

MAUVAIS VERS

Dix officiers se reconnaîtront-ils dans les lignes suivantes:

Léger comme un oiseau chanteur,
 Notre futur ambassadeur
 Se fait de grandes illusions.
 Il sue et besogne à foison.
 Le froid, le chaud, il les dédaigne!
 Pour lui, nulle chape de laine,
 Et puis, nulle chape ultra-chaude,
 Quoiqu'au East Block il soit à l'aube.
 Nulle barrière semble arrêter
 Son élan vers l'immortalité.
 A l'offre d'un poste d'Attaché,
 "Qu'à Dieu ne plaise!" dit-il, outré!
 Accepterait-il la Turquie?
 Notre homme cette fois, casi conquis,
 Avec le bey, doors et déjà,
 Se voit en tenue d'apparat.
 Désire la France, puis le Pérou,
 Rejète les deux, et nous rend fous.
 Se dit blessé d'être méconnu,
 Et vante partout ses vertus.
 Si coter sa pleine valeur
 Est défendu par la pudeur,
 Notre homme est coupable cent fois,
 Mais innocent devant la loi.
 On essaie de le mettre au pas,
 Faire le beau ne lui plaît pas.
 Veut toujours mieux, attend son dû,
 Puis déjà vieux, sourd et chenu,
 Doit s'contenter du Zanzibar,
 Voilà le sort des matamores.

LIZARDS BRING LUCK IN FRIENDLY LAOS

As the plane circled to land at Vientiane I saw a sleepy town strung out along the Mekong river with hills in the background. It all looked charming. Everyone at the airport seemed glad to see me and a friendly feeling permeates the entire Canadian colony here. It is partly this that makes Vientiane such a nice place to be. There is absolutely no bickering, no disgruntled persons and everyone seems quite content to be here and to be doing a good job of work.

The Laotian Government built a new building for an office (later it will be used as a school). It consists of about 10 rooms leading off a wide veranda. The rooms connect or you can walk along this veranda. The building (as are most here) is raised up on cement pillars about 10' above ground because of the heavy rains during the rainy season beginning in May. The rooms are all light and airy. The partitions are of woven bamboo, the floors of wide boards covered with brightly coloured straw mats. We look out onto some Laotian houses and as Laotians do most of their living out of doors, and as the road nearby shows a steady stream of water-buffalo drawn carts, bicycles, jeeps, trucks and so on, it is sometimes hard to concentrate on typing. The office furniture was supplied by the French and is quite adequate. There is usually a breeze as our offices are on the second-floor level. At the present time we work from 8:30 to 1 and go back after lunch and stay until around 6:30 or 7:00 if there is much work. That is about as long as anyone can work here, as the heat is too enervating. We all take a siesta during the afternoon and feel it if we don't. We work Saturdays in the morning only, although last Saturday we worked in the afternoon also - it all depends on how much work there is to do.

The staff live in various places. Mr. Mayrand and General Morton have a house. Mr. Ballachey and a couple of the others also live in a house, but eat with us. The senior army officers live above the mess. The rest of us live in what is known as the "Bungalow". Actually it is a hotel, two-storeys, set in its own grounds and not at all bad. A number of Poles and Indians live here also. We all eat at the army mess which is about half a block away from the Bungalow. It is divided into two parts - one for the NCO's and the other for the Officers and External personnel. The same kitchen and staff serve both. The Officer's mess is a large room with dining table at one end and easy chairs at the other with a wide screened veranda running all around the outside. It is bright and quite cheery. There is a move on foot just