundred thousand tons of rice have been exported. Tea and coffee are also being exported for the first time in years.

Recently French scientists have suggested the planting of the castor oil plant, as it grows well in the climate found in Viet-nam. Success has come from this experiment, and, as there is a demand on the world market for this oil, Viet-nam should be able to earn some money from export of oil.

There is, however, much ignorance in the field of agriculture, and only education in the basic principles of agriculture can improve some of the waste in natural resources.

Dr. Willard S. Krabill, a medical missionary with the Mennonite Central Committee in Indo-China, has

said, "The tribes people are guilty of much agricultural and forestry malpractice. Help is needed for them to learn to utilize their country's own resources."

New Methods

American Economic Aid has assisted the farmers by using tractors and cultivators, harrows, plows, and threshing machines. The Vietnamese farmer has seen for himself that a greater harvest awaits him if he will employ different equipment and methods on the farm.

Mr. Du Phuoc Long, a Christian at the Vietnamese Embassy in Washington, stated that many have been sent to Burma, to the Philippines, and to the United States to learn better farming methods.

There is a great need for trained agriculturists, as this is the main means of employment in Viet-nam.

In the field of agriculture we have already made long strides. Our program of land reform is being judiciously carried out. We have already transferred a good deal of land to landless farmers. It is the conviction of my Government that the individual farmer must own the land he cultivates.⁴

The amount of cultivable land has been increased by opening up the Plaine des Jones for cultivation, and by winning for agriculture the vast undeveloped territories of our higher regions. There is a need for

4. Ibid., p. 37.

those who are trained in agriculture, forestry, livestock, handicrafts, and village industries.

B. Industries

The government of Viet-nam has a great concern and interest in the development of industry. It has also made the investment of money in industry worthwhile to outsiders. "Our country needs industries. It is a result of colonialism that we are merely a producer of raw materials and forced to import all finished goods. Economic survival requires that we break this colonial pattern."⁵

The present plans call for a gradual industrialization program consistent with the needs and capacities of the land. The one important industrial undertaking has been the commencement of work in developing the hydroelectric potential. There are plans for producing textiles, sugar, cement, paper, glass, and plastics. The Vietnamese Government guarantees foreign investors against nationalization or against expropriation without due compensation.

Any new foreign investor is allowed three years' exemption from real estate, taxation, as well as free registration of incorporation. New agricultural

5. Ibid., p. 39.

investments are exempted from land tax until the enterprise shall have harvested its first crop.

"Industrial, commercial, and agricultural enterprises will receive one hundred percent remission of income taxes for their first year of operation; twenty-five percent for the second and third years, and twenty-five percent on reinvested income."⁶

The Vietnamese Government does not regard foreign private investment as a threat to national integrity. They welcome investment as a necessary and cooperative factor in the development of free Viet-nam.

1. New Industries

Leonard Walsh, a New England textile manufacturer, considered Viet-nam a good place to build a plant. He has found the Vietnamese an alert individual, possessing initiative and skill. He found the taxation and tariff restrictions are not excessive and hoped to have his plant functioning by the middle of 1958.

Several European industrialists have found the financial conditions attractive and have realized the potential market for their manufactured goods. Caterpillar tractors are being built in Saigon; drugs are produced in laboratories in Saigon under license from

6. Ibid., p. 39.

French and German firms. Soap is manufactured; rubber tires and other rubber products are produced; Lambretta scooters and motorcycles are manufactured under license from Italy. Flashlights and flashlight batteries are also manufactured, as are building materials.

2. Suggested Projects in Industry and Other Areas

Mr. Hoang Hung, the Secretary of State for Reconstruction and City Planning, states that there is a need for the manufacturing of new and lighter building materials. Recently a light, easily-manufactured material called cocotex has been discovered. What is needed now is a business man or a company to manufacture this material in vast amounts. Cocotex is also more fireproof than the bamboo and fibre with which they construct their houses. There is a constant demand for housing, as areas destroyed by the war are rebuilt and the one million refugees from the Communist area are resettled.

The government has suggested that industries which can find all their raw materials present in the country be the first established. This would be one way to conserve their capital and become economically stable.

There are demands for the manufacture of bricks,

spinning mills, paper mills, cement works, tile factories, soap factories, farm implements, wagons, and tools.

There are also demands for teachers, vocational guidance directors, handicraft experts, and community directors.

C. Medical Work and Relief Work

The Mennonite Central Committee has been engaged in work in Viet-nam for four years. Dr. Krabill, the Mennonite doctor who has done much medical work there, presents some of the needs which are so pressing:

Vietnam greatly lacks trained people such as civil servants, engineers, technicians of all sorts, doctors, and nurses. The health needs of the people are tremendous, and with the army taking in the very few new ones which are produced here, the critical shortage of medical personnel and health services is not likely to be significantly improved for the next ten to fifteen years. The simplest medical care is unavailable to large groups of the population, and even in the cities, much of the medicine which is available is misused, and dispensed without supervision.⁷

1. Student Work

A student work camp was sponsored by the International Rescue Committee at Tan An, a small village thirty miles south of Saigon. Mrs. Margaret Cole was the director of this work camp and approached the Mennonite Central Committee on continuing this program.

7. Dr. Willard S. Krabill, Mennonite Central Committee Report, 1957.

The student work involves sponsorship of discussion groups and work camps, and acting as a clearing agency and contact for the sending of students abroad to international seminars and work camps. These camps provide work and assist in the construction of projects, as well as providing discussion groups. This is the first time that many of these students have contacted a Christian witness.

2. Church World Service Work

The Protestant refugee village of Da Hoa in south central Viet-nam has been administered and supported by Church World Service since its formation in 1955. The aid to Da Hoa this past year includes:

- (1) Aid in setting up a bamboo industry and the expenditure of forty thousand piastres on this project.
- (2) Aid in building a "Bungalow" (restaurant), two hundred and sixty thousand piastres were given to this project.
- (3) Purchase of a water pump for irrigation purposes; this cost seventeen thousand piastres.
- (4) Forty thousand piastres were given to the clearing of land and planting coffee and tea trees, sugar cane plants, fruit trees, and pineapple plants.
- (5) Financial support was given to the pastor and village school teacher and nurse.
- (6) Financial and administrative help were given in setting up village and church committees.⁸

8. Ibid.

3. Financial Contributions

It was considered a wise move to give financial support to the extent of thirty thousand piastres to many needy pastors. Pastor De Luze, the French Protestant pastor in Saigon, received thirty-two thousand piastres to help sponsor four scholarships for needy pastors.

4. Leper Work

Dr. Krabill has continued as medical director of the Banmethuot Leprosarium of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. The project consists of general medical and mobile and stationary clinics among the tribes people of the southern highlands, especially the Radau tribe.

Contributions were given to the institution by the Church World Service and Mennonite Committee. These contributions included twenty tons of rice, five hundred dollars worth of medical supplies, and the expense of sending Dr. Krabill to study leprosaria in Malaya and Thailand. The knowledge and experience gained from this trip made possible the reorganization and expansion of the entire leprosy treatment program, so that by establishing outpatient clinics and outlying leprosy treatment villages, the leprosarium reaches over five hundred and fifty patients today, compared to two hundred and fifty a year ago.

An X-ray machine has been purchased for use in this work as well.

D. Summation

At the present time the Mennonite Central Committee has been invited by the National Church leaders to carry on negotiations with the Government of Viet-nam to increase their agricultural and medical work.

Rev. A.Q. Van Benschoten has stated that agricultural missionary work has a place in these under-developed lands. He mentioned that the agriculture in Viet-nam is very similar to Thailand. He said that some of our American Baptists have sent an improved breed of poultry to some of the Thai Christians. The result was that it meant more meaty chickens and more eggs, which in turn means more protein. This is an item badly needed in their diets. A stronger people means a more active, vibrant church.

Rev. Van Benschoten mentioned also that it was the result of Dr. Richard Buker's urging that some of the "Christian and Missionary Alliance people took training in the field of leprosy from Dr. Buker." The result was that "in one year of actually working among the leprous people they had more converts than in years among the non-leprous ones."

Rev. D.I. Jeffrey, who has been Chairman of the Viet-nam field for a period of over fifteen years wrote, "I am quite in favor of your suggestions for strengthening the National Church.

"The present Vietnamese government is fully aware of the need to develop industry, agriculture, and horticulture. The immense project at Cai Sanh, near Rach Gia is one example of agricultural development. There are other projects near Pleiku. There is talk also of a plan for the vast Plainedes Jones not far from Saigon. To back this, special schools have been established at Tanan and near Dalat. Students are being sent to the United States, Philippines, and other countries for special studies in agriculture.

"A number of our Christian young people have taken advantage of these courses. Mr. Huynh minh Y and other Christians are working small plantations. Mr. Duy cach Lam has continued to develop his gardens at Dalat and hires a number of workmen.

"Undoubtedly a missionary with special training could do a great work especially in inland areas. Right now Viet-nam is ready to use men who can step into interior posts. Our first stage of occupying main centers is over, and we need men who will push on into

more rugged territory. The program you suggest as well as medical assistance has immense possibilities."

Another missionary, Rev. Harold Curwen Smith, who has been on the field with Mr. Jeffrey for over thirty years states that "agricultural and medical work have great possibilities in Viet-nam." Rev. Smith has questioned various leaders of the National Church, and they agreed that agricultural, industrial, and medical missionaries are needed. They preferred to remain anonymous because of the present political situation in the country.

CONCLUSION

Hunger is one of the problems of Asia and other parts of the world. This is certainly true in Indo-China, where hunger is often a very real everyday experience.

The Vietnamese could have a life absolutely free of hunger if they were physically capable of work, if their nutritional and hygienic conditions allowed them to make use of the potentialities of their country.

As President Diem has stated, agrarian reform is an absolute necessity, replacing the wooden plow, the bamboo rake, and the water wheel by modern machinery and scientific agriculture.

A lesson can be learned from the Japanese, who were once a nation dependent solely on agriculture as a means of livelihood. Once Commodore Perry of the United States breached the inviolable Imperial waters by forcing entrance to Uraga Bay, the industrialization of Japan commenced.

The Japanese people adopted Western methods of fighting hunger so quickly and so thoroughly that just six years after the coming of the

white men, in 1860, a revolution broke out that abolished feudalism and set up the economic principles and technical methods of the West.¹

The Government of Viet-nam has realized the necessity of providing better and more food for the population in order to improve their health. This involves improved methods of agriculture and the use of modern equipment. This involves the ability to export products to purchase this new equipment. We see as necessary then a program of industrialization to assist in providing some of the essentials of the people and thus conserve their dollar resources; it also means more exports for Viet-nam.

In this modern technical and scientific age trained men and women are needed in all spheres of modern-day life. The Government of Viet-nam is pleading for experts in all fields. There is a great need for the Christian who desires to serve as a lay missionary. Church World Service could use more educated Christians in its work. The United Nations needs all types of experts to send to assist the under-developed lands, such as Viet-nam.

There is room for the Christian editor, newspaper man, printer, business executive, industrialist,

1. Josue de Castro, The Geography of Hunger (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1952), p. 191.

farmer, doctor, nurse, teacher, and professor. The whole matter may lie in the hands of Christians who have had adequate training--if they truly desire to serve God in these countries and make inquiries, they will find a place of service. So much of the problem may be that the Christian is afraid or unwilling to aid dying men.

Our Lord practised in His earthly ministry what He preached. He had compassion on those who suffered from illness and sickness, whether it was spiritual or physical. He also fed the thousands who hungered. Evidently there is more required of us as Christians than the proclamation of the Truth.

The statistics provided by the Government of Viet-nam show that there are over one million Catholic converts. The Catholic church has had a strong position in the country, because of the loyalty of her followers. The President's wife is Catholic, and so are various government officials. The Catholics have had a very active program in agriculture for their followers. Dr. Krabill, Rev. D.I. Jeffrey, and Rev. H.C. Smith have commented on the efficiency and effectiveness of the help given to the Catholics by their various church and relief organizations.

As we have admitted the Catholics' capability in agriculture and medical work, we must examine honestly Protestant efforts.

Upon reading confidential material sent to me, I am desperately aware of the need for the different denominations to cooperate. There should be no denominational competition, as there is enough work available for all who are interested. In one needy situation, assistance to Christian Nationals has been hindered by an order from some church leader here in the United States.

I am in total agreement with Rev. Robert W. Miller, the Associate Director of Foreign Relief and Services, when he says, "It is our conviction also that we are not only responsible to lead others to Christ but also help them with their economic problems, and to work in partnership with local church groups."

We have seen that the National Christian Church in Viet-nam has cooperated with various Protestant denominations. We are thankful for the great work that has been done and continues to be done by the Christian and Missionary Alliance.

The Alliance could possibly send some of their missionaries to summer school where they could learn basic facts concerning agriculture and medicine. This

would prove worthwhile on the field. Another approach might be the suggestion by the Alliance to other groups that they carry on a different type of missionary endeavor while they continue on in their present program.

Therefore I would like to mention possible prerequisites for successful agricultural work by missionaries, as suggested by Dr. I.W. Moomaw. These suggestions could apply to missionaries from other boards as well as the Alliance.

The missionary should have rural experience which can be gained on the farm. Dr. Moomaw states, "To possess the skills and the sense of originality that accrue from life on a well-managed farm is of great help in making adaptations on the field."²

Experience of value can be gained through high school courses in agriculture and home economics. Experience in 4-H clubs, Future Farmers and Home Makers, and other leadership groups can be helpful in service later on.

College training for the prospective agricultural missionary should include the regular four-year course in agriculture. College courses should be chosen to provide a broad background rather than much specialization. The

2. I.W. Moomaw, Training for the Rural Missionary (New York: Agricultural Missions, Inc.), p. 1.

following areas of study should be well-represented: Natural Science, Agriculture (technical courses), Shop Work and Industrial Arts, Extension Methods which include Rural Education and Social Science.

The training for a missionary interested in Home Economics and Family Life should include study in the following areas: Home Economics (technical courses), Home and Family Life, Child Care and Guidance, Extension Education, and Handicrafts.

Dr. Moomaw has suggested that it is wise for those who have had the prerequisites mentioned should have a year of basic rural training to supplement their technical training. As the new missionary, as a rule, has to develop his program of work alone, it is also of great help if he can spend three to six months as an assistant to a successful extension agent in agriculture or home economics before going to the field. He can, in that way, take advantage of the very best experience in such phases of work as: Program Planning, Finding and Training Local Leaders, Home and Field Demonstration Methods, Result Demonstrations, The Use of Government Specialists, and How to Cooperate with Other Agencies.

I firmly believe that the time has come for us to examine the past and to think about the present and future. There must be a willingness to change our

procedure and methods for better ones, but always the goal must remain the same--to win others to Christ and to assist them to become established in the faith, spiritually and economically.

Men and women with talent, training, and trust in Christ must, with great foresight and faith, undertake this new and challenging work. They must have the confidence of St. Paul, who said, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

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