Picture of Annamese, Tonkinese, Cambodian, Laotian and Cochinchina Women

"So have I strived to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named."

GOSPEL PRESS, HANOI, TONKIN
PRAYER REQUESTS

Personnel.—PRAY 1) For a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Indochina; that the Gospel may be preached with authority, and the power of God mightily manifested; 2) For several missionaries needing God’s healing touch.

Bible Schools.—PRAY 1) For the material needs of the students in Tourane and Battambang, that their board and fees may be fully paid; 2) For the needed funds for the student-evangelists who now need to return to school to complete their studies and thus be able to efficiently continue their faithful ministry; 3) For the Lord to definitely guide the Joint Committee in the appointment of the score or more of students going out into the work. To this end that the native churches and converts may be more generous in their offerings, thereby releasing mission funds, and also other offerings be received from God’s stewards, thus enabling advance work in pioneer fields where there are still many millions waiting for the Gospel; 4) For a new mimeograph machine to replace the worn-out one.

Gospel Press.—PRAY 1) For greater saving and sanctifying power among the twenty or thirty printers, that the unsaved may accept Jesus and the saved go on in the Lord; 2) For God to grant much needed wisdom in the management of the Press, sending in sufficient paying work, and also further funds to enable the press to continue to work at full capacity; 3) For the hundreds of thousands of books and tracts which have gone forth, that they may be freighted with prayer, and used by the Holy Spirit to lead many souls to Christ; 4) For the Annamese Bible Magazine to be increasingly used for the spiritual enriching of the Annamese Christians.

Tribes’ Work.—PRAY 1) For the work among the Moi, centred at Dalat, and the Tcham centred at Nhatrang, Annam; 2) For the work among the Tho, centred at Langson, and the Muong, centred at Hoabinh, Tonkin; 3) For the work among the Pnongs, centred at Kratié, Cambodia; 4) For the score or more of tribes still waiting for the Gospel in Laos and Tonkin.

HARD TIMES,— BUT HAPPY!

REJOICE in the Lord, and again I say rejoice.» The Apostle who penned these words knew better than any of us what hard times meant. He knew how to abound, but he also knew how to suffer want, how to be imprisoned, ship-wrecked, beaten, and persecuted. Yet in spite of it all he could «rejoice in the Lord,» and thus by precept and example incite others to rejoice.

Short allowances and hard times cannot quench this joy, if we keep «looking unto Jesus.» Who, as someone reminds us, «Never owned a foot of land, never rode in a carriage, never had a hired servant, and at last lay down in a borrowed grave.» Yet Jesus has said, «These things have I spoken unto you that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy might be full.»

Hard times can be happy times for the children of God, because it is in these times that they realise their Father’s love and care. It is then they more truly experience that indeed their God supplies all their need, «according to His riches in glory.» One of God’s saints has said: «Trust Him implicitly, submit to Him cheerfully, and you will find that all shall be well; that more grace will be given you. The Shepherd is leading you in the right way to His own blessed fold.»

Again for the children of God there is another aspect of these dark times, for they may be but the harbinger of the soon Coming of the Lord. How short may be the time left for us «to occupy» before we shall hear the midnight cry : «Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him!» We who study God’s Word can read the «signs of the times,» and can see all about us the «distress of nations, with perplexity,…men’s hearts failing them for fear.» These were to presage the great tribulation which may be even now beginning. God grant that we may be the means of preparing many a soul to meet our Lord with joy and gladness, and be for ever free from «hard times.»
PERSONALIA

SINCE our last issue of the Call we have gladly welcomed back to our midst Rev. and Mrs. N. M. Cressman with their two children, Ethella and Donald. Mrs. Cressman’s long physical testing surely proves the Lord has a great love for them, and we feel sure He will richly bless their ministry in Cambodia in the winning of many souls.

HELEN ANNIE ELLISON arrived to greet her happy parents in Hongkong, the 12th September, 1932; and PAUL MONROE CARLSON “came to live” with his parents in Saigon, on Tuesday, 20th November, 1932. May they ever be a new inspiration and blessing to their parents!

THE school for missionaries’ children is again in full swing after the Christmas vacation. Miss ARMIA Heinikinen as teacher and Mrs. H. A. Jackson as matron surely have a big responsibility, and we ask prayer for them.

In a recent letter, Mr. H. A. Jackson writes: “Our work among the Moi is an actual case of advancing by prayer. Although we do not yet have authorization, yet in spite of all God is getting the Gospel to the Moi. Mr. Xol, the Moi evangelist, makes two trips a month to a plantation where he preaches to five hundred of his own people.”

OUR missionaries, Rev. and Mrs. P. A. Voth, in Khon Ken, East Siam, recently wrote: “We have been kept busy holding meetings in the local Chapel and nearby villages. I am teaching three young men an hour every morning and also on Wednesday evenings. As soon as the rainy season is over we expect to do a great deal of village work. We have been selling Scriptures and the new heart tract every morning at the Chapel, but the response is very slow—the people are such bigoted Buddhists. The Siamese pastor from Korat is holding ten days of meetings in Ubon which we trust will be blessed.”

OUR chairman, Mr. Irwin, needs special prayer that wisdom may be granted as he leaves Saigon for the Joint Committee meeting in Tourane the end of February.

ON Christmas Day the enlarged Hanoi Church was dedicated to the Lord, about three hundred being present at this impressive service. The Lord used Mrs. H. Homer-Dixon to make possible this enlargement, she meeting two-thirds of the expense. Pastor and Mrs. Le-Van-Thai, during the past four years, have been the Lord’s servants in charge of this Church which has been much blessed by their faithful and devoted ministry.

THE news from Ubon, East Siam, is encouraging. Prayer is asked for a recent convert, Nai Wichien, and for three young men who lack the courage of their convictions. Mr. and Mrs. Chrisman and Mr. and Mrs. Ziemer are making good progress in the language.

FROM Kratie, Cambodia, comes the good news that one of the three provinces is now open and Mr. Gordon H. Smith is visiting regularly the Kompong Cham district. “Authorization for Kratie Province is expected any day now. Things are brightening up.”

THE work in Quinbon district where Mr. and Mrs. Olsen are stationed is developing, authorization having been given for new work. Mr. Olsen is busy working on a topical index in Annamese.

MR. H. C SMITH of Haiphong is giving half his time to superintending the colportage work of the British and Foreign Bible Society in Indochina. The new, smaller size Gospel portions in Annamese issued by the Bible Society last year have been in good demand, and already a second edition of 50,000 has been ordered printed on the Hanoi Gospel Press, together with 20,000 Gospel portions in the Annamese colloquial characters for the older people who know only the character and not the romanized.

MR. STEBBINS at Hue is expecting, in company with two members of the committee of the Annamese Church, to visit the King at Hue. Pray their interview may be blessed of the Lord.

DURING December and January, Mr. and Mrs. Roffe of Luang Prabang made a long itinerary by canoe down the Mekong to Vientiane, returning on foot, visiting several tens of villages in North Laos witnessing the Gospel.
A REQUEST.—BY REQUEST!

MRS. HOMERA HOMER-DIXON, HANOI, TONKIN

Mr. Cadman has asked me to write a message for this number of the Call, and so here it is—and it is just one more request for prayer. (Nothing new! I hear someone say, and they start to turn over the page to find something more interesting). But perhaps there may be something new in this request...read it and see!

They say an outsider always sees most of the game. The present writer was an outsider perhaps longer than any other missionary on this field, before entering this particular sphere of service, and for over fourteen years was an active worker for missions in the homeland; therefore, because of this unique opportunity of being closely acquainted with both ends of mission work, one is perhaps aware of the virtues and the failings of the two ends.

One remembers well the prayer-meetings which are the very life and main strength of mission work—those countless little gatherings scattered throughout the homelands, many of them held in quiet homes of the prayer-warriors who form so important a part in God’s army. God grant this letter may be read in some of them! Keep on, friends, keep on praying! You are doing infinitely valuable work! Keep on!

But this special request is that you who pray for us will not forget to pray for our spiritual needs. In the old days how often and earnestly we used to pray that the missionaries might be kept in health, and have sufficient funds to carry on their work, and that they might win many souls to Christ, and that the devil might be defeated and the Gospel might triumph! But it was comparatively rare to hear anyone pray for the actual spiritual life of the missionaries themselves. Why?

...Why? If one’s memory may be trusted, the universal impression at home is that missionaries are a sort of semi-celestial being, far beyond the common faults and failings of mankind. To have a missionary visitor seemed hardly less than having an angelic visitor, and truly in youth one’s missionary acquaintances were almost idolised, and the discovery that those idols were made of human clay was a process as slow as it was painful. It never dawned on us in those days that Satan would launch his very bitterest attacks at the worker rather than at the work.

Thus it would seem necessary to remind the beloved friends at home who are our most valuable co-workers by prayer, that we are most decidedly still human! The nearest thing to a halo that we possess or desire is the sun-helmet! When you pray for our health, we beseech you to pray also for our spiritual health; when you pray for the work, remember the worker; when you pray that the natives and new converts may grow in grace, don’t forget that we—the missionaries—also need to grow in grace.

We have not attained. The fact that one has a diploma, or a dozen diplomas, and has crossed the ocean or a dozen oceans, learned a new language or a dozen new languages, does not mean that one is a perfect saint! Like Paul, we butt «follow after.» Preaching the Gospel in a strange tongue does not automatically make one temptation-proof. On the contrary, it would seem that any sort of prominence like that makes one the very target for more temptations than ever.

For this reason, this request for prayer is urgently presented to all you at home who love us—that you will remember to pray for our spiritual as well as physical life; if you love us, pray for us—that God will «keep us at the boiling point by the Holy Spirit» (Moule’s rendering of Romans 12: 11), and that we may have an abundant love one towards another, genuine humility, more earnest prayer-life, be more truly self-sacrificing...blessings of the Spirit, yes, all of them!

Missionaries are but seldom tempted to the great sins (as the world calls them); it is the subtle sins in the spiritual realm which attack us most; it is the little foxes which spoil the vines! And sadly enough, where the need is greatest, the prayer is often least.

If you love us, pray for our spiritual needs!
WE lift up our hearts to God with thanksgiving and praise for the way He has manifested His saving power in our midst. A man (Tho) was converted in the Langson chapel and returned to his village about twenty-two miles away. We had been praying for a long time that the Lord would open the way to preach the Gospel there. A week after he had decided to follow Christ, he came in one day and asked if we would come to his village and tell his people more about Jesus Christ. Naturally the invitation was gladly accepted. To our surprise, when entering his home, which is not built like the regular Tho houses, but looking more like a country chapel, we found the place well filled. They listened attentively to the message and at the close twelve gave their hearts to God. It was requested we return every week, so we have been holding meetings there since the first of May. These meetings are well attended and at times there are a hundred present. What rejoices our hearts most of all is that at every meeting some decide for Christ, making over fifty decisions within the last four months. We had never witnessed such earnestness and hunger for the Word of God, and can but praise and thank Him. It is good to hear them say how happy they are since knowing Jesus as their Saviour.

FOREGOING VENGEANCE FOR BROTHER'S MURDER

One man who attends the meetings regularly, walks eight miles one way to hear more of the love of Christ who saved him from sin. The Lord was convicting him for a long time, but he gave his heart to the Lord only after a struggle of many weeks. This man's brother was murdered on his way from market some time ago, and he swore he would take revenge on the murderer. We told him of Christ's teaching, «Love your enemies,...» and of his own accord he decided to let vengeance go. The following week he asked us to go and be witness when he destroyed his six altars. His home was crowded with his friends and neighbors to see what would happen, for they believed the spirits would be angry and harm him. To their surprise nothing happened, and it gave us another opportunity to tell them of Jesus and His saving power.

CONVERSION OF OLD VILLAGE CHIEF AND OTHERS

The former village chief was one of the first to give his heart to the Lord. He had been an opium fiend, and after his conversion was delivered of that terrible habit that destroys both body and soul. His wife seeing the change in his life, also came to the meetings and prayed the penitent prayer, «Lord be merciful to me a sinner.» Their two sons have also decided for Christ, and it makes us rejoice to see the whole family serving the Lord.

Another young fellow has been delivered from the power of darkness. Satan held him in constant fear, and he says he could see him march across the fields and attack certain homes. He would also say things concerning certain people that were fulfilled, so most everyone feared him. But now that Christ has come into his heart, there is light after darkness and hope after fears.

God's mighty Spirit is working in this large village, and we pray this will continue until many more souls are swept into the Kingdom of God. Please pray for these babes in Christ that they may be rooted and grounded in the truth, and that nothing shall be able to separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

SATAN DEFEATED—GOSPEL TRIUMPHS!

WHEN the Lord Jesus commissions us to go forth into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, His Word also instructs us that we are to go forth to fight a spiritual battle against the evil one. «We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.» Thus in our work we constantly feel the powers of spiritual darkness warring against the saving power of Him Who is the Light of the world.

On January 29th, after the Sunday morning service,
we were invited to a home to take down the ancestral altar. This family had recently stepped out on the Lord's side and wished to clear out everything belonging to the evil one. We had barely arrived, and had only spoken about a dozen words, when a dog suddenly, unawares, sneaked from underneath the board bed and took a bite at my leg. I naturally let out a yell from the unexpected pain! The old couple whom we were visiting soon freed the dog from its vise-like grip on my ankle. We had previously visited this home many times, and the dog had never been hostile. But now, when we came to destroy one of Satan's strongholds, it looked as if he was using the dog to try and drive us away. Praise God! our Leader was Victor, even as He said: «All power is given unto Me,» and in spite of Satan’s attack the idolatrous altar came down, and thus another triumph was gained! —J. J. Van Hine, Langson.

PIONEERING AMONG THE MUONG TRIBE
«Where Christ has never been named»
REV. JEAN FUNÉ, HOABINH, TONKIN

«Away across the river, away across the fields, The cry of dying sinners, is calling still to me! It rings through all my being, I can no longer stay; It is the voice of Jesus, and I must haste away. Away, away... Oh! let me not delay, Away, away... Oh! let me haste away.»

LOCATION AND POPULATION OF MUONG TRIBE

FROM Hanoi a good road takes us across the fields of the Tonkin delta, where rice grows thick and the harvest is usually plenteous, on across the first chain of mountains, and then across the Black River to a country which in contrast is poor and needy in every way. Here the natives plant their rice, but most of the time it does not produce any harvest because of the scarcity of water. Only thirty miles inland from the low-lying delta, but what a difference! The natives are poor, their houses and fields usually belong to the village, and they rarely have rice to sell, some not even having sufficient to eat.

The paternal French government has helped in many ways, but if this province of Hoabinh has not been developed as much as the others, yet there is at least the blessing of peace. The little history we do know of the Muong is that up to twenty years ago they were constantly at war with the Annamese to whom they refused to submit. Hoabinh means «wonderful peace,» and is the new name given to the province since the French have brought peace. We pray that it may be granted us, as we travel the highways of this province, to lead many to the «Prince of Peace.»

Hoabinh is the main centre for the Muong tribe which numbers 140,000 souls; then they are scattered towards the North, and also South into Ninh-binh Province and a few in Thanh-hoa Province.

THE MUONG LANGUAGE

The language of the Muong is a dialect of the Annamese, and so Annamese can be understood almost everywhere. The formation of the sentences is the same, word for word, and their vocabulary differs only concerning the very ordinary things of life. Often they use the same word with a different pronunciation and accent. This dialect has never been reduced to writing.

«GOOD NEWS» PREACHED TO MUONG IN GOSPEL HALL

Hoabinh today will mean «good news» to you because, on the 7th of October, 1932, we came here to bring the «good news» of salvation to this new tribe, the Muong. It means «good news» because Hoabinh is a very strategic centre. To the North lies a vast mountainous region, stretching up to the Chinese border, where the Gospel has never been preached before. To the West is also a like region stretching over to North Laos. Praise God for this forward advance! More «good news» is that within a month or two the new road north, for a distance of two hundred miles through Sonla Province, the big centre for the Thai tribes, will be finished. Who will come for North-West Tonkin? For the Red River district? The Master is calling! Dare you dare linger longer, dear reader? These perishing tribes need you!

The Muong are scattered throughout the mountain regions, and only come into the big centres for market
days. Before the Têt (native new year), we had from six

to seven thousand Muong come into the chef lieu (adminis-

trative centre) to trade and barter. They mostly sell

their produce, pigs and chickens, etc., to the Annamese

who send it down by sampan to the delta cities. On those
days the Gospel Hall was opened from eight a.m. till
eight p.m., the evangelist and I, without a rest, continually
explaining the Gospel. How it rejoiced our hearts to see

the Muong coming to hear the Gospel for the first time!

About five hundred Muongs visited our Chapel every

market day before the Têt, so you can imagine our joy.

SOME STRANGE IDEAS OF THE MUONG

The Muong do have a certain vague idea of a Creator,

but never think of Him as the God of Love Who saves

from sin. Yesterday afternoon I was talking to an old

Muong, and I asked him what their idea was of creation,

and he said they do not know; but they have a legend

about a flood from which a brother and his sister were

saved, becoming the founders of the new race.

The Muong are very ignorant. They are slaves to

their chiefs, and are so used to it that they do not wish
to be free. These chiefs can usually read and write a little,
yet for fear of their authority, do not wish their people to
learn. Thus we cannot use books, so the best we can do
is to visit them, and trust the Holy Spirit to use the oral
witness to bring them to a saving knowledge of Jesus.

I was amused the way a Muong explained what it

means to «be blessed.» He could not understand the

meaning at first, then suddenly he exclaimed: «Oh, yes,
to be blessed is to have eyes and see, some are blind; it
is to have ears and hear, some are deaf.».

The Muong are a very timid people. It is amusing,
yet sad, to see how men, women, and children will run
away and hide themselves at the approach of a European.

One day before Christmas I stopped at a place to enquire

the way to a certain man's house. I entered the yard
and called out, but there was no answer. After repeated

calling a man replied: «No, there is nobody here, just
I!» I had a good laugh! Soon he came out of his

concealment, and his fears partly vanishing, also laughed.

In the villages where we have visited several times, the

Muong become very friendly and receive us kindly.

There is a strange custom here. The Muong are one
day late in their calendar. For instance, when we count
the 9th they count the 8th. But they always know what
day it is. But to keep an appointment is something very

different! Over a dozen have promised to come here and

work for me,—but not one has ever come. A few weeks
ago, on the invitation of a village chief, I promised to

visit him on a fixed day. I went there, but nobody was

at home. I had cycled thirty-five miles for nothing!

ITINERATING AMONG THE MUONG

At the beginning of this month, January, the evangelist
and I took our bicycles and, following the valley, we went
to Suyut, a market centre twenty-five miles to the north.

I have never had such a thrilling trip, speeding down the
hills so as to go up easier on the other side,—if we did not
do that we would have had to walk half the way. We

followed the winding and beaten tracks made by the

mountaineers' feet. As I had nearly eighty pounds of

baggage, books, etc., there were times when I could
barely take the curves. But the Lord kept us. We spent

the night at Suyut, a good centre to reach theTho tribes
in this district. When we left the house where we had
spent the night, the lady refused to take any money,
simply asking us that we remember her in prayer, and

that her son may see the Light. She seemed sincere, and

you may be sure we have prayed for her salvation.

Upon our return to Hoabinh, a big Muong chief visited
us. He had heard the Gospel in Sontay, and invited us
to visit his village, distant two days by bicycle. He prayed
the penitent's prayer, and seemed very happy in his new
found faith. I hope to visit him next week. Pray that

he may be sincerely converted, and a winner of souls.

Giving the Gospel for the first time to the Muong is a
most joyful task. I have never been so happy in my life!

I do not want your pity, I only feel for you,

For angels well might envy the work that I may do.
Friends I man in sin are dying; think of me when you pray,
I hear my Master calling... and I must haste away.—A. R. S.
THE TCHAM RACE,—STILL WAITING!
REV. C. E. TRAVIS, NHATRANG, SO. ANNAM

TCHAM GODDESS WITH TEN ARMS AND TEN HANDS

If you will come with us just across the river from Nhatrang, about two miles from our home, we can show you a sight, that even though most interesting, is truly sad to the earnest Christian. There, on a hill about fifty feet high, stands an old Tcham tower or temple overlooking the villages of Nhatrang and Culao, the mouth of the river, and the bay. This tower, built almost twelve hundred years ago, is a most interesting piece of architecture. It is about sixty-five feet long, forty-six feet wide, and fifty-nine feet high. It is made of brick laid so closely together that there seems to be no mortar between. The special object of worship is in a small dark room inside. It is a stone goddess having ten arms and ten hands.

The temple which was built by the Tcham people so many hundreds of years ago is now in the hands of the Annamese. As we stand and look at these stones and brick we try to imagine what secret they hold. If they could speak they would tell of the hundreds of thousands of poor souls that have passed that way; how they entered between the high stone pillars at the outside, passed through two heavy doors to the inner room, there offered their gifts to a goddess of stone, then filled out still sick, body and soul, and their poor hearts as dark as the chamber they came from. They would tell of young and old, mothers with sick babes, men and women of all classes, discouraged, diseased, broken hearted, all grooping in the dark trying to get help from a cold stone. Some people of the West may laugh at these poor people of the East, but is their folly even as ridiculous as the Westerner who rejects the Gospel light and puts his trust in the «arm of flesh»?

How our hearts ache as we think of the Tcham race! They built this tower and many others like it, and for eight or nine centuries were the rulers of this land. We imagine we can see a whole race of people, sturdy and strong, passing in at the doors of this temple, laying all

that they have at the feet of this stone goddess, and passing out and down off the stage soon to become almost extinct.

As we stand outside, viewing the beautiful scenery, the sun setting behind the great range of mountains in the background, lighting the sky with such gorgeous colors, we almost forget that there is any tragedy connected with the scene. But the truth remains, that down through the ages, while the Church slept, this race, all but a few thousand, have passed away,—and as yet without a missionary! There stands the Tcham tower like a monument to our crime! «What crime?» some one asks. It is the crime of withholding the message that was their very life.

THE TCHAM REMNANT MUST HAVE THE GOSPEL.
The great mass of people in this district are Annamese. Our work here is with them, but our thoughts keep turning to these others, a strange people with a different language, the Tchams. They are as sheep without a shepherd. They are like people still struggling on the surface after the great ocean liner has sunk. Most of them have gone down without anyone seeming to care. The greater part of those who are left are about seventy-five miles from here, down near Phanrang. We MUST throw them the lifeline before it is too late!

We will never forget the time that we sat down in the shade of an old tree, about five miles west of Phanrang, and told an old Tcham man about Jesus. He drank it in as one dying of thirst, and bowed there, not to a goddess of stone, but to the Lord of heaven and earth, accepting Jesus as his Saviour. What a privilege it is to get in on this business of throwing out the life-line. We expect to be making another trip through the district in a few days, to be away for several weeks. Please continue to stand with us as we reach out to help the Annamese, but especially at this time as we cast a line to these poor Tcham people, please hold the rope and pull in hard—BY PRAYER.

Throw out the life-line, Throw out the life-line;
The Tcham race is drifting away.
Throw out the life-line, Throw out the life-line;
The Tcham race is sinking to-day.
During these depression days when short allowances are the rule rather than the exception, we sometimes get letters from the homeland in which there are sincere expressions of sympathy for the poor missionary. We greatly appreciate the sentiment that prompts these letters. However, as our Lord said 'meat to eat' that His disciples knew not of, so the missionary often has a form of recompense that cannot be computed in dollars and cents.

What, for instance, could better compensate a missionary for any material sacrifice he might have to make, than to fellowship with some poor native whose habits and character have been radically transformed by the Gospel the missionary has brought? To kneel in prayer with those who, a few short years ago, were satirical Buddhists or superstitious ancestor worshippers—this is joy! To listen to the glad testimony of those whom God had delivered from a life of degradation and slavery to Satan—this is satisfaction! And, thank God, these testimonies are our constant portion.

On a recent trip to Tayninh, one of my outstations, I had the joy of baptizing ten converts, as well as praying with two who wished to accept Christ as Saviour. The next day one of those who had been baptized, said to me with tears in his eyes: "Oh, I thank God for His goodness! I accepted Christ a little over a month ago, and He has kept me from touching a drop of liquor all this time—an experience I haven't had for many, many years. Surely He'll keep me if I keep on trusting Him."

"He certainly will," said the native evangelist enthusiastically. "Just look what He did for me. He delivered me not only from drink but from opium as well."

"That's interesting; tell me about it."

The following is a gist of the evangelist's story, as I heard him recount it.

"Well, as a young man, I wanted position and fame—I wanted to be an official in my village, so, of course, I had to be tactful and show myself friendly to the officials. When they offered me a smoke of opium &ndash; just to be sociable, I had no alternative but to accept. There was apparently no harm in a few smokes, I thought; and just look at the possibilities!

"It was not long before I had the coveted position in my village; I was respected, and was able (by accepting bribes) to receive a good income. But my success had been costly, for the threads of the opium habit had now been woven into a strong cable, and I was a hopeless and helpless opium sot. The craving became stronger with each passing year, until finally I required from four to five piastres worth of the drug a day to satisfy my desire.

"By this time I began to see the seriousness of my case and decided to try a cure. There were a number of Annamese and Chinese doctors who claimed to have medicines (costing thirty piastres and up) that would free one from this dread habit. So I tried one cure and got relief for a few days. Then, like an advancing army came the demons of desire, and—I fell. Discouragement displaced the hope that had sprung up within me for several days, and some time elapsed before I was induced to try another cure—this time a SURE one.

"So I tried it. It failed. It failed. I tried another cure and still another, but they were of no avail. To make a story short, this fearful drug held me in its vise-like grip for seven long years in spite of all human efforts to conquer it.

"I had reached the point where I was nearly reconciled to being an opium fiend all my days, when an American missionary came to my village and preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It appealed to my reason, to my conscience, and finally conquered my will. I accepted Christ as my Saviour, I was forgiven and saved. Hallelujah!

"A short time after this the Lord began to speak to me about the opium habit. I talked to the native preacher and he advised me to trust God for victory over it. Others had done it, and so could I.

"This was a tremendous challenge and I hesitated about accepting it. But, after praying about it with my wife, I
CHRISTMAS AT ANNAMENSE BIBLE SCHOOL
REV. H. H. MAZELT, TOURANE, ANNAM

CHRISTMAS day began in a very happy manner for us this year. We were suddenly awakened about five o'clock by the familiar strains of "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing," sung by a group of enthusiastic students near our bedroom window. After singing this carol they went slowly away, meanwhile singing another, and sounding very much like a recessional. As they went others were awakened and hurriedly arose to join in the happy chorus. Finally they assembled in the school chapel to sing all the Christmas songs our hymnal contains, omitting nary a verse just as they always do. Then they came back just at the break of a very beautiful day to sing another one for us. We hastily slipped on our bath robes to go out and wish them a Merry Christmas, and, behold, there stood one of the wise men with a large pack on his back! As we looked into the happy, radiant faces of these dear students, our hearts were greatly moved, for some of them less than two years ago knew nothing about the Christ of Christmas. Oh the grace that has also given to this people the knowledge of sins forgiven!

At 10 o'clock that morning we met for worship in the Church and were again reminded of Emmanuel, God with us. Yes, He is with us even here in the midst of the heathen. For almost a score of years His name, this precious Name of which the angels sang, has been proclaimed on the burning plains as well as on the mountain top.

The children in the Sunday School had practiced hard and faithfully every night for two weeks, and that night gave several scenes from Pilgrim's Progress, interspersed with Christmas songs. One of the country Churches thought it would be a good plan to have these children give this program at their Church on Christmas Eve, so the entire group, comprising 20 children, the Pastor and several deacons left here by native bus early Saturday afternoon. They fully expected to arrive in plenty of time for the service that evening, since they only had fifty miles to travel, but the native bus, as usual, had to make
frequent stops to repair their already worn out tires. It was nearly 10 o'clock before they arrived within about three miles of the Church, only to find that a small bamboo bridge had been washed out by recent heavy rains. This necessitated a tramp through mud, with the deacons carrying the children through the worst places, and their arrival in a much bedraggled condition at about midnight. The audience was still patiently waiting, so after a few minutes rest the program was given, after which a midnight supper was served, and the homeward journey begun at about two-thirty a.m. They thought they would certainly be home in time for the morning service, but again frequent punctures delayed them so that they only arrived a few minutes after the service had begun.

What a beautiful sunny day the Lord gave us on which to celebrate His birthday. For days before the sky had been overcast, while frequent rains and cool winds kept us indoors much of the time. No, we never have a "While Christmas out here, and the thermometer seldom registers below 60 degrees in Annam. But how one can shiver at that temperature because of the humidity! So a bright sunny day was much appreciated.

After the morning service the members of the Tourane Church came in to wish us a Merry Christmas and bring us a present. With them came one faithful old blind man, led by a small granddaughter, who had trudged five miles to join in worshipping the King. Their present was not such as one would receive at home, nor was it wrapped up in nice paper tied with dainty ribbon, but rather something living and open to the gaze of all our eyes. A canary! No, something much more practical than that. Two lovely fat capons, brought right into our living room in a small cage made of chicken wire woven together. Our hearts rejoiced as we recalled the origin of giving gifts at Christmas time, and remembered that our Heavenly Father has given to us the greatest gift mankind ever received, even Christ Jesus our Saviour. We often wondered during the day if He might come back to catch away His waiting ones before we could celebrate another Christmas. «Even so, come, Lord Jesus.»

CHRISTMAS BAPTISMS IN MOUNTAIN STREAM
MRS. F. C. PETERSON, KOMPONG TRACH, CAMBODIA

NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS

On every hand the Chinese and Annamese in the little village of Kompong Trach are in a fever of excitement and anticipation. Their houses are getting their annual sweep, sewing machines are humming, and new suits are coming into existence. A supply of fire-crackers is on hand, and in a few more days they will be bunging their welcome to the New Year. A New Year,—and what will it hold for those who are making such elaborate preparations to receive it? Prosperity for some; poverty for others; happiness may come to a few, while sorrows crowd upon the rest. Each heart longs for the comforts of life, and hopes the New Year will bring blessings of health, wealth, and happiness—but what of the soul? The enemy has these so wrapped around with his evil devices that they give no thought to the things of eternity. Only the Spirit of the living God can awaken them from their trance. Praise the Lord! He has awakened a few during the year which is past.

FIRST FRUITS AT KOMPONG TRACH

A year ago, Christmas, was the hardest Christmas we have ever spent. We were here in Kompong Trach, but as yet had no permission to open the chapel. There were no Christians in the immediate vicinity to share the Christmas joy with us, and we were afflicted with a real case of homesickness. But how different this year! Christmas morning dawned, a beautiful day, and one long to be remembered. At seven o'clock a group of Christians gathered, and we all went to the mountain, about a mile in back of our house, and there in a little stream had our first baptismal service in Kompong Trach. Nine were buried with Christ in baptism, seven men and two women. It seemed fitting that Auk and his wife should be baptised first, for it was through his witnessing that several of the others had come to the Lord. Just as they stepped into the water, he bowed in prayer, and his supplication to the Lord was so sweet that it brought tears to our eyes—tears of joy for God's goodness in saving these. As the others
followed, each one looked to the Lord for His blessing, and it was indeed a precious time when we could feel God's presence very near. How we praise the Lord for nine Cambodian Christians in Kompong Trach. All of the men work in the pepper fields, some of them as far as six miles distance from here, but they have been very faithful in walking in for Wednesday night prayer meeting and for Sunday evening service, and usually bring some others with them to hear the Gospel message.

At a recent prayer meeting one man told us he had been a terrible drinker and opium smoker, but that since he gave his heart to the Lord the hunger for these things had completely left him. Praise the Lord for this testimony! This man is witnessing to his fellow workmen out in the pepper fields, and in the evenings gets people together to tell what Jesus has done for him.

BLIND, SAVED, TAKEN TO HEAVENLY HOME

A blind man came in to Sunday night service a few months ago, accompanied by a young man who had already given his heart to the Lord. I believe I have never seen such a gruesome figure as this blind man! His body was deformed, his head misshapen, and his eyes, though sightless, bulged from his head so terribly that it seemed that they might pop out at any moment. It was difficult to think that such a looking creature could be a human being. He listened attentively to the message, and we invited him to come back to prayer meeting Wednesday night, and he came. He came to meetings regularly, although he and several others had walked three miles to get here after a hard day's work in a pepper field. One night he said he wanted to give his heart to the Lord. From that time on he never missed a Wednesday or Sunday night service, and we had several meetings out in his home. The Wednesday before Christmas he was there as usual, but Christmas night Ki failed to come, and the next morning word came to us that he had died very suddenly during the night. They said that he passed out very peacefully, calling upon the Name of the Lord. How gracious our Saviour is! After all the years in physical darkness, God permitted him to come into the spiritual light at the eleventh hour. Hallelujah! There is a keen interest being shown out there where he lived, and we are still having meetings there.

NEW YEAR DESIRES

A New Year with new hopes and ambitions, each heart anticipating something better than the year before. How futile these hopes without the knowledge of the Saviour! How dense is the darkness when they do not know Jesus, the Light of the world. Oh! that God will pour out our lives in intercessory prayer, that the Holy Spirit may work on their hearts and bring them into the glorious light of the Gospel.

EBENEZER!

MRS. R. M. JACKSON, THANH HOA, NORTH ANNAM

We are on the threshold of another new year. What great possibilities it holds! What joys and triumphs! Yea, perhaps, what sorrows and trials! The following lines express our sentiments at this time:

"Tis Jesus the First and the Last,
Whose Spirit will guide us safe Home.
We'll praise Him for all that is Past,
And trust Him for all that's to come."

Truly, we have great reason to "praise" Him and "trust" Him. When we came here in 1928, we were all but driven from the province. Friendless, despised, hated, suspected and forbidden to speak in the Name of Jesus. Sometimes so cast down and discouraged that we wondered if we should not resign from the Mission. The assurance of being definitely called of God was the only thing that sustained us in those dark days. Men or devils could not stop us from praying, and pray we did. Those prayers are being answered to-day.

We have gone for miles in every direction, selling thousands of Gospel books and witnessing for our Master. Not only does no one speak against it, but many of the officials are now kind and helpful.

At Christmas we held several days of special services.
I wish you might have seen the eager crowds that filled our chapel! The splendid order and attention were proof of their keen interest. Among them were twenty-one of the Christians from the country villages. How we praise God for these little groups that are springing up everywhere, in large part the result of our colportage work. Many of these country believers walked many weary miles to get here. The Christians themselves provided the chapel decorations, gifts for Bible contests, and the "tea feast". We had only to enjoy it all! In the month of March, the Annual District Prayer Conference will be held here. Please pray it may be blessed of God.

One of the country Christians came from the village of Cho Quang. He was one of the mob that pelted us with mud and drove us from their village, four years ago. How many times since that memorable day have we prayed for that place and longed to return! What a joy, on our return from furlough, to find this earnest Christian the first fruit from that wicked district! He is standing true under fiery persecutions. When first saved, he was much discouraged because of the hindrances met in his home. Not knowing it was wrong to do so, he took poison. God graciously spared his life. Though he is himself a married man, his father beats him for forsaking their religion. Just recently, he drove him from home, and filled out papers disowning him as his son. When they saw this did not accomplish their purpose, they came and asked him to return. I have previously written of other young men who are similarly persecuted for Jesus' sake. They claim that they will die before they deny the One they have learned to love. Pray!

One of the most encouraging things in our work, at present, is the little group of believers at Nga Pho. A couple of years ago, a man from there bought a Bible. A day or so before we left for furlough, he came to visit us. He brought with him his mother and several other relatives. They wished to accept Christ as their Saviour. We stopped our packing long enough to pray with them. Through the busy months that followed, we did not think very often of them, but God did not forget them. There is now a fine group of Christians there, all won through the influence of this one man. He gathers them together each Sunday, and they conduct their own service. This is what we want all over the district,—souls saved and meetings held, without expense to the Mission.

We recently visited this village and spent the night in Mr. Du's home. Being some miles off the main highway it is not easy of access. One new stunt we had to perform was to cross a stream on a bridge of bamboo poles. Fortunately, there were poles on one side, to hang on to, or we would surely have gone down.

When Mr. Du became a Christian, he gave up his position as second official of the village. He now teaches a number of the village children. At first the heathen parents objected to the new religion the children were learning with their lessons. Gradually, however, when they saw the change for good it made in them, many others brought their offspring to be taught by this godly man. By his forsaking the heathen religion, he had also to forfeit his right to a certain piece of land. This property involved the worship of its donor. When his mother saw how much they were losing, she begged her son to allow her to follow the new religion, in his place. She is now one of the most earnest Christians there.

Some time last term, a certain man visited us and bought books. Since, like many another, he did not return; we presently forgot him. A few weeks ago, this gentleman was visiting in town. He was brought to the meeting by one of our Christians. He showed much interest. A little later we went to his village. Being a retired official, he exerts considerable influence there. It was a wonderful privilege to show this soul the Way of Life. He drank in every word, like one who had thirsted long. To watch the changed expression of his countenance, as the Light broke upon his soul, was one of the most beautiful sights we have ever witnessed. What a great, great privilege and responsibility is ours! Pray that God may make us a blessing.
THE LEGEND OF THE FOUNCING OF A CITY

REV. F. G. GROBB, VIENTIANE, NORTH LAOS

(The legend upon which this is based was told to me by my teacher, but cannot be proven. Though the custom does not obtain today, it could easily have taken place for the Khao or Mois, neighbours, still practice human sacrifice when possible).

LONG, long ago, far up on the banks of the Mother Mekong, that mighty river who has fed for countless generations many an ancient people, and carried on its bosom many a royal child, there snuggled a number of tiny villages where dwelt a group of the fathers of the present day Laotians. Their origin was hidden in the blackness of a night only made visible by the few flickering tales told by the old mothers. The contentment of their lives was written on their faces—their needs were few and readily satisfied from the profuse vegetation which kindly nature showers in a tropical land blessed by plenty of water and sun. Two to three months labour in the year was sufficient to provide them with their daily bread—rice. Truly a land where “all the world is beautiful.”

Yet there lies in the heart of the most primitive man an ambition which urges him to better things, often whetted by the necessity of self-protection. As the villages grew the head men dreamed a dream, even as the heroes of Ancient Greece and Rome, a dream of a great and beautiful city which should be known and feared even as far as the Salted Waters, where the Mighty Mekong herself gave up her individuality.

Finally these ‘city fathers’ gathered a great convocation of the people. The Boundaries, many miles in extent, were marked out at the strategic bend of the river, a dyke was thrown up against the flood water, and a row of thorns planted against hostile forces. Then a great day was appointed, and preparations made for the ceremonial founding of the city, which was the commencement of the central pagoda. There was needed but one thing before this work could be undertaken, a Protecting Spirit. Buddhism was the accepted religion of the people, but Buddha was not real enough, not intimate enough, to satisfy their hearts. A special spirit was needed to hold their interests at heart. So the great day came and a mighty procession started out. There were the priests bearing their venerable saffron-clad chief; there was a great cortège of people carrying banners, flowers and highly decorated floats in the form of elephants and other animals; and they marched to the tune of a great gong and many of their double toned tom-toms. Prayers had been offered already, and it was known that the gods had chosen somewhere a beautiful maiden who was to become the protecting genius. As the procession made its way, the maiden presented herself and was duly conducted to the centre of the city amid great acclamation. Here at the site of the new temple, a trench had been prepared and into this, accompanied by appropriate ceremony, the young maiden hurled herself and therein was interred. Thus, according to the story, was founded the principal pagoda and the city, later known as Vientiane!

Years passed and by the vicissitudes of history, the Kingdom of Lan-Xang came into being, with Vientiane as its capital. But as ever, amid the finest of surroundings, man proved to be vile. In successive years and centuries, down from the north, over the river from the west and even through the protecting mountains on the east, came invading hosts. Many times was the city defeated and its kings forced to flee; the capital sacked and its buildings destroyed. Large numbers of its people were forced to emigrate to the other side of the river, leaving the city almost desolate. Through all this the protecting spirit was found to be of no avail,—the sacrifice had been in vain. Even Buddha’s many heads were not worth their weight in bronze, and fell before the ruinous sword to be hidden in the debris of years. Thus waned the glory of Vientiane.

The city however still lived and is yet one of the two important centres of Laos, being the seat of the French Government. The European city has been constructed in the northern part of the enclosure about the many ruins. Today the missionaries of the Gospel of Christ, though on the southern fringe of the French city, find themselves within one hundred yards of the ancient centre where
stands a rebuilt pagoda under which are said to lie the bones of a young maiden!

Many, many years ago on Calvary's rugged mount, the Son of God sacrificed his spotless Life, and thereby laid the foundations of a New City, to be peopled by those "of every kindred and tongue and people and nation." Long have these people waited for the glorious news which will liberate them from habits of sin that are as ingrained as their superstitions. Nineteen hundred years later the first few learn that they are to form a part of the New Jerusalem. They are still the same people, in a half-hearted way worshipping the same gods who availed not in time of need, the only religion they know; still contented and easy-going;—and still bound by Satan! Will you not pray that soon many may be claimed for Christ who, though dead, rose again and now lives for ever more?

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