

AN
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TO
EASTERN ASIA

TRANS-CONTINENTAL CONNECTIONS
BETWEEN EUROPE & ASIA

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EAST INDIES

INCLUDING

Philippine Islands, French Indo-China, Siam, Malay Peninsula,
and Dutch East Indies



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The seacoast of French Indo-China, which stretches from N. to S. in an S-shaped line, is 2,500 km. in length. Mostly throughout this coast-line, except at the delta plains of Tongking and Cochin-China, high cliffs fringe the shore, but at the mouths of large rivers the lands are so even and level that no shelter is found for ships, the latter being obliged to proceed up the river mouth in order to find an anchoring place, for example, Hai-phong and Saigon, the latter being 65 km. inland and one of the finest natural harbours in the Far East.

III. Flora and Fauna. As French Indo-China has a warm, moist climate, the land is favoured by luxuriant vegetation. In the mountain districts, a large part of their area is under forests, viz. N. parts of Tongking, Laos, Annam, and N.E. parts of Cochin-China. The jungles of the low-lands, with their thick growth of brushwood, are impenetrable and unexploitable, but the forests which are higher up contain an inexhaustible supply of fine timber and also afford access to wood-cutters. Of the timber trees, the more important kinds are the teak, *tau*, *lim*, *sen*, *tram*, *latania* (*latanier*), tamarind (*tamarinier*), and ebony (*ébénier*), besides many kinds of bamboos. Among fruit trees may be mentioned mangostine (*mangoustanier*), mango-tree (*manguier*), banana-tree (*bananier*).

Indo-China also has a rich fauna. There abound the tiger, leopard, bear, rhinoceros, wild boar, buffalo, fox, monkey, badger, and deer; and of birds, the peacock, falcon, eagle, and partridge. In a word, the country offers ideal facilities for game-shooting.

IV. Inhabitants. The population of French Indo-China consists of Annamese, Cambodians, Tais, Chams, and aborigines (*Man*, *Méos*, *Lolo*, etc.). Of these the Annamese are the most numerous, aggregating as many as 15,000,000; the Cambodians come next, with 1,300,000, followed by the Tais with 1,110,000, and the Chams 100,000; the aborigines are estimated to number 500,000. Besides these, there are about 300,000 Chinese and other Asiatics, 15,000 Europeans, and 40,000 Eurasians. Taken altogether the inhabitants of French Indo-China number about 18,370,000, which gives an average of 24 people per kilometre. Further, as to their distribution, the Annamese live mostly in Tongking, Annam, and Cochin-China, the Cambodians in Cambodia, the Tais in Laos, the Chams in Cochin-China and a part of Cambodia; the aborigines live scattered among the mountains of the interior.

Among these native races, the Annamese are more civilized than any others. Through the experience of many generations they make a good agricultural population, but show little aptitude for trade. Throughout Indo-China trade is in the hands of the Chinese. The Tais live apparently by preference in mountain districts, where they keep cattle and make hunting their chief occupation; they are far below the Annamese in the scale of civilization. The Cambodians engage in forestry, agriculture, fishery, and hunting.

V. Political Organization. French Indo-China, which comprises the colony of Cochin-China, the protectorates of Annam, Cambodia,