

Banmethuot, Viet Nam,
August, 1954.

"And the Gates Shall Not Be Shut"

Dear Friends---

The guns have ceased their firing at last, and the great movement of troops, refugees and equipment has begun. While we mourn for North Viet-Nam, in the hands of the Communists, we rejoice that Laos, Cambodia, and our Tribes areas are to be free. God has graciously answered your prayers in our behalf. Just in time too, for ten battalions of Viet Minh got within 25 miles of Banmethuot, by-passing Pleiku to the north, and this town is practically defenseless. Many paratroopers were flown in during the last days before the cease-fire, and our situation was becoming critical.

While pessimism and defeatism have been gripping the free world, the Christian Church included, we have been rejoicing in God's great promise given us many years ago--"And the gates shall not be shut." Seldom during the past months have we heard anyone offer much hope for missionary work in this country, and we have stood quite alone at times as we have felt that God would keep the doors open. How thrilling it has been to see this promise continually being fulfilled.

Now, while we continue to establish the work among the new tribal areas to the southwest of us among the Mnongs and Stiengs, our attention turns to the north, to the Jeh, Sedang, Hre, Katu, Kha Leu and other tribes. I visited them in 1940 and have never ceased to pray that some day the "gates of brass and bars of iron" may be broken open to permit us to enter with the Gospel. These tribes inhabit the mountains south of the 17th parallel, west of the cities of Quang Tri, Hue, Tourane, etc. Just as soon as the country becomes safe for travel, I shall be making a survey and will report to The Christian & Missionary Alliance the possibilities of establishing mission stations in those areas. This will call for rugged pioneers and plenty of money besides prevailing prayer.

FINANCIAL CRISIS--As mentioned in our last circulars, the dollar still brings only half as much as it should, owing to the piastre being attached to the French franc. This has meant that work on the following projects has had to be stopped completely:

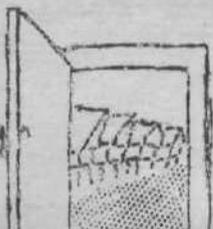
Leprosarium hospital,
House for single ladies at Banmethuot,
Dormitory for Bible School, Banmethuot,
Nui Bara mission house.

It has also meant that we have had to put two or three of your gifts for preachers' support together in order to have sufficient for one preacher and his family. This month the preachers voluntarily offered five thousand piastres from their meager allowances to help support some for whom sufficient funds had not been received. We have had to lay off five of the younger, less experienced workers. We are praying that this situation may soon be changed so that we may receive more local currency for our dollars. Please stand with us in this transition period. We shall let you know as soon as things turn for the better.

LEPROSARIUM EQUIPMENT--We have been rejoicing in the wonderful equipment that has come to us through American Economic Aid to this country. We have been privileged to share in this through the medical and agricultural departments. During the past months we have received the following as grants for our Leprosarium work:

1 22½ KVA diesel-electric generator, 1 gasoline water pump for
gardens with hose, 1 3½ ton Chevrolet truck with grain and
cattle body, 1 D 6 66-horsepower Caterpillar tractor-bulldozer
with disc plow, 2 refrigerators.

The big bulldozer is being shipped from Saigon on a special army trailer, costing the agricultural department of American Aid about \$450.00 for transportation costs. We have been longing for this for several years in order that we might undertake the following projects:

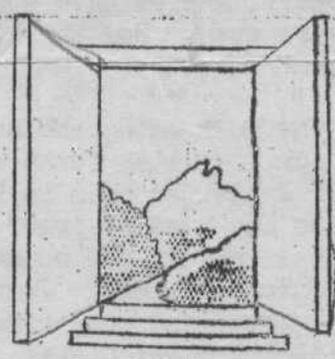


Large fish pond to give patients fish for food. They get no meat., Roads and drains, Clearing the property of trees and stumps, Clearing large tracts of jungle to plant rice and corn (our monthly rice bill is nearly \$300.00), Uncovering clay deposits for brick-making, Making a dam for a water reservoir in the dry season.

The only hitch at present is that we have no funds to purchase diesel oil to run this new bulldozer. We are so glad our boy Leslie is here to handle this big piece of equipment.

AMONG THE MNONGS AND STIENGs—During the past month we have made two trips to these new areas. On the first trip, with Laura and Leslie along, ten Mnongs at Bu Prang prayed, including a village chief. We find a cordial welcome in those villages from which we have taken patients into our Leprosarium.

Leslie and I have just spent five days among the Mnongs and Stiengs. I took along a new Magnemite portable tape recorder and made tapes of the whole trip. With the background noises of the dogs and ducks and chickens, houses full of people chattering, I described what was going on as they met and heard the Gospel. Then as the car brushed through the narrow trails we picked up the jungle sounds, cicada bugs, etc., and described the country we went through. One night we made tapes of the meeting where 20 Stiengs, the very first from this great tribe of 60,000 or more people, prayed for salvation.



Mr. Sung, the Vietnamese mis-preach in Stieng, and he took Vietnamese records made by We got all this on the tape radio by VISION, Inc., Spokane,

sionary at Nui Bara, can now his phonograph along with some Gospel Recordings of Los Angeles. too. These will be used on the Washington.

Leslie shot a pure white deer, for four days on this trip. the like of which had never been

at 250 yards, and we ate venison This animal was a phenomenon, seen before here.

NEWS BRIEFS—We happily welcomed back Bob and Marie Ziemer with little Miriam (Beth and Bobby Tim are in school at Dalat.). They started in immediately to teach in the Bible School which began August 2. — A special course for ordination will be followed and we hope to be able to ordain a number of our splendid preachers. — We deeply regret not being able to send photographs this month, owing to lack of funds. — Clyde and Marguerite Powell are busily studying Rada, living in our Lake Chapel.

AGAIN, THANK YOU—And now our deepest, heartfelt thanks to you for your splendid gift this month, and all your warm sympathy. We especially appreciate the faithfulness of those who are regularly supporting preachers or patients. Then too, with the financial difficulties we are undergoing just now, we are extremely glad for the undesigned special gifts which come at this opportune time.

It is as you give of your substance that our work is maintained and extended. Under our Divine Leader we do depend upon the support of you fellow-workers. God has decreed that you and I must help Him. He used the little boy and his loaves and fishes to feed the multitude.

"A great door and effectual is opened unto us and there are many adversaries." It is time now to open up these new stations—to enter these new tribes. We appeal strongly for this forward movement into the great new country to the north of us. We must press on in the work of evangelizing these unreached tribes. Your gifts will make it possible for us to enter these open doors, and begin to harvest these souls.

On behalf of our large group of patients at the Leprosarium, our native evangelists, and all our Banmeuthot missionary staff, which now numbers ten, we send our love and intense gratitude.

Laura S. Smith

Gordon H. Smith