

## SIAM: THE WAR AND THE MISSIONARY TASK

*Siam Missionaries in the War; Visit of the Board Deputation; Changes in the Church's Environment; The Church's Life; The Church's Task; Unique Medical Service; The Strategic Function of Mission Schools; Pen Pictures of Siam Stations; The Opportunity and the Strategy*

THE STORY of how the war came to Siam and how the missionaries and Siamese Christians fared during the period of occupation is told by one of them\* who was stationed at Chiangmai in the North and was in the little group who left Siam unceremoniously on short notice by way of Burma:

On December 1, 1941, a meeting of the Presbyterian missionaries was being held at The Prince Royal's College in Chiangmai. The ladies in charge of Wattana Academy in Bangkok had at the last minute decided not to come to the meeting. As they were making preparations to come the wife of a high official had said, "You must not leave the girls. Something is going to happen soon." Our diplomats knew nothing of "anything going to happen." However, the minister did suggest that the children in school in India remain there and not return to Siam for Christmas and the two and a half months' vacation. The parents in Chiangmai decided to let them come as they were already in Calcutta, fifteen hundred miles from their school, and their seats were booked on the next flying boat. They telephoned to Bangkok first and were assured by friends that "nothing was going to happen," at least not before all women and children would be safely out of Siam in January.

The mission meeting closed and those from out of town left the morning of December 5th. The next evening, Saturday, a telegram was received saying that all women and children should come down on the next express train—there were two a week, the next one Tuesday morning—to go right through Bangkok to Singapore on the way home.

There was hasty packing in the homes for those to go and for those who were to be left behind. Many plans regarding Christmas were jotted down.

Six forty-five in the morning was the news hour at Prince Royal's on Monday (which is Sunday afternoon in the United States) and at that

\* Mrs. Kenneth Wells in "Siam Story." Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, 1946.

time Singapore was tuned in. Through the sounds of bombs and gun fire audible over the radio, crackled the news of Pearl Harbor, Hongkong and Bangkok. It was, yes; it really was war.

The government officials had a hard and unwelcome choice to make. Should they cast their lot with the Allies and follow the will of the people? Britain and the United States could not give them the slightest aid. We know the choice they made. They acquiesced in the accomplished fact of the entry of Japanese troops on Siamese soil. On December 11, 1941, the Siamese Premier (with Bangkok patrolled by Japanese troops) agreed to form a military alliance with Japan.

The banks promptly closed, and worried, stricken officials began sending their wives and children out to the villages.

In view of the emergency developing, the mission treasurer at Chiangmai had not been depositing all the funds in the local bank as they came up from Bangkok. So when the emergency arrived there was some 10,000 baht in the safe at Prince Royal's, some to be left for mission work, the rest to be used for evacuation. It was known that the Japanese had control of Bangkok and the railroad south, that they were coming north and that they considered all Americans as enemies.

At noon we received a telegram from Bangkok saying "stay where you are," meaning, do not try to get to Bangkok; and later in the evening a final telegram from our American minister, Mr. Peck, saying, "get out by way of Burma." This meant hand luggage, baskets that could be carried and bed rolls. Our good clothes were left in the trunks already packed, and sturdy shoes and overalls and pullovers for jungle travel were sorted out and rolled in bundles.

Food packers had to be prepared and, not knowing how long we would be in the jungle, we took along fifty pounds of powdered milk. This was almost all used before we got to India. Some dried fruit, a little flour and a tin of baking powder—for after a day or so all the bread would be moldy and we would have to use dumplings instead. Cheese, coffee, and tea were added. These things with utensils made quite a stack. After all, Christmas was coming, and I was not as sure as the Siamese that we would be back by that time.

We worked quietly around the house in a complete blackout, putting things away, making room for the teachers who were to move in, seeing that the inventory of school linen was in the closet with the supplies, going over our medicine kit, for no doctor was going out with us (two joined the party later), and wondered if we had enough of the right things.

We moved along the platform of the railroad station where a group of friends were gathered, both Christian and non-Christian. A large group to see off "enemy aliens." There were teachers, nurses, students, members

of the church, villagers, Chinese merchants and government officials to wish us all possible speed.

"As long as we are masters in our own house we will protect you, but we do not know how long we will remain masters. I advise you to leave," said the Governor of Chiengmai, sadly.

Fifty miles south of Chiengmai we came to Lampang, the road head. A big truck was waiting for us. We loaded our stuff in. We had a bite to eat. We mixed milk for the children and filled canteens with fresh water. Then in blistering heat we started the run for the border.

The party consisted of Mr. and Mrs. John S. Holladay with John (10) and Anna-Maria (5), Mrs. Charles E. Park, who had just arrived from America and was enroute to her station in southern Yunnan, Miss Barbara McKinley of Dara Academy and Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth E. Wells with Roberta (8) and Kenneth (6) in one truck. Just ahead were eight Englishmen and a Hollander in another truck.

We hurried through villages large enough to have a telegraph office and were stopped by gendarmes at numerous places. They seemed uncertain what to do with us and were disposed to let us get by, when they had no actual orders to stop us. As night came on, the ride became nerve-racking. We were travelling in almost complete blackout on a high graded road and our unimaginative driver saw no reason for slackening speed. We were stopped several times by groups of home guards always with the same reaction. "Oh Farangs" (foreigners). "Laa luk noi" (and little ones too). "But they can all speak the Thai. Let them go. Let them go."

It was very late and pitch dark when we arrived at Chiengrai, the last large town on the Siamese side of the border. Here we had to stop until we had turned in our alien registration papers and received permits to leave the country. The office would be open at nine the next morning. The Governor finally got permits ready, although it may well have meant political suicide for him. He would not, however, consider re-entry permits for the men of the party. They had planned to return to Chiengmai after seeing the women and children safely across the border. The situation had developed so fast even in the last ten hours that they would have to come with us or be interned. Our papers were given to us and we did the thirty-five miles to the border in record time. The boundary line between Siam and the Southern Shan States is a small river spanned by an iron bridge. We could look across the river to Burma and comparative safety.

We found to our relief that the head customs man was an old Prince Royal's boy. His assistant had had his life saved by an operation performed by Dr. Cort at McCormick Hospital. We had fallen among friends.

After all our luggage had been gone over we were told that we might cross into Burma. Porters helped us to the middle of the bridge. In the

center of the bridge stood an Englishman, Mr. Wilson, the assistant district commissioner. Some of the Kungtung State constabulary were with him. He directed them to take our stuff to his office not far distant. As we walked along he told us what radio news there was—that the Japanese were heading north from Bangkok, and asked about the others left behind. We told him that we thought they would be along the next day.

The second group that came out of Siam had more time for packing and disposing of their goods, but less time for travel. As the bridges were out now, their trip was very difficult. Young Mrs. Hugh McKean had the heaviest heart and the most inspired courage. Leaving her family behind—her father was a British timber man, retired in Siam—she brought out her two small children and her invalid husband.

In charge of Dr. Telford, the first evacuee party reached the British outpost on the mountain of Loi Mwe in the Shan States with reasonable speed and comfort. From here messages were sent to the United States. At Dr. Telford's home at the agricultural school for the hill tribes—a project of which the Baptists may well be proud—we unrolled our beds and cooked our first real meal. As soon as a convoy was ready we would join it and go on into central Burma.

The orders to leave came suddenly. Within fifteen minutes we were experiencing a harrowing slide down the mountain into the ancient city of Kengtung. Here we met the convoy, ten big U. S. government trucks (lend-lease) ready to start back for supplies. Women and children were put in the cabs with the drivers. The men threw in the luggage and got in wherever there was room. There were more British in the party by this time. We started off on an eastern leg of the Burma road.

Five days we climbed mountain ranges of eight and nine thousand feet, through some of the worst jungle in the world, around curves that looked as if they would be our last.

The party broke up in India. Some members started for the homeland immediately, others later, while others are still there. The McKean family went to the Presbyterian hospital in Miraj, India. The trip out had been one of continual pain for Mr. McKean, borne in a most heroic manner. Some measure of relief was obtained at the hospital, but the brave and weary spirit bowed to a stronger power and Mr. McKean died in May, 1942. The Siam Mission lost one of its finest and most efficient missionaries, and certainly, its best financial expert.

Three members of the Mission remained in the immediate war zone. From Taunggyi, Mrs. Park went to her station in southern Yunnan, where her husband, Dr. Charles E. Park, and their little son lie buried. She was finally forced to move north, but not before she had helped some injured members of the American Volunteer Group to escape. She finally settled in the Mo Hai district, south of Kunming, doing intensive and most ac-

ceptable evangelistic and educational work. She was in contact with a Friends' Unit and also an orphaned mission of the Lutheran Church. She was the only member of the Mission to remain anywhere near her field during the war.

Rev. Loren Hanna and Mrs. Hanna stayed on in Taunggyi and joined Dr. Gordon Seagrave's (Baptist) Mobile Surgical Unit. Dr. Seagrave's nurses' training school was put out to field work and there were small groups in makeshift hospitals along a 700 mile line. Mrs. Hanna took charge of one group of nurses as chaperone, which responsibility grew to include washing, sterilizing and cooking over an open fire. When it became necessary to withdraw the nurses, Mr. and Mrs. Hanna attached themselves to the Chinese army and kept some of the hospital huts going until May 12th. The enemy was only a few miles away, transport had broken down and their position became untenable. They were rescued by some British Commandos who had been fighting rear guard actions. With them they did a trek of 560 miles over 43 mountain ranges in 62 days to Kunming. For only a short distance was there transport. The United States army flew Mr. and Mrs. Hanna from Kunming to Calcutta, whence they sailed for home.

Words cannot express the grateful thanks for those Americans in Siam who escaped across the border, to the Baptist mission and to the soldiers and officers of the British army in Burma. Their aid was given with the utmost consideration and with all dispatch.

The story took a different turn in southern Siam. This is what happened there as told by one who went through it:

The news of Pearl Harbor spread like wildfire in Bangkok. The American Legation advised all Americans, especially women and children, to come to the Legation at once. Each person was to be allowed one suitcase, a bedding roll and some provisions. These we sent in to the Legation and added a small charcoal brazier with an eye to morning coffee. For two weeks the Americans lived in the Legation while an internment camp was being prepared. They compared notes and reminisced, and wondered what was happening. There was a continuous stream of gifts of food, the only thing that could be sent in. Bananas, melons, vegetables and fresh eggs arrived every day. Food was prepared under the direction of the home economics expert and everyone turned a hand at the work.

On December 23rd all the Americans with the exception of seven diplomatic and consular officials were loaded into buses and taken to the new quarters. Part of the campus of the University of Moral and Political Science had been hastily rearranged and now about 350 British, Dutch and American civilians moved in.

Package day twice a week became very important after Siamese and

Chinese friends were forbidden to see us in person. The food, and specially the fruit that came in, was a very real item in keeping us all well. The monotonous diet kept deteriorating. Beef became buffalo, and buffalo became—we were never quite sure what. Many of the donors of food sent it in anonymously because they were high officials and dared not let their gifts be known.

Our only hope of freedom was an early end of the war and that did not seem very likely. We shall never forget the Good Friday service. Our hearts were anxious for the steadfastness of the Christian groups in Siam. The news that the Swiss consul wanted to see us meant little. However, he brought news of negotiations toward repatriation. We could scarcely believe our good fortune.

Dr. and Mrs. George B. McFarland, affiliated members of the Siam mission, were not interned in the camp. Out of respect for their lifetime of unselfish service given to the Siamese Government in the organization of its medical school, the McFarlands were interned in their home. Here, in the garden he loved so well, Dr. McFarland lived out his life beyond the three score years and ten. He died May 3, 1942, a beloved American, the servant and friend of all. Mrs. McFarland was with the group of Americans who left Bangkok June 29th for the strange journey home.

By the middle of 1943 the war was not going so well for the Axis. Premier Tojo therefore visited Siam to show a more conciliatory attitude toward the unfriendly Siamese. He transferred four states from British Malaya to Siam as a free gift. The Siamese viewed this gift with suspicion and were singularly ungrateful, much to the annoyance of the Japanese. The people quickly seized American fliers shot down in air raids and smuggled them away in civilian camps. Many a simple villager gave up a 10,000 baht reward to help an injured airman.

The people also learned how to give food and help to British, Dutch, and Australian prisoners of war, brought into Siam from Malaya by the Japanese military, and used by them to build roads and installations. A group of villagers would pass by the place where some prisoners of war were working under guard. They would stare at the prisoners and then begin shouting derisively. They would all scoop up stones from the road and send a shower toward the prisoners. But the prisoners were never struck by stones for the agile villagers had substituted the object concealed in their other hand and a hail of hard boiled eggs descended on them. Many of the eggs had quinine tablets pressed into them from the fast dwindling supply available to the populace.

On July 20, 1944, Premier Tojo and his cabinet fell. Two days later the Siamese National Assembly voted to oust their collaborationist Premier. The new government was headed by Regent Pradit Manudharm and Premier Aphaiwongs. At once the new government proclaimed religious

toleration and was visited by many delegations of Christians expressing their gratification. The Minister of Education sent a circular letter (Sept. 28, 1944) reminding all heads of schools that pupils were free to profess any religion that they desired.

The planes came over just at dusk. They spotted the markets on a level strip and came in low. The American civilian, with silver leaves in his pocket, in case he should be captured, took a deep breath, stepped into space and counted ten. With the pull of the rip cord the parachute bloomed and he floated down and landed with that loose-jointed roll he'd used so many times in college football at Missouri Valley. The Rev. John S. Holladay was back in Siam.

Two other personnel parachutes followed and then 'chutes carrying gear. Assistants ran to meet them. Mr. Holladay and his two Siamese lieutenants were helped out of their parachutes. The material was collected and the whole party vanished into the shadow of the jungle. The guerrilla organizer had arrived.

Then began months of hide-and-seek through eastern Siam. Always the guerrilla forces grew larger. Recruiting was easy. Always the accidents to roads and bridges were most inconvenient to Japanese troop movements. Always the British and American fliers got away. Food seemed to filter mysteriously into the prison camps of the Japanese. The prisoners stopped dying. Only the leader, who spoke Thai so easily with a bit of the northern Lao thrown in, recognized one group for what they were, those who had vanished when the Houston sank into the sea. The guerrilla forces grew and grew. A large force was in readiness and strategically distributed. Siam refrained from undertaking an armed revolt against the Japanese at the expressed wishes of the Allies. This was acknowledged openly in a statement by Secretary of State James Byrnes on the 19th of August 1945, who further said:

During the past four years we have regarded Thailand not as an enemy, but as a country to be liberated from the enemy. With the liberation now accomplished we look to the resumption by Thailand of its former place in the community of nations as a free, sovereign and independent country.—Before the war, Thailand and the United States had a long history of close friendship. We hope that friendship will be even closer in the future.

On V-J day American officers, guerrilla agents, helped and protected by the Siamese forces, and American intelligence officers hidden in Bangkok by the Siamese, came into the open and joined the victory parade.

There was Capt. Howard Palmer, son of the Rev. M. B. Palmer and Mrs. Palmer of Bangkok Christian College, now retired. Boys with whom he had played, who had gone to school to his father and practiced music with his mother, were now bending every effort to make their country free and safe. There, too, were Dwight and Daniel Bulkley, smart in their

uniforms, and smiling at the populace. They were the sons of Dr. Lucius C. Bulkley, who established and built up the hospital at Trang and is famous in southern Siam for his cataract operations.

Mr. Holladay's first visit was to the church on Sunday morning. The service was led by Kru Tardt, a woman elder. One of the Siamese Christians present wrote:

Specially among the Christian people tears flowed freely when an American missionary first visited. We brought to the prayer house in Pramuan Road a missionary named Mr. Holladay. Old friends, both men and women, freely wipe the tears out and many could no longer keep their eyes to their prayer book. Everyone tried to catch every word he said as though their lives hang on what he said. After the service was over there was a rush to touch him or hear the words he spoke to each one. Such was the rejoicing indeed.

The Board of Foreign Missions sent greetings to the Siamese Government on its liberation. Regent Pradit cabled back:

Please convey our best thanks to the Presbyterian Mission. I am aware of the activities of the Mission for the enhancement of good relations between Siam and the United States, and I hope that when the appropriate time comes the Mission will be able to render us the help which we badly need and which the Mission so kindly offers.

#### VISIT OF BOARD DEPUTATION

The Board's post-war deputation to Siam spent six weeks in that country in October and November, 1946, only a few months after the arrival of the first missionary group to go out after the war. The following eye-witness excerpts from the reports and letters of the deputation members give a vivid picture of the effect of the war on Siam and on the work of the Mission and Church in that country. The first of these are from the reports of Dr. J. Leon Hooper, secretary of the Mission and leader of the deputation, and the Rev. Glenn W. Moore of Los Angeles. Mrs. Paul Moser, Mrs. Frank C. Hughson, M.D., and the Rev. William N. Wysham of the Board's staff, are also quoted at length.

Going directly by plane from devastated Manila to Siam via Hongkong in only eight hours flying time, one is struck with the evidence of the lack of destruction in Bangkok. Our arrival was at one of the large airports of the world today. Planes from Europe, China, India and the Philippines arrive and depart at frequent intervals. The airport was not damaged during the war and promises to be still larger, as Bangkok becomes the crossroads of travel from Europe to Asia and Australia and even more from America to India. We were informed soon after our arrival that planes were being ordered for a system of airports within Siam itself, with planes going from Bangkok to all the major interior points, north and south, thus placing all these points within a few hours, and in some case a few minutes, of Bangkok. This typifies the change that is coming in the country. One



can believe the air age in Siam will bring with it other major changes and that the whole tempo of life within Siam will be stepped up to the demands of the new day. We found evidences that this had already begun and that the country would make great strides along all lines, given a peaceful world and favorable chances to share in the economic development of the world.

#### CHANGES IN THE CHURCH'S ENVIRONMENT

One can best begin with the after war changes in the political, social and cultural life of Siam which are affecting the Church in that country. The situation is so favorable now that one would like to forget the war years. But it cannot be forgotten that Siam was very much in the midst of the war, and was the staging ground for both the Japanese invasion of Singapore and the later disastrous campaign in Burma. Bangkok remained through the war the headquarters of the Japanese armies in that area and there were many Japanese soldiers stationed throughout the country. There were many changes in the traditional way of living due to the presence of these soldiers.

One cannot say that the war did not affect Siam in its political, social and cultural aspects. The moral condition of the people was affected. The presence of so many Japanese soldiers with little to do made for a deterioration of the moral life of the people, especially in the cities. The chance for gain in the "buy and sell" business made for sharp practice. The very underground movement was like so many others, and the people in it had to live by their wits. But one can safely say that the harm has not been so very great or lasting and there is generally order in the country. The people basically are sound and are going about their business in all lines of activities much as before the war.

The Siamese have a constitutional monarchy based on the English or perhaps the European plan. They change governments rather easily and often. How very serious any one change may be is hard to tell at the time. The changes that have recently taken place have seemed to be in line with the constitution. There have been no recent coups since the one that forced the constitution (1932) and the one that forced the collaborationists out during the war. The recent murder of the King has not indicated that any changes are being anticipated in the way of making the government a democracy with no traditional ruling house. There are evidences that the royal house still has a strong hold on the populace and any move to do away with it would meet resistance.

The policy of the war government of Siam regarding religious liberty departed greatly from the traditional policy of earlier days and from the constitutional provisions in the present government. Recent returned missionaries and visitors report definite religious persecution during the war. This did not take the form of the violence that was experienced in other

lands. It was largely that people who had positions in schools or in government were told they had a choice of renouncing their Christianity or losing their positions. Most of the Christians did not hesitate but gave up positions with no chance of getting anything else. Most Christian schools were either closed or taken over by the government. Christian hospitals were taken over and run as government hospitals. Many of the churches were closed and sometimes the people were told they were not even to read the Bible and pray in their own homes. The insecurity brought about was real, and the people suffered mental torture for the reason that they never were sure how far the persecution might go. It was a testing time and the Christians came out of it stronger than ever and with a consciousness of their own power and importance that they had never had before. The public was also conscious of this power and one official was quoted as saying that the Christian Church was the only institution that came out of the war with a higher respect on the part of the public for its moral integrity.

Since the war, the churches are open and have full freedom and co-operation. The government gave orders that all schools and hospitals formerly run by the Mission groups and the Churches were to be turned back, and this has been done.

The relation of the Mission and the Government was never more cordial than today. And this is in a country that has shown in its official relationships the most cordial co-operation. One official in a letter expressing his regret at being unable to attend a dinner in honor of the Board's deputation took occasion to say, "I believe that your organization will cause untold benefits to my country with a greater momentum. For over a century the American Mission has successfully carried out many progressive activities concerning medical work, general education, public health and others: all of these are well known to the people of Siam." Another evidence of the same friendliness came in the return to Siam of the first missionaries. They were able to take with them five tons of medicine furnished by Church World Service. The government placed its entire medical staff at the disposal of the group and helped to get the medicine to the people who needed it. It was definitely a Christian program of relief and the missionaries were given credit at all times for what they had done. Details of this notable service are given below.

#### THE CHURCH'S LIFE

The war brought many changes to the Church of Christ in Siam. There was a loss of membership. There are no accurate figures of these losses, but the reports of the different areas show that there were losses. There were also gains in membership. These were mostly in the North and were considerable. These are continuing and may prove to be a real revival of

the life of the Church. The Church has never had a large membership. It is now less than ten thousand, perhaps not over eight thousand; most of these are in the North around Chiangmai and Chiangrai. Besides the Church of Christ in Siam, there are Christian and Missionary Alliance churches in the eastern part of the country. There is no statement available as to the membership in these churches but it is probably quite small.

The leadership of the Church as a whole is excellent. Unfortunately, most of this leadership is in the field of education and medical work. The teachers and the doctors and nurses constitute a fine group of Christian workers in their profession and give of their time and service to the church. The ministry has no such body of men. There are only a few ordained men, and still fewer who are full-time pastors. During the war, many of these who were giving their full service had to seek other means of livelihood. Many of these have not returned to the ministry and some may not return at all. The facilities for training of leaders has been inadequate. The Seminary has been closed, but plans are now under way to reopen it. There is an excellent Seminary building located at Chiangmai. There will need to be a connection with the schools for higher education as the ministers who are to serve will need an education beyond the high school level. A well-trained and devoted ministry is the greatest need of this small struggling Church.

The war greatly affected the economic condition of the members of the Church. There were four self-supporting churches in Bangkok before the war. There is not one of these now with a minister for the reason that they cannot support one. The Church attempted a program of self-support following the war, but there was not much being paid in by the churches. There is a strong feeling that this program of self-support is the only way in which the Church can keep its own life and there is a determination on the part of the small group of leaders that the financial status of the Church shall be improved. There is much discussion of methods to improve the economic condition of the members of the Church to the end of their better support of the Church. It is true that the members for the most part are not people of great wealth or even of average wealth for the country.

The evangelistic spirit of the Church never was greater. There is a distinct move now towards a nation-wide evangelistic effort. There have been some 1300 additions to the Church since the war and the evangelistic program is still on. The Church has a three-year program of advance, and evangelism is at the heart of this program. This is distinctly a church program in which the missionaries are co-operating.

#### THE CHURCH'S TASK

If one defines the designation "unoccupied regions" as those untouched or relatively untouched by Christianity, it might be said that there is not

much that comes under this category. The Church of Christ is in the central part of the country extending north and south. The Christian and Missionary Alliance has gone into eastern Siam. There is an unoccupied section on the Burmese border, but it has a small population. The great population areas are within the territory of the Church of Christ. One cannot say that the territory is occupied from the standpoint of a church membership in the towns and cities adequately meeting the challenge which they present. Less than five hundred members in the Thai church in Bangkok can hardly be a sufficient number to meet the call for evangelizing the half million Thai who are in the city, to say nothing of the more than half million Chinese. There are two relatively strong Chinese churches, and they are aggressively evangelistic.

The distribution of personnel, both foreign and national, is along geographical and functional lines. The Christian and Missionary Alliance workers are in the eastern part of the country, although very few of these have returned, and their number has never been very large. The American Presbyterian missionaries have been in two geographical centers; largely, the North and the South. Chiangmai has had a larger number of institutions and is also the center of the largest evangelistic effort. The number of workers in all fields of endeavor is too small, the lowest in many years, and the great effort is to get more missionaries and nationals into the service.

#### UNIQUE MEDICAL SERVICE

The medical work has played a great role in the relief of suffering, in the banishing of superstition regarding causes of disease, and in public health service, but also has been an integral part of the missionary enterprise in every station. Considering the medical needs of these communities and the inability of others to meet these needs, it seems that a rededication of these institutions to the full program of service in the name of Christ is called for. Care should be taken to see that they serve the total area by extension service in co-operation with field evangelists. Nationalization could be achieved more largely in medical work than in other departments.

One of the most spectacular demonstrations of Christian compassion and international friendship came to Siam early in 1946, when the Rev. Paul Eakin and Dr. E. C. Cort brought to this country nearly five tons of drugs—the gift of the churches of America to the people of Thailand. Four years of war and the oppression of enemy armies had denuded the country of drugs. Malaria was rampant; smallpox epidemic, and cholera, dysentery, and typhoid prevalent in every district. Quinine was available only in the black market, at a price of ten ticals (a dollar) a tablet. There were no sulpha compounds, few antiseptics, and no simple drugs such as epsom salts and soda bicarbonate.

Then Dr. Eakin flew in, with word that a ship was on the way from Singapore bringing five tons of drugs. Dr. Cort accompanied the precious shipment

lest the cargo be stolen and get into the black market. The ship arrived. The Director General of Customs and Minister of Finance were at the wharf to assure immediate clearance of the drugs duty free.

The King gave a dinner inviting Dr. Cort to outline a plan for distribution. Officials of the health and education departments gave full co-operation. Malaria was felt to be the major menace; sickness was so widespread that rice fields were not prepared. The first districts selected for work, therefore, were the great rice fields from Bangkok to Chiangmai.

Ten doctors from our mission hospitals worked with eight from the anti-malaria unit of the northern provinces. The territory was mapped out and a team assigned to each district under the direction of the governor. Local magistrates, with volunteers from schools and temples, notified the people, assigned meeting places, and prepared the records. When the team arrived with drugs, everything was ready for work. Villages came by turns, the lists prepared by local officials. Those too sick to come to the clinics were seen in their own homes. Records were completed with diagnosis and treatment, and in our missions files are the names of all treated with the medicines used.

In Bangkok there were over 1,000 cases of smallpox and cholera in the hospital for contagious diseases. Patients were dying by scores daily; the death rate for those with smallpox was 75%. Sulfadiazine reversed the rate; under this treatment, 75% recovered.

In the South, yaws and dysentery were prevalent. Daily clinics with free treatment were held in the dispensary, and in some local centers by the doctors; but the staff was so limited that team work through the provinces was impossible.

In one district, every person was sick with malaria—a total of 2,546 cases. Rice planting had stopped; no one was able to work. In a few days of treatment the epidemic was under control with very few deaths.

To date three shipments of drugs have arrived. Every hospital in the country has shared the contents. The Health Department was given a large amount for work under local health officers. Under the personal supervision of mission doctors, over 300,000 people were treated. Results were immediate. Recoveries were rapid. People went back to work. The rice fields were planted. The rains came. A bumper crop of rice was ready for harvest: without the drugs, without foresighted plans for distribution, without co-operation, a serious food shortage, possibly even famine, was inevitable. In addition, beyond the numbers cured directly, were thousands who benefited because the free drugs broke the black market. Prices of atabrine and quinine dropped to one per cent of the rates before the Christian shipment of medicines arrived.

The gratitude of the people on every hand is genuine and heartening. The Premier, the Minister of Health, the Minister of Agriculture and numerous princes have expressed their appreciation. Everywhere the medical work is acclaimed as the unique expression of Christianity. An editorial (written by a Buddhist) in a Thai news magazine, October 6, 1946, sums it up as follows: "The gift of the healer is perhaps the greatest of all gifts—and the most ennobling of human endeavors, the finest expression of the religious urge in man. Christian missions, which carry out extensive work all over the world, take this aspect of helping humanity as part and parcel of their work. In fact, the appeal which the western religions have made to the already religious east is mainly due to their disinterested endeavor in this respect.

"Three hundred thousand persons have been treated in one of the most widespread health campaigns ever undertaken in this country—startling successes have been recorded. The story is one for which the Missions and the churches can take the fullest pride in coming to the rescue of this country in time of dire need. Many gifts were given by the United Nations, but none more beneficial than these medicines—a base of life to hundreds of thousands of people. The work of the medical man is not always spectacular, but if there is anything that is enduring in the life of a nation it is this unspectacular activity. The nation has reason to be thankful to the Christian churches of the United States for the gift of the medicines, and to the American missionaries headed by Dr. Cort who made a success of utilizing it to the best effects."

The increase of tuberculosis during the war is most distressing. Christian workers from other stations—pastors, teachers, Bible women, and helpers—have been brought to McCormick Hospital for treatment from all the northern stations. More than twenty are in the wards now, taking space needed for acute medical and surgical cases. The hospital is overcrowded, and a waiting list grows longer each week. Since Chiangmai is the only station with a fully competent staff, it is impossible to refuse care to mission personnel; the building planned for 120 patients now cares for 160. (During the war, more than 2,000 were housed on the premises in military huts!)

Ten hospitals of the Siam Mission were equipped and functioning before the war. Of these one—Kiulung Kiang—was completely destroyed by fire. One, Petchaburi, is in use as a dormitory for the Boys' School. This leaves eight for rehabilitation. All need repairs, including walls, roofs, floors, paint, screens, and plumbing. All need replenishment of drugs and instruments.

The Siam Mission has for a hundred years given testimony to the three-fold character of the Christian faith expressed in preaching, teaching, and healing. This consistent witness has borne fruit and many have been added to the Church. Every station has included a hospital—except the capital city. In Bangkok alone there has been no provision for comprehensive medical care.

The greatest single medical need in Siam is a Christian Hospital at Bangkok. It presents both the greatest opportunity and the most urgent responsibility in Southeast Asia. The people are ready for it. The government has requested it. Officials, teachers, students, missionaries, all alike are eager and ready to co-operate.

The Siamese Christians appeal for a hospital as their greatest need. The Chinese who are more than sixty per cent of the population, urge the need and the opportunity. Their plight is most serious, for government institutions discriminate especially against them.

The government hospitals are overcrowded. There is no money available for new hospitals or other installations since the war. Bangkok has a great concentration of officials, educators, military and civilian employees—a greater number of influential people than any other city in the Kingdom. It is the only large capital city in the world without a good Christian hospital. For a century our Christian witness in Bangkok has been hampered for lack of the Christ-like gift of healing.

The power of God, the fullness of life, the expression of love in service, await this new channel for the healing of the maimed, the sick, the blind,—those to whom our Saviour ministered. He awaits our action. We must not fail Him—or the Siamese people.

## THE STRATEGIC FUNCTION OF MISSION SCHOOLS

We might appraise the mission schools in the light of the rather extended statement of aim as set forth in the Board's Manual:

1. The nurture of the children of the Christian community.
2. Finding and training Christian leaders for participation in family, community, vocational, church, and state life.
3. The evangelization of non-Christians.
4. The leavening of non-Christian society by imparting Christian ideals to all students in the school to the end of (1) abating the evils of society; (2) transforming the spirit of the local and national society; (3) facilitating the winning of others to Christ; (4) improving the Christian environment.

Taking these larger aims one by one and trying to apply them to the schools in Siam, we might make the following observations:

There were no figures given of the total number of school age children of Christian parents in Siam. It is evident that the number could be much larger. If all were in these schools, it might greatly change their atmosphere and ideals. This might make it necessary to spend more money on scholarships, but the investment would be worth it.

The present Christian leaders have come largely from our Christian schools or were trained in these schools. A dramatic example of the value of such training is the case of one family in Bangkok, where three of the sons are Christian leaders. College work, once it is started, will add to this number and to the effectiveness of such leaders.

The schools, over the years, have not been very effective as evangelizing agencies. In some instances, the Christian program has not been specially designed to bring about decisions for the Christian life. There have been outstanding examples of such decisions but, by and large, the number of those accepting the Christian way of life publicly has been very small.

It is evident that the Board has held through the years to the ideals set forth in the last of the aims for Christian schools given above and has taken seriously the several things which it believed could be done for a non-Christian country by the leavening effect of Christian schools. The Board has held, therefore, to the idea of making the facilities of these schools available to the children of non-Christian parents. This has been the policy in every Mission of the Board and has been true of the schools in Siam. The influence motive has been a conscious one. It may be argued that this motive has been too dominant but it has been justified. One of the graduates of Bangkok Christian College, in giving a word of welcome to the Deputation at a reception by the College, indicated that this had been true for himself and for many other graduates of the school. He said:

In a total war, no individual is exempt from the damage and ravages of war, the innocent as well as the guilty. It is indeed a regrettable fact.

Despite hardships and tribulations, one may find consolation in the fact that the work of the Mission carried on by the Thai people concerned, during the absence of the American missionaries, stood the test.

The Bangkok Christian College is one such institution of the Mission which has gone through fire and floods and has emerged from the war stronger and triumphant. Credit is due to its faculty and the many loyal BCC sons.

It is a fact to say that BCC has made not a small contribution to the building of the national life. It is here that most of us first learned the spirit of selfless service and sacrifice. What we are we owe a great deal to our Alma Mater who is ever so near and so dear to our hearts.

Now that BCC is entering the new era of its life, with its new plan and hopes, we feel that with your help and guidance our dream of a newer, bigger, and better BCC will come true. And I can assure you that any true and loyal sons of BCC shall not fail to rally around their Alma Mater.

The Mission and the devoted teachers are determined to make the schools serve the church and the community in all ways outlined by these Manual rules. It is certain that they have a great opportunity and should be supported. They will need to speed up the training program for Christian teachers and to be prepared for changes which may come in the demand for nationalization of the schools.

One aspect of the present situation is the continued and increasing use of English in the schools and in certain departments of the government. This is due partly to the increasing contacts with England and America. It is due also to the practical nature of the Siamese and their desire for an education in the quickest time which will fit them best to meet the needs of their country. We found in the government medical school that the major subjects were being taught in English, and that English itself was being taught to prepare the students for a better use of their text books. The missionaries are not unmindful of this favorable situation for the teaching of English. The schools of the Mission will try to meet this demand, and additional missionary teachers could be used to teach English and the subjects in English, especially the Bible.

#### PEN PICTURES OF SIAM STATIONS

Mrs. Paul Moser of the Deputation wrote from Chiangmai on November 5, 1946:

Chiangmai, in the heart of northern Siam, has been ten full delightful days for the Deputation. Here, as everywhere, we have seen and heard what the war meant in terms of people and property. We came into the railroad station, which was completely destroyed by American bombers as they drove out the Japanese. Chiangmai and the surrounding country has suffered less than any other place we have been. None of the buildings at Prince Royal's College for boys, Dara School for girls, McCormick Hospital, the church or missionaries' homes has been destroyed. All were taken over by the government and most of them occupied by Thai or Japanese soldiers.

Our first day in Chiangmai was Sunday. We could see the cross on the



church long before we arrived, for it rises far above the surrounding buildings and tree tops. We were told that the Japanese, following the policy of friendship with the Siamese, asked permission to use the church as barracks and to tear down the cross and place an anti-aircraft gun in the tower. They promised to pay for replacing the cross after the war was over. After the surrender, the men of the church demanded 29,000 ticals to replace the cross and compensate for other damage done and after considerable difficulty received half this amount.

Almost 1,000 people were packed into the church for the two-hour communion service. The men, in their white suits with a black band around the left arm—mourning for the king—sat on one side and the women in white blouses and black skirts on the other. Children of all ages were tucked here and there in between; many sat on the floor. How can they sit so still for so long? We wondered!

Three babies were baptized and twenty folk taken into the church membership. The communion service was very impressive; we shall long remember the happy faces of the elders—three of them women—as they passed among the people, and the prayer of the minister, in his lovely blue and white robe, as he held the cup before him in both hands: "We promise thee, Oh God, we will never forget your shed blood and great loving kindness to us." The whole congregation stayed for dinner, which was served in the spacious church yard.

The 38-acre campus of Prince Royal's College is enclosed with hibiscus hedges, and brilliant tropical flowers. Standing on the porch of the administration building, we looked at the wide expanse of smooth lawns, the curved walks, the rose beds, the stream with an arched bridge across it, the oval playing field surrounded by splendid buildings and a circle of tall palms and acacia trees. It was almost impossible to realize that a few months ago this same campus, after years of army occupation during which 2000 horses were stabled here, was a complete wreck. The transformation which has taken place represents a marvel of restoration within a brief period.

Before the war the enrollment was 642—now it is 748; a thousand boys wanted to enter but a limit of 750 was maintained. There are 26 teachers, 22 of whom are Christians. The boys from the Christian homes are here; many boys who cannot pay tuition are on scholarships. The sons of government officials and wealthy Buddhist families are also enrolled. One government official said, "When we learned America had not declared war on Siam though Siam had declared war on her, we knew America was just. When we knew of the atomic bomb we knew America was ahead in science and education, so we want our sons to go to the mission schools." Never has American prestige and influence been as widespread in Siam as now. The opportunities of Christian education are unlimited! Now is the time to prepare to meet the new demands of an awakened youth. If we wait it will be too late. "There is a great beginning here in Chiangmai, but we see clearly that it is not the beginning but the continuing of the same until it is thoroughly finished, which yieldeth the true glory."

At the beginning of Japanese occupation Prince Royal's College was closed and soldiers moved in and took over all the buildings. A preparatory school for the University in Bangkok was established by the government which said the head teacher and staff would have to become Buddhist to remain. "That finished us for we would never give up Christ." were the words the head teacher used

in explaining how they met the situation. The depth of their faith was revealed during those war years; now their one purpose is to build a greater Prince Royal's College.

Central in the life of the campus is the chapel. Each school day begins with a service in the sanctuary. We watched several hundred Siamese boys file into the church and sit, alert and eager—yet very quietly—facing the beautiful altar. At the back of the chancel are three niches, the center one holding the cross, the one on the right a seven-branch candelabra and the one on the left the tree of life. It is a right and good setting for boys, the fulfillment of whose need and search for God is the mission of the school.

Dara Academy for girls prepared to open in six weeks, after the buildings had been occupied for three years by Thai soldiers. Kru Boachome, head teacher, and two others are the only pre-war teachers; fifteen are new. The enrollment is 360, 25 of whom are boarders. During the first months of school there was much sickness, especially malaria among the teachers and students; there was no housemother; there were the new teachers to direct and her own classes to teach, but Kru Boachome has worked at top speed, taking no vacation even during the extreme heat, and now has the school well organized and ready for new advances. Kru Boachome was head teacher at Dara for eight years then went to Silliman University in the Philippines and was studying there when the war came. She was finally returned by the Japanese. It was indeed fortunate she was here to take charge when Dara reopened. It is the wish of all that she have the opportunity to continue her education abroad, preferably in the States.

McCormick Hospital is by far the largest, best equipped and staffed hospital we have seen. Dr. and Mrs. Cort have poured 38 years of love and service into the building of an institution to be an enduring witness to the God of mercy and love. Just to know that the hospital has 17 buildings with 160 beds staffed by two doctors and 4 internes; 12 staff and 39 student nurses; and 111 other workers, all caring for 4,000 patients this year, is only a part of the glorious chapter written by McCormick Hospital.

One Sunday afternoon we drove out six miles to the Leper Colony to attend church service. The church, hospital, school, administration buildings, and homes are built on a large island in the Maa Ping River, and on each side of the road are the attractive cottages which house the lepers. The need of paint is evident wherever we go, for none has been available during or since the war, but nowhere else have we wished for it more. The little cottages, each with its own yard full of beautiful flowers and ferns and surrounded by tall palms, banana trees, and always the hibiscus hedges, needed only white paint on the cottages to complete the picture. The people were seated on mats on the floor and porches when we arrived. The calm stillness was not broken by our entrance. Hundreds of eyes greeted us without stir or confusion. There are 339 in the Asylum and all except a very few are Christians. They had little care during the three years of war and were under pressure because of their faith. Only five denied Christ. The minister announced these five had asked forgiveness and were coming back into the church. During the opening worship service we watched the people. They sang the hymns quietly and reverently; all leaned forward almost to the floor during prayers.

We wondered that they found living good enough to sing "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow." After the opening service sixty-three stood up and took the vows of church membership. Then they began to come, one after the

other, kneeling before Dr. Wysham to be baptized. Many almost in rags, some quite well dressed, and all immaculately clean. Eight were young men around twenty-five; there was no evidence of disease in them; they were as handsome and manly as any we have seen anywhere. Ten were women in white blouses and hand-woven skirts of red, purple and black. As Dr. Wysham put his hand on each of the sixty-three heads and said, "Child of God, I baptize thee in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost," a new sense of what it means to be a Child of God came to all of us. It was one of the high and holy hours we have had during these past months.

Immediately following this, the Lord's Supper was served. The elders were all lepers—four men and four women. Many in the congregation had to have the bread put into their mouths and the wine poured on their tongues for they had no hands or fingers. Through our tears we watched one elder, with toeless feet, thumping among his friends, carrying the symbol of the broken body of Christ. We have heard many times that "Chiengmai Leper Asylum is the most beautiful in the world" and as we rode away in the quick-falling night, we understood why that is true—not alone because of the lovely setting for the splendid buildings but because the Gospel of healing and love is being demonstrated in a truly beautiful way.

Our third worship service for the week was in the village church of San Sai. The church was crowded. There were as many children as women or men. A map drawn on a blackboard attracted our attention. Using the San Sai church as a center, lines had been drawn out to twenty-eight other villages where volunteers, usually elders, had preached, taught, and established churches. 509 new converts have been baptized in these places the past year and 207 in the San Sai church. A government official gave the address of welcome, part of which we share: "In behalf of the members of this church, I feel it the greatest honor for your visiting our small community today. During the global war, everybody calmly maintained his faith. We have had prayer meetings (without any hymns) in every Christian house in turn. When we were allowed to open the gate of the temple eighteen months ago, we began to hold service in the church with the aim of revival—we decided that some of our elders should take it as their duty to go out preaching the Gospel. We will not forget to inform the committee that the clothing and medicines sent to us by our American friends for the poor and sick have been thankfully received and distributed accordingly. According to Matthew 9:37—'The harvest is plentiful and high at hand, but the labourers are few'; so we supplicate the Board to see to this, too."

Dr. William N. Wysham wrote of Chiengrai, near the Chinese border, on Oct. 28, 1946:

I was the only member of the deputation able to visit Chiengrai, the farthest north station in Siam, 150 miles beyond Lampang. All the transportation between the two points is by truck, and the one I boarded took more than sixteen hours to make the trip, cursed as it was with a legacy of Japanese tires and a charcoal-burning engine devised by our late enemy.

The one day I spent at Chiengrai will always stand out in my memory. Here is a station so solidly built by the missionaries who have resided there that it came through the terrific ordeal of the war with flying colors. In particular, what I found is a great tribute to the devoted service of the late Reverend Ray W.

Bachtell and Mrs. Bachtell, who has recently returned to the field alone, and of Dr. and Mrs. W. H. Beach, now retired, at Overbrook Hospital.

During the war years and since, the church in Chiengrai has carried on alone. Their church building and grounds were used as a drinking and gambling center by army forces. Every Christian was under heavy pressure to renounce his faith and return to Buddhism. Some yielded, but the church as a whole stood firm. As soon as the war ended, they reclaimed their place of worship. They raised a great sum to cleanse the desecrated church building and I found it fully restored, with a well kept lawn and flower beds around it. On a weekday afternoon 100 Christians came to worship, and to greet me as the Board's representative.

Overbrook Hospital was used as a military hospital during the war. A faithful assistant stood by through five years and, now that it is again ready to turn back to the Mission, he has cleaned it from top to bottom. It will need repairs after heavy wear and tear and is largely stripped of its equipment, but it was easy for me to visualize this pathetically empty building as again providing the city and a wide outfield with a demonstration of Christ as the great Healer and Saviour.

The high point of Christian service in Chiengrai I found in the school. Surely it is second to none in all Siam. It now uses five buildings and needs more. I visited 22 crowded classrooms with pupils in ten grades—735 of them in all. It is twice as large as the government school. It was the first complete co-educational school in Siam. One hundred of the students are Christians, and 19 of the 25 teachers, both of these very high proportions here. There is regular Bible study, for all the school radiates a Christian atmosphere. The war has left it with many needs as to property and equipment but the esprit de corps is extraordinary.

The school has come through the war so well mainly because of the devotion of the principal, Kru Amorn Doungnatra, and his able wife. The day the Japanese army arrived, they conferred and prayed together. Young and with seven small children, they yet came to the heroic conclusion that they were ready to be shot rather than deny Christ. The test came the next day. The Siamese Commissioner of Education, under Japanese orders, told Kru Amorn that he must replace all Christian teachers with Buddhists. He replied that he would resign first. It was suggested that he and the teachers merely say they were Buddhists. "That," said he, "would be easy, but with what result? I am a third-generation Christian and if I deny Jesus Christ, neither you nor anyone else will ever trust me. I will be unworthy to remain principal and, if I am ready to be a traitor to my religion, I will be just as ready to betray my country." There was no answer to this and, since nearly all the children of the officials themselves were in the school, it continued as a Christian institution throughout the war. Its prestige also protected the Church from severe persecution and served to keep the Christian community together.

My day in Chiengrai ended with a dinner given by Christian leaders to honor me as the representative of the American church. The Governor and Commissioner of Education, both Buddhists, were present and the former spoke warmly of missionary service as he hung a garland around my neck. In my response, I told them all of the affection of American Christians for Siam and our conviction that this land can only progress in freedom and democracy as it receives the Christian gospel which has been America's greatest blessing.

## THE OPPORTUNITY AND THE STRATEGY

In a final letter Dr. Wysham summed up the conclusions of the Deputation:

Post-war Siam seems to us to be as ready for the positive proclamation of the Gospel of Christ as any strongly Buddhist country could be. The welcome accorded to American missionaries by Christians and Buddhists alike upon their return surely has few parallels in missionary history, and we have shared in this open-hearted friendliness. We have met cabinet ministers and other men of high rank in the capital, and governors, princes, commissioners of education and other officials all over the country; one and all they have gone out of their way to be friendly and have been profuse in their expressions of appreciation for what our missionary work has meant to Siam. Speaking at one of the receptions given for us, the Buddhist governor of a province put it this way: "I wish to express the gratitude of the Siamese people for all the missionaries have done and hope for the full fruition of all they wish to accomplish." Always we were happy to tell of the friendship of Christian people in America for Siam and to assure them that we would convey their thanks and good wishes to you at home.

One of the missionaries who knows intimately the trends in Siam during the war and since peace came, has summed up for us the reasons for the new interest in Christianity which is apparent everywhere, though Bangkok itself, as a great port city, naturally lags behind provincial areas somewhat in this regard. He cites four causes for the new interest: (1) A reaction from the wartime political persecution of Christians due to Japanese pressure. Thinking Siamese are not proud of this break in their traditional good record as to religious liberty and some of them are investigating the religion whose adherents so generally stood fast. (2) The fact that the United States ignored Siam's declaration of war on us and, immediately after hostilities ceased, announced publicly that Siam must be a free and sovereign nation. Missionaries here are Americans and, while they proclaim Christianity apart from their nationality, America's friendship for Siam certainly aids the missionary cause. (3) The realization by the Siamese during the war that, with the departure of the missionaries, their educational and medical needs, especially in northern Siam, were not being met. They awoke to a new appreciation of what missionary work stands for and are open to its full meaning now that missionary service is renewed. (4) The courage of the thousands of Christians who stood firm, often at the risk of their lives. Today these are showing new leadership and have a passion to share the Gospel which meant everything to them in time of trial. Many tell stories of direct answers to prayer and of miraculous escapes from bombs and other dangers, and it is impossible to meet with instances of this without the conviction that God cared for these harried Christians in a very special way. By their side witness many who wavered during the war, but who have in shame now repented publicly in the church fellowship and have thus found new evangelistic zeal.

Along with this, there is a widespread feeling among Buddhists that they received little or no spiritual help from their religion in wartime and find even less today, when moral collapse is rampant and post-war needs press in upon the nation. To these the prompt return of the missionaries with all the help and promise of the Gospel represents a vivid contrast. Recently a Siamese-speaking representative of the American government was conversing with a priest in a

Buddhist temple. The latter said: "Our people come to us now and ask why it is that Buddhism is doing nothing for us, while these Christians are tireless in their help." For all these and doubtless other reasons we found the schools crowded with eager, open-minded boys and girls and most of the churches already recovered from the inevitable loss of membership in war years and driving forward in a new evangelism. This is true even in the South, where Buddhism has always been stronger; but in the North, post-war spiritual developments have all the marks of the beginning of a great evangelistic movement. We might cite many experiences as proof of this fact, but one that stands out in our memory was a country parish we visited on a Thursday morning for lack of any other free time. Two church groups united in a service which 125 village people left their work to attend. Of these 27, nearly all young people, had just been won to Christ and baptized. A few miles away we found a branch of this church, probably the newest Christian group in Siam. The first convert was a young man, formerly a Buddhist priest. Recently he found a Bible portion, then hunted two months before he met a Christian elder. By that time he had been ready for instruction and now there are twelve Christians in the group, including an aged woman. The whole village came to hear us speak—more than 100 people. It was evident that hundreds, perhaps thousands, of similar villages are ready to hear the Gospel, if only there was a way of reaching them.

After the war the Siam Mission is but a semblance of its former self in point of personnel. In 1920 there were 93 missionaries on the roll. After the depression years this dropped to 73 in 1939, and today in 1946 there is a total of 31 either on the field or about to come out soon. Of these, nine have only one more five-year term to serve. Retirement and war-related causes have taken a terrific toll of the Siam Mission, and the present staff is absolutely inadequate in numbers to meet the situation in any of the departments of missionary service. New recruits are now being appointed and four are expected to arrive soon, but the Board and our great Church behind it must take heroic measures to build up the Siam Mission that, after more than a century of sowing, it may reap the harvest now so evidently ripening.

After a month of the closest contacts with such opportunities and needs as these, we of the deputation entered upon the conference period which marked the climax of our visitation of this field.

The conference began with several days when representatives from the eight districts of the Church of Christ in Siam conferred together on church matters while at the same time every missionary now on the field met with the Board deputation to discuss the re-establishment of the Siam Mission after nearly five years that it has ceased to function because of the war. Afterwards the two groups, about eighty in all, met for four days in a formal planning conference looking forward to the post-war period. Six committees conferred on the varied types of missionary endeavor, and on Church-Mission relations. Then the conference as a whole discussed the committee recommendations, adopting them in their final form to go the Board, as the basis of the new program for Siam.

We of the deputation are convinced that the conference stimulated fresh thinking about old problems and renewed the fellowship between missionary and national in a most wholesome way. Two of the committees had Siamese as chairmen; discussion in both committee and on the conference floor was full, free and frank. One able woman elder felt no inhibitions in telling the

deputation and all others at the conference the kind of missionaries she felt the Siamese Church would welcome in the future. A real step forward in Church-Mission relations was taken in a carefully worked-out plan for joint advisory committees, with an equal number of nationals and missionaries, to serve in the important fields of evangelism, education, medical work and Christian literature. Many recommendations were made looking forward to a better-trained ministry, a better-instructed membership, more highly trained teachers and doctors, and greater emphasis on youth and women's work. The need for two colleges, one in Bangkok and one in Chiangmai, to meet the situation in Christian higher education was discussed at greater length than any other topic, and the conference voted in favor of opening both in 1948, with a priority for Chiangmai if only one could be established now. The conference also asked for a 100-bed hospital in Bangkok, where the Board has never had any hospital work in all the decades of its service in Siam.

Perhaps the most thoroughly thought-out plan for the future was for a comprehensive program of Christian literature and literacy. All stocks of literature were destroyed in the war so that everything must be begun new. To that end the conference requested that the Rev. Paul A. Eakin, who was born in Siam, use his linguistic talents in this service and give full time to creating a whole new literature.

There were many interesting and able men and women in the national group at the conference. We felt that on the whole, lay representatives, a number of whom are principals of Christian schools or doctors in Christian hospitals, showed more leadership than the pastors and evangelists. This pointed up the crying need of a better trained ministry and, for that reason, one of the most significant actions of the conference was a recommendation for a seminary to include academic college courses and supervision of field work with the usual theological subjects.

In a very true sense this significant conference marks the beginning of the second century of Presbyterian work in Siam. Prior to 1846, Bangkok was used as a springboard to closed China and one Presbyterian couple had worked here for a brief period, but it was the Rev. and Mrs. Stephen Mattoon and Dr. Samuel R. House who founded permanent work. Exactly one hundred years ago they were on their way to Bangkok. They and hundreds of others who followed them have been the human agents for the founding of a Church which has now survived a catastrophic war. If our Church in America will but bring its Mission up to adequate strength, this Church may well win all Siam for Christ before the second century of service has ended.