

The CALL

of French Indo-China

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PLEASING JESUS!

TIS joy and gladness, full of glory
To live for Jesus here;
No burden this, to please my Lord
Who gave His life, so dear.

In heathen lands, His Name unknown,
I gladly will proclaim,
Because I know this pleases Him,
Who from Heaven's glory came.

He knows, He cares, He watches me,
As on my pilgrim way,
I seek to win lost souls for Him,
And work for Him each day.

For victories won, for answered prayer,
For grace, through every day,
To be well pleasing unto Thee,—
We praise Thee Lord alway.

— G. H. C.

Proving what is well pleasing unto
the Lord.— Eph. 5: 10

GOSPEL PRESS, HANOI, TONKIN

PROTESTANTISM IN FRENCH INDOCHINA

Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory: Amen and Amen.— Ps. 72: 18.

A GLAD paean of victory is doubtless sounding amongst the angelic hosts in the heavenlies, and is echoing in our hearts, for the prayers and endeavours of over a score of years have been rewarded. Now, at last, permission to preach the Gospel in the Protectorates of Tonkin and Annam, has been granted to Protestants by the French and Annamese Governments of Indochina. Already our Mission has been authorized to open Gospel Halls in several of the most populous centres of the protectorates, the earnest, we trust, of many more as we are enabled to extend the work. The following is an excerpt from the new decree, dated the 4th December, 1929, and issued by the Resident Superior at Hue:

1. French Protestant pastors are unrestricted in the exercise of worship and evangelistic work.
2. A preliminary procedure of authorization is established for foreign Missions and clergymen of all creeds.
3. The demands for authorization shall be transmitted, by those involved, to the Resident Superior, examined at the meeting of the Council of the «Co Mat» for the approbation of His Majesty or of the guardian of his ceremonial powers during his minority. The decision taken shall be given through the Resident Superior.
4. The regularization of existing establishments shall take place in conformity with the same procedure.
5. His Excellency the Minister of Ceremonies and the Administrator Director of Bureaux of the Residence Superior are charged, each in-so-far as he is concerned, with the execution of this present decree which is equivalent to a royal ordinance.»

WE would offer our sincere thanks to the Protestants in France, working through the *Federation Protestante Française* and its representative in Indochina, for their valued cooperation in acquiring the above privileges for Protestantism in this land. We pray that we as a mission and as missionaries may ever be found faithful to the trust reposed in us, and that the authorities may be granted all needed wisdom in governing this, «The Land of the Southern Peace.»

EDITORIAL

Proving what is well pleasing unto the Lord.— Ephesians 5: 10

EVERY life is attuned to some ideal, is striving, whether consciously or unconsciously, to attain some goal. To some the aim is very low—to live a life of ease or pleasure, to acquire wealth, to win fame or glory, in short, to please self. To others the aim is somewhat higher—to please some loved one, perhaps to be a philanthropist, that is, a lover of mankind. But yet others have the highest aim of all—to please Christ, or in the words of the apostle, «Proving what is well pleasing unto the Lord,» to so regulate every day and hour that God's will may be supreme in their lives. A life so lived will be illumined with the very glory of heaven, and will indeed be «well pleasing unto the Lord.» To which of these classes do we belong?

WE who are on the far distant mission fields, often almost wholly deprived of the «communion of saints,» need an incentive, a motive, to keep us fired with enthusiasm. A dry set of rules of conduct has not power to make our hearts burn within us.» But a personal love for our Leader, who «gave His life a ransom for many,»—this will lighten the labour of service, will fill our hearts with «joy unspeakable and full of glory,» as we go out to bring the message of love to hearts steeped in the pollution of heathenism.

THEN again our text contains a maxim for the daily conduct of life, which will solve all questions of duty. In God's Word principles are laid down rather than explicit directions for conduct. Therefore Christ's teaching is as applicable to the burning questions of this twentieth century as to the Christian community of the first. It is as powerful in changing an Annamese sinner, a worshipper of demons, into a saint and a follower of the pure and holy Jesus, as of converting a hobo of New York.

BEST of all our text implies that Jesus cares whether we live in a manner well pleasing to Him. He is in the heavenlies, and we here on His footstool, but He is conscious of our every thought and action, and is pleased, or dare we say it, saddened, by our actions. Oh, shall we not daily so live that we may be «well pleasing unto the Lord,» and one day deserve His «Well done, good and faithful servant.»

PERSONALIA



FOR over three months a dark cloud of anxiety has been overshadowing our mission because of the severe illness of Mrs. Cressman and Mrs. Peterson. The latter is now, we believe, out of danger and able to sit up in a long chair; but Mrs. Cressman's life still hangs in the balance. It is only because of God's wonder working power, in answer to the united prayers of the missionaries, that our sisters are still with us. We are trusting God for complete deliverance for both these devoted servants of God.

IN this «vale of tears» the sunshine and the shadows are ever strangely intermingled, and so we take pleasure in announcing the arrival of four little strangers, who have come «like trailing clouds of glory, from God who is their home.» Their names and date of arrival are as follows: David Ivory Jeffrey, 7th October, 1929; Donald Edward Cressman, 26th October, 1929; Evelyn Anne Peterson, 30th October, 1929; and Ivan Earl Travis, 1st November, 1929.

THEIR many friends in the homeland will rejoice to welcome Mr. and Mrs. Prnett and their sturdy trio of boys. Theirs has been a rich ministry for God in a virgin field, and they leave behind them many new-born souls who will follow them with their prayers. Mr. and Mrs. Stebbins and family are leaving by the same steamer, (19th March from Hongkong), on an early furlough. They will be much missed from their district, where the Lord has so prospered the work in the founding of native churches.

AS we speed the departing, so we would welcome the coming missionaries, in this case two couples, coming to us with new zeal and new enthusiasm for the glorious work of preaching Christ where He is not named or known. Mr. and Mrs. Gordon H. Smith are studying the language in Pnom-penh, and Mr. and Mrs. Peter A. Voth at Ubon, in the new pioneer field of Eastern Siam. Another couple, Mr. and Mrs. Franklin Grobb, are now in France and we trust will be ready for active service by the end of this year. Mr. and Mrs. Ellison and the two children are now visiting his parents in England, and expect to be back in Indochina by Conference.

A DOUBLE wedding took place in the Union Church, at Hongkong, on November 8th, 1929, the Rev. H. H. Hazlett and Miss Celma M. Ailshouse, and the Rev. E. Roffe and Miss Thelma Mole, being united in marriage. We extend our heartiest congratulations and well-wishes to the happy couples. May their aim for their united lives be that of Elizabeth B. Browning:

Beloved, let us love so well
Our work shall still be better for our love,
And still our love be sweeter for our work.

THE desires of the parents and friends of the missionaries' children have at last attained «a local habitation and a name,» for the *Foyer des Enfants* is now nestling under the shadow of the fragrant pine forest of Dalat, and is occupied by a happy family of children. Under Miss Heikennen's efficient teaching they are being prepared for the stern battle of life, in the midst of ideal surroundings. Mrs. Homer-Dixon is happy in her new home in Hanoi, busy studying Annamese, and already helping in the local Sunday Schools.

WE deeply regret to announce the 'passing yonder,' at the end of November, 1929, of M. Arthur Blocher, pastor of the *Eglise du Tabernacle*, Rue Belliard, Paris, and closely associated with Dr. Saillens in the Bible School at Nogent-sur-Marne. In the closing words of the last letter, recently received from him, he wrote: «May God allow me to be instrumental in furthering the progress of His Kingdom in Indochina.» M. Blocher has indeed been a «friend in need» to the mission and missionaries, and will be greatly missed by them. M. Funé, our French colleague, is a member of his church, and came out here mainly through his loving interest. May the God of all consolation be the portion of the bereaved ones. Let us pray that God will raise up many others to carry on the work so nobly begun by our departed brother.

TRIALS OF A NEW MISSIONARY

AT the last conference one of the young missionaries amusingly related how he had come to 'help' the poor Annamese, but how they had successively 'helped' themselves to his bicycle, fountain pen, trousers, overcoat, pocket book, small change, etc. May our brother soon be more than recompensed by a fruitful, soulwinning ministry among these often seemingly incorrigible heathen!

A NEW FIELD AND A NEW VISION—NAMDINH

ACCORDING to the appointment of last Conference I have been living in Thanh-Hoa with Mr. and Mrs. R. M. Jackson, but I have been asked to use my citizenship rights to help in the opening of a station in Nam-Dinh. Probably our friends remember that the Mission had tried in the past to start work there but received orders from superior authorities to discontinue. It was in July when Mr. R. M. Jackson and I went there to rent a house for an evangelist. We did not intend, at first, to have meetings right away because of the difficult situation in Tonkin, but after a while the Lord led us to begin. In September we paid a visit to the new Resident and told him what we were going to do. He was very nice about it, and we were encouraged.

That very day we started meetings. The Lord has blessed. Within two months fourteen have prayed, and some of them are very encouraging. One of them is undergoing very severe persecution from his relatives. They burn his books, hide his clothes to keep him from going to church on Sunday, etc.... But he is standing true to the Lord!

Another to whom we had loaned a French New Testament sent us the price for it, and from his letter I copy the following: «It is a great pleasure to send you the price of this book. This Holy Book speaks to me of beautiful things, and I cannot help but keep it as a good friend, an eloquent and calm adviser that will be the guide of my life for ever.» This young man is now a teacher in a primary school in Hanoi, he speaks French almost perfectly. I would ask our friends to remember these in prayer.

Nam-Dinh is a wonderful field, a tremendous task. Small in area yet one of the largest in population (almost a million people), the province is known as an education centre. In town alone we count about 1,700 students. The Catholics are very strong, but still many are Buddhists, and all are in need of the Gospel.

My heart was deeply moved when I got a vision of that marvellous opportunity. We put our Sunday morning service at 8 o'clock instead of nine so as to have more time to go out. Then the evangelist (Thay Diem) and I go out in the country to sell books. Sometimes it is hard and I feel sorry that I do not know the language better, but the Lord goes with us and we sell an average of 200 books (Gospels and tracts) every

Sunday, riding some thirty or forty kilometres on bicycles. We take a little lunch with us, and come back around 5 p. m., just in time to have supper and a little rest before the evening service.

I will continue to go there every Saturday afternoon, coming back on Monday mornings to study. Pray for Namdinh, and for me, that the Lord will give me strength to serve Him there and yet not to neglect my principal work which is learning the language.—JEAN FUNÉ, THANH-HOA

A ZEALOUS SOUL-WINNING CONVERT

TWO men were baptized at Quang-ngai just recently, the first fruits in that province. This is the place where two student-colporteurs were arrested two years ago when they went there to ask permission to sell books. One of these two men had been waiting for five years for a chapel to be opened in that city. He was led to the Lord by a young Annamese doctor who had gone to Cantho and there learned the 'Way of Life.' He bought a large number of books to take back to his native village when he returned, and the first man to believe through his witnessing was his uncle. This man's entire family has also believed, and the others soon hope to be baptized. Even his mother, 78 years old, has professed faith in Jesus.

A PROPHET'S CHAMBER IN ANNAM!

Two days after baptizing this man I had the privilege of visiting his home. He had pleaded so earnestly when he came to Quang-ngai the Sunday before that we could not resist calling there on our return from Quinhon, even though we were pressed for time. It was a real pleasure and one that I would not have missed for anything. He had bought a canvas-back steamer chair in anticipation of the day when a missionary would come to call on him, also a large oil lamp to light up the house when folks would come to inquire. We had many opportunities for witnessing in his home, for as soon as the word was noised about that we were there they began to gather in. One man who had prayed before, but had been afraid to declare himself during the days of persecution, confessed his sins and asked the Lord to make him more faithful. We called on the Mandarin of that district, and after hearing us explain the Gospel, he admitted that the true religion of Jesus Christ was greater than that of the R. C. Church or the teachings of Confucius.—H. H. HAZLETT, TOURANE.

A HUMBLE MEANS TO A NOBLE END!

WHO ever heard of tin cans preaching the Gospel? They don't, but they can help! A few weeks ago Mr. Haum, the leading Christian of the village of Ta Phon, came in to bring us some chickens and eggs we had ordered. While talking with us he spied a box full of empty milk cans that we were wondering how to get rid of. He begged us very humbly for them, and we told him we were only too glad to get rid of them. He took every one of them, forty or fifty, and carried them fifteen kilometers across the rice fields to his home.

The other day he came again, and seeing the box again full of cans, he asked us with his usual smile if he could have them. His carrying them away relieved us of the job of digging a hole to bury them, so we were only too glad to have him take them. However, having taken so many such a short time before, our curiosity was aroused as to what he did with them. We knew that the natives prized them for drinking cups, but one couldn't use so many in a life time, so we asked him. What was our surprise to find out that he used them in witnessing for the Lord!

Since he has become a Christian many of his neighbors will have nothing to do with him. They won't even do business with him, so he has invented several ruses to aid him in getting contact with these people. He sells medicine to help alleviate the suffering of children that have the terrible native skin diseases. When people come to buy a pill they get the Gospel too. In this way he has become known over quite a large district, and people come from far and near to get these pills. Now he has found this new way, he takes these tin cans miles across the rice fields to his village, and gives them away to anyone who will come and ask. The only price he asks is that they sit down for a few minutes while he «gossips» the Gospel. I have heard of medicine as a means to the spreading of the Gospel, but «tin cans» is a new one. We will all do well to follow our humble brother's example, and use every means to the glorious end of spreading the Good News of Salvation.—A. L. HAMMOND BATTANG.

BIBLE COLPORTAGE IN INDOCHINA

DURING 1929 the Hanoi Depot of the British and Foreign Bible Society sent out 1,122 Bibles, 2,026 New Testaments, and 70,383 Scripture portions, which were sold by the evangelists and colporters, superintended by the missionaries.

OUR ANNAMITE MISSIONARIES AT TRAON

GOD'S anointing is on Mr. and Mrs. Trung in their rapidly growing work at Traon and Tambinh. For three months I have been able to do but little in helping them in their abundant labors; but their complete dependance upon the Holy Spirit has made them effective missionaries of the Master in these two young churches. My visit yesterday at both of the churches was a real spiritual inspiration to me, and I was filled with renewed confidence in the ability of these native missionaries to carry out God's program. How my heart rejoiced as I baptised the thirteen converts at Traon and the nine at Tambinh, all won by these fine young missionaries in the short four months since their arrival to take charge of this work. The attendance in both churches was splendid, and things were going on as well as though I had been there to help and advise, in fact I believe they do better without too much of our interference. Mr. Trung is a graduate of our Bible school and his wife has had two years in the women's school. Mrs. Trung was so happy with her tiny newborn babe, and she is, as I could quickly see, a real help to her husband and a blessing to the women.

TRAON CHURCH HELPS TAMBINH

Traon and Tambinh have assumed the entire support of this young couple, and they are showing a spirit of liberality that I have never seen manifest before. Traon church had earnestly desired for some months to erect a new church building and had purchased the lumber and complete equipment for it, but try as they would, it was impossible to locate a piece of land. Tambinh was also eager for its own church, and what was my surprise when I learned that the Traon church had made a gift of this \$250.00 church to the Tambinh Christians. Very soon after a recent convert pledged \$400.00 to help build a new tiled roof church in Traon. The Lord is thus rewarding them for their generosity, and they are now to have a nice new \$1,000 church.

TAMBINH CHURCH HELPS CAINGAN

Tambinh has not lagged behind in generosity for only several months ago, when their little chapel was overcrowded with newly baptised Christians, they consented to help launch a new church at Caingan some ten miles distant. Three-quarters of their number became members of this new church, leaving the Tambinh church with only a little handful of Christians. Cai-

ngan was able to immediately build a church and invite a worker, assuming one-half the preacher's salary from the start. However, Tambinh was thus left without the much desired new church building and a pretty well emptied chapel. How God has rewarded their faith, by this gift of a whole church building which cost them but little!! Then yesterday nine more Christians were added to this little flock. Here are three churches filled with fresh love for God and for each other.

CAINGAN CHURCH HELPS BACANG

From Traon sprang up the work at Tambinh and from Tambinh the work has reached over into Caingan and now the Caingan church are laying plans to plant a new church at Bacang where they have won over ten souls to the Lord,—and all this they are doing themselves. Mr. Trung has entered into the labors of our pioneer Annamese missionary, Mr. Tu, who is now going on with his studies at the Bible school. This shows that real progress is being made in self-propagation. They are catching the vision, love is beginning to burn in their hearts for their own people. It is only thus that these lands can be speedily evangelized. The Annamese pastors and evangelists on this field are still very young, but they have been eager to learn and soon they will get their stride, soon they will be no longer our students, but will step forward into a militant leadership. Great leaders in our American churches today were unknown years ago.

Step by step God is leading us forward in French Indochina and soon, yes before we hardly realize it, we will see an Annamese church with its native leaders carrying the Gospel swiftly to every corner of French Indochina. Surely it is God's plan that this land be evangelized by this generation of preachers in this generation. Stand with us dear friends in prayer, that the Lord of the harvest will call out many more Annamese missionaries to step into this vast whitened harvest field. —

IRVING R. STEBBINS.

OUTPUT OF THE HANOI GOSPEL PRESS

THE output of the Hanoi Gospel Press for 1929 was seven-and-a-quarter million pages, in Annamese and Cambodian, Laosian and French, and English. Since the establishment of this press about seventy-five million pages have been printed. Pray for these printed pages, the 'silent evangelists,' as they are read throughout this needy land.

OUR PIONEER MISSIONARIES IN N.E. TONKIN

SINCE we have been here, we have gone out to several villages just to get acquainted with the people and talk about the Gospel. Understand me well, we did not preach, but just talked, so can never say we are disobeying the law. The Resident was very cordial with us, and also most of the other officials. The doctor, military and civil, is very kind to us and, by the way, is a Protestant. Next week he is going to That Khe and promised to take us along. We accepted the invitation as there is a Christian up there we can go and visit.

Natives both Annamese and Thos are coming in to see us from time to time to know about the «Hoi Tin Lanh.» We have had a Ly-Truong who invited us to his village. We intend to go the first opportunity we get. This noon we had five men visit us who seem interested in the Gospel. Two were school teachers and the others were business men. Everything up to the present looks rather encouraging, and we trust in the near future we may have permission to open up a chapel. — *Extract from a letter from Rev. J. J. Van Hine, Langson, Tonkin.*

THE 'GOOD HAND OF THE LORD' IN BIENHOA

THE good hand of the Lord continues to be upon the work in our district. We are constantly having the privilege of witnessing to new people in new places. We have fairly well covered, by colportage work and itineration, at least once, every portion of the three huge provinces in our district. Of course that doesn't include the many big plantations, many of which refuse us the right to witness or sell books. Some of these have ten thousand people working on them. Truly a wonderful opportunity which can be opened by prayer only.

I have baptized already this new year another eleven converts. I shouldn't be surprised if there is a self-supporting church here at Bienhoa before the year closes. The Christians are growing in grace, are hungry to know more of Jesus, and they are not afraid to witness for Him. Truly God has done wonders during the two-and-a-half years we have been here. When we came there was a cold indifference and even a passive hostility. But, «with God all things are possible.» After much prayer and witnessing, seed-sowing and watering, we are seeing something of the fruit of our labors. Truly the harvest is great but the laborers few. — *Extract from letter from Rev. W. A. Pruett on eve of preparing to leave for furlough.*

PIONEERING IN LUANG PRABANG

DEFINITE missionary work was begun among the Thai race in Northern Laos last February, when Mr. Jeffrey accompanied me to Luang Prabang and saw me temporarily settled in a semi-civilized house. The goodness of the Lord had been manifested all along the way. Government officials at every turn of the road proved to be kind and courteous, and although we travelled by car, river steamer and horse for about twelve days, we came through without serious mishap.

DIFFICULT SITUATION REQUIRING PRAYER

Arrived in Luang Prabang, we were assured by the *Commissaire*, a Protestant, that he would aid us in every possible way, but that our work of necessity would be very limited, especially at the beginning. We in turn assured him that we would be perfectly content to restrict our efforts to language study for some months to come, and that consequently there would be no danger of political complications. The king of Luang Prabang, the only remaining sovereign in Laos, is the nominal head of the national religion, Buddhism, and as such is pledged to protect the present state and propagation of this religion. Thus the position of the French Government is rather delicate in allowing us to begin a work in opposition to the interests of the realm they are pledged to protect. This situation calls for much prayer and divine wisdom.

KIND HELP FROM A CONVERTED PRINCE

The *Commissaire* regretted that there was no suitable house available, but introduced us to Chao (Prince) Souvannaphalom, the only Christian Lao in the district. This young man, son of one of the former kings of Laos, had spent five years studying in France, and on his return to Laos had been converted through reading the Word of God presented to him by an Annamese Christian. Since then his faith has been sorely tested: he has been ostracized and snubbed; family difficulties have arisen causing painful separation; he has been plunged into deep bereavement; but in and through all the Lord has been his refuge and he has found shelter and strength in our Rock.

The prince had three vacant rooms in a house otherwise occupied by Annamese tradesmen, and he kindly invited us to make them our own as long as we could use them. He showed himself the very personification of kindness in the days that followed—found servants for me, persuaded his uncle to

teach me the rudiments of the Lao (Thai) language, and in countless ways made himself indispensable. So for several months I had the privilege of studying by day with the brother of the above-mentioned king, of eating various kinds of good, bad or worse food, and of sleeping by night on a bed of solid teakwood.

PROBLEM OF A MISSIONARY RESIDENCE

As the days and weeks went by it became evident that the prince's house would not be permanently suitable and, since practically all the houses of this far-off post are built by and for the Administration, the problem of finding a house became an acute one. Possible doors were closed one after another until I wondered if I would be able to accommodate Mrs. Roffe who was expected to sail from Canada at any time. Finally, near the end of August, an admirable located house was promised me, due to the extremely kind efforts of local French officials. My surprise was great and my disappointment keen when, four weeks later, the owner calmly told me that he was no longer willing to rent it to me. Four days later word came that my wife's sailing had been postponed indefinitely. Blow as it was, I was thankful, for I had no house in which to receive her.

I then set out to rent the only remaining available house which because of its structure is more or less the laughing-stock of the French community. First negotiations with the owner ended with him saying that he no longer wished to rent. However, the battle was not mine but the Lord's, so I sought His plans for another campaign and followed Him to the attack. Two days later, in the afternoon of September 28th, final word came that she for whom I had waited so long was at last to sail on October 17th. I was confident that the Lord had His hand on everything and was not a bit surprised, though none the less happy, to receive word that evening that the proprietor had reconsidered the matter and was quite willing to rent.

The next week was one hustle—every moment was full. The house had to be cleaned up, my belongings had to be moved in, many details had to be attended to, and at last on Friday evening, just as the government offices were closing, I signed the contract and was thus able to start out the next morning, October the 5th, on my nineteen day journey to Hanoi, by raft, river steamer and train. Without the kind interest and aid of the *commissaire* and his good-hearted staff I would never have been able to finish things up, but the Lord

has provided us with real friends in these men. Pray that our contact may be of fullest fruitage to the glory of His Name.

THE NEEDS OF THIS PIONEER FIELD

And now we are going back,—two missionaries in a vast region of scattered peoples and diverse tribes. To reach them all is difficult, and for us is impossible. We are trusting the Lord for many things. A home for the missionary, a base for his work, must be built, probably at a cost of \$3,000 gold. Itinerating can be done only on horses (good horses could be obtained for about \$30.00 gold each), and by river launch. Above all we need a profound and quick grasp of the language, and hearts ever on fire to win men to Christ, train them for Christ, and send them out to the other lost sheep who at present could only be reached by a dozen missionary couples. Pray that soon the Word may be broadcast over the country by messengers of the Lord's own choosing and training, so that these people may be largely represented in the Bride of the Lamb.—E. ROFFE, LUANG PRABANG, NORTHERN LAOS.

URGENTLY NEEDED—PICTURE CARDS!

HELP us win the children for JESUS! See how the black eyes of the little native children sparkle as they gaze at the brilliant colours of a Sunday School Picture Card, held out by the teacher as a 'bait' to catch these little 'fish.' If children at home need such inducements to attend Sunday School, how much more these little heathen!

Please gather up your used picture cards (or picture post-cards) and send them to us by **Book Post**, in small packages of two or three hundred, addressed «**Imprimerie Evangelique, Hanoi, French Indochina.**» They will then be sent to the place of greatest need. Get your favoured children to help these little ones, who have so little of the beauty and joy of life. You and your children can be real missionaries, by proxy, as you send these cards, and help us gather in these 'jewels for Jesus.'

BUILDING CHURCHES

LAST December it was a great pleasure to the editor to take part in a district conference held at Faifoo, Annam, in a brick and tiled church seating two hundred people, conceived, planned, and entirely paid for by the members of that thriving congregation, without any direct missionary oversight. Praise God! Let us pray that many other such churches shall spring up throughout this land.

THE CHALLENGE OF EASTERN SIAM

TEN months have passed since we entered Eastern Siam and took up our abode at Oubone. During that time we have been studying and working and also wondering how great a task we have before us and how many co-workers would be needed to accomplish the task. In order to see and better understand the need as it is, Rev. Peter Voth and I took a trip across East Siam, cutting straight through the heart of that populous but little known section of Siam where scarcely a missionary has ever trod. I want the reader to take this same trip with us, to feel the same jerks and bumps as we jolt over tortuous trails; to sleep in the same inns and on the same board beds; to count the scores and scores of towns and villages through which we passed with their millions sitting in the dense darkness of hopeless heathenism; and then to catch a little of the yearning and compassion of Jesus as He also looks upon these multitudes of helpless heathen, and also to sense the same burden of prayer and responsibility for their evangelization that has gripped our hearts since seeing the immensity of the need.

THE TERRITORY TRAVELLED

Before beginning our trip let us take a glance at a map of the «Land of the White Elephant.» To the east you will see a large section cutting into French Indo-China. On the north and east it borders French Laos, on the south Cambodia, while on the west it is cut off from the rest of Siam by a range of jungle-covered mountains. Here in the center of the Indo-China peninsular we find this territory nearly the size of the state of Minnesota, with a population of over three millions. Now look again to the southeast of this section and locate the city of Oubone where our journey begins, and cut across northwestward to Nong Khay on the Mékong River opposite Vientiane, then return by way of Korat to the south and you have our itinerary.

MOTORING OVER OX-CART TRAILS

Our method of transportation was very modern. To make such a trip a few years ago one would have had to use horses or elephants. Even now in the rainy season travel is possible only by horse. But it being the dry season we took advantage of speedier methods and travelled the entire distance (with the exception of one day by train) in Chevrolet motor trucks

owned and operated by natives. The roads as a rule are extremely rough, thus cutting speed down to nine or ten miles an hour, and sometimes making us wish we could get out and walk to avoid the bumps. But in spite of difficult roads the native chauffeurs always got there! To them no trail was too difficult to pass, no log and bamboo bridge too dangerous to risk, no mudhole too deep to get through. Somehow native ingenuity always found a way. Where there was no trail we took to the rice fields now harvested and dry. Where there were no rice fields we plunged into the jungles and forests sometimes following a well beaten road, at other times a mere trail; and again for many miles we threaded our way in and out among the forest trees following bunches of dry grass tied to the tree branches as our only guide. Thus nightfall overtook us, more than once threatening to make us lose our way in the forest depths, but «the Lord goeth before,» and He guided us safely through. However the most of the country through which we passed was well inhabited, and the roads passable for about six months of the year. In Eastern Siam there are several hundred miles of such roads passable by motor bus, and in many places the government is improving them continually. Along these trails are literally scores of villages and cities all waiting for the messenger of the Gospel.

PRIMITIVE CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE

The country through which we passed was for the most part monotonous. There are no beautiful mountains and valleys such as cheer the voyager on the Laos side of the Mekong River. Apart from some forests and jungles to the west, Eastern Siam is a great plain composed of farms. There is little of the romantic to be found; only mile after mile of rice fields. Village after village of naked children, half dressed men and women, and scores of ugly, mangy, half-starved dogs. We see plenty of disease and sickness with much illiteracy and ignorance, though the government has made great progress during recent years in establishing schools and dispensaries. The people, primitive in their habits, live in simple bamboo houses with grass roofs, and sit on the floor as they eat rice with their fingers. Here also the vices of civilization have found their way, while its luxuries are sadly lacking. I say they are unromantic, unlovable, ignorant, and deluded,—but Jesus loves them. Jesus died for them! Can we not give of ourselves for them as well?

PASSING A NIGHT IN AN OPIUM DEN IN YASODHORN

Let us visit a few of the places where we stopped. Our first stop was the city of Yasodhorn. Night had already fallen before we entered its dark streets, for here street lights are unknown. It is a typical town with its bamboo and grass houses, its shops built of wood or mud brick. After arriving we inquired for an inn, but were informed that there was none. The shops and stores were nearly all closed and it was too late to go to the city magistrates' house. Where should we go for the night? Soon, however, a man stepped up and said that over yonder was a shop where travellers occasionally stopped and where we could pass the night also. Following our guide we soon found ourselves to our dismay in an opium den. Men were lying around on all sides ruining soul and body with this curse of the Orient. There was no other place to go, so reluctantly we accepted a room next to the den and prepared to spend the night on a bed of boards. Neighbors came in to visit and we gave them tracts and witnessed of the Gospel. Finally after eating our meal of rice we lay down to try to sleep, but on both sides of us the noise continued until late into the night driving sleep away. Weird sensuous music lulled the opium smokers into the dreamy trance, the desire for which causes them to sacrifice health and wealth. So we lay and mused and prayed thinking how strange for the messenger of the Cross to find asylum in such a den of vice, and yet how appropriate to witness of the Saviour's saving love in this sink of shame.

VISIT OF A SNEAK THIEF

With the early hours of the morning came sleep and with them came also a sneaking thief who, scaling the partition separating our small room from the next, stealthily let himself down by rope into our sleeping quarters and made away with my briefcase. He thought undoubtedly that it contained money, but apart from my passport which was valuable it contained only various small articles and nearly a thousand tracts. Perhaps God will yet make the «wrath of man to praise Him» by causing those tracts to fall into the hands of some seeker after the Truth. May God hasten the day when there shall be a Gospel lighthouse established in Yasodhorn.

ROI ETT AND KON KEN-WAITING FOR MISSIONARIES

The next night we spent in a Chinese inn at Roi Ett located in the very heart of Eastern Siam. Here we found a baptised Christian who was a former colporter of the American

Bible Society. Here he lives as a lone star shining midst the darkest night. He rejoiced in our coming and spent much time with us talking about the Word of God, and then joined with us in prayer for this needy field. Roi Ett is the capital of a province of over 300,000 population, contains nine counties, each having a large town as county seat and innumerable villages clustering around about. Yet there are no Christians in any of them. Here there should be a missionary giving his entire time to evangelizing. To live there will require courage. For five months of the year that section is inaccessible except by three or four weeks in ox cart or by horse. But surely the harvest will repay the sacrifice.

We continued on to Kon Ken, also the center of a province of over 300,000 with nine counties. The government is building a railroad which in three years time will bring this populous center to within two days travel of Bangkok. The time is ripe to put a missionary couple in that place to begin evangelizing those masses. Kon Ken is the cleanest looking city through which we passed, and with the completion of the railroad from Bangkok it will become a prosperous commercial center. Here it may be necessary to build a small missionary residence, for we found no habitable houses for rent.

UDORN A GREAT MISSIONARY OPPORTUNITY

Again we continued northward to Udorn, the capital of a state containing six provinces representing a million of population. The Lord Lieutenant Governor was very cordial and invited us to stay another day. Gladly would we have stayed there permanently to give out the Water of Life, but we must hasten on. We will probably not return there for another year or two for we have more than we can do here in our own province of Oubone with its 800,000 people. We must have more missionaries if they are all to receive the Gospel.

From Udorn we went north to Nong Khay returning the same day. Nong Khay is a small disagreeable city which makes its living by fishing in the Mekong River. This was the farthest extremity of our journey; we are responsible for carrying the Gospel that far. Across the river from there is French Laos with its lofty hills and dense jungles. There, in Vientiane, should also be a missionary couple.

A WIDE OPEN DOOR IN EASTERN SIAM

Eastern Siam is wide open to the Gospel. Though Siam is an absolute monarchy with a Buddhist king, yet no restrictions are put in the missionary's way. Religious toleration is recog-

nised for all beliefs. The individual can worship as he believes. The officials are all friendly and congenial; thus far none have ever opposed our work. Instead of opposition we find cooperation. An open door lies before us. Help us to enter in with your prayers.

THREE MILLIONS OF SOULS STILL WAITING

We were away only eleven days but during that brief period of time we passed through centers representing over three million people of which the Alliance is responsible for two and one-half million. They are without the Gospel or a messenger of the Gospel. To feed that multitude we are only two missionary couples. Does it require any argument to prove we need help? Three or four more couples are needed along with scores of native evangelists to evangelize this needy land. A light Gospel car in which to sleep and eat as we travel from village to village will also help to speed the light. If we are to give the Gospel to these multitudes in this generation we cannot tarry. God stir our hearts with compassion for this benighted people! Can you not see them as an endless stream drifting into a future of eternal anguish and despair?

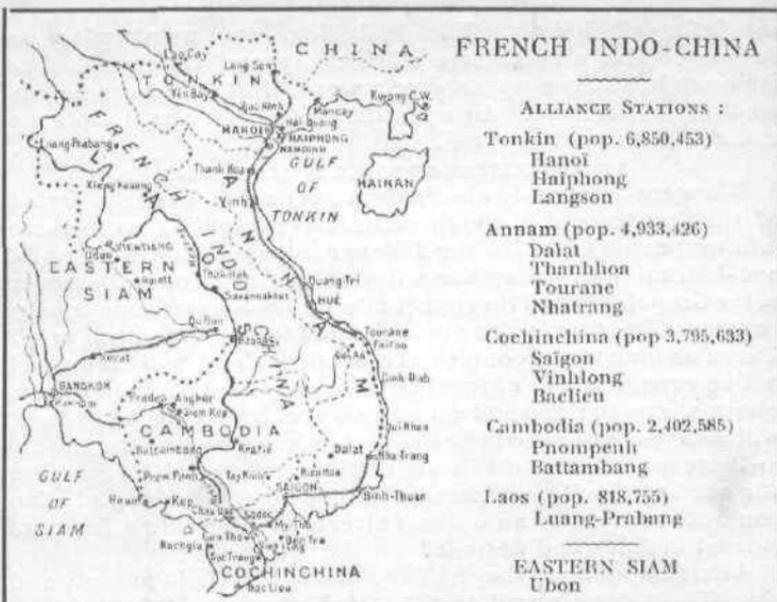
What hope have they? They are born here in poverty and sin. They grow up; they till their father's rice fields; they think as he thought, believe as he believed. They know nothing better. They build pagodas, worship the image of Buddha, do good works for merit, make offerings to demons to appease their anger or illwill; then they die. Thus generation after generation is born, lives and dies without Christ. Generations have gone already; this generation is going; how many more will we permit to die in the same way? Reader, do you not see their hopeless faces? Do you not hear their cries of despair? Can you not feel their eternal anguish?

I see them in anguish and tears
Unable to stifle their moaning;
But in vain they plead, not a soul gives heed,
Nor hearkens to their groaning.
Yet, they'll stand at last when their life is past
And they'll tell as they leave the throne
That since no one came in the Saviour's name,
They suffered and died alone.—OSWALD J. SMITH.

— PAUL GUNTHER, UBON, EASTERN SIAM.

ANNUAL MISSIONARY CONFERENCE

PRAY that God's richest blessing may rest upon the Annual Conference of the missionaries in French Indochina and Eastern Siam, to be held at Dalat, Annam, 1st May, 1930.



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