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OPPORTUNITY ABROAD IN AGRICULTURE EDUCATION

DAVID G. TUTTLE*

From the steaming jungles of the Congo to the mountains of Tibet lie countless challenges for anyone pioneering in agricultural work. In many of these areas agriculture exists today as it was two thousand years ago. Also this type of pioneer work offers the romance of traveling and meeting people in other lands.

Educationally speaking, the requirements are rather rigid. A Master of Science degree in agriculture is essential. One should also be at least 25 years old both for the sake of maturity and also to establish prestige in other countries, which is a matter of vital importance.

A Bachelor's degree in Agricultural Education will get one a teaching certificate honored in almost all countries. Preferably for the Master's degree, one should major in Agronomy or Soils with minors in Animal Husbandry, Dairy Husbandry, Agricultural Engineering or Agricultural Economics. This allows one to specialize and yet be able to adapt himself to almost all situations presented.

As an agricultural specialist, one has little trouble obtaining positions with foreign governments or private concerns.

One such type of work may be as a plantation or ranch manager: this may mean working with sugar cane, pineapples, rubber, cattle, hogs or some other similar enterprise. This position usually offers an excellent salary with one or two months paid vacation per year.

One may act as a foreman or may do just supervisory work. A foreman will do most or all of the planning, budgeting and analyzing and see that it is properly carried out. All labor disputes will come to him for settlement. Generally speaking, the people in tropical areas are not in-

terested in working beyond what is needed for existence. Absenteeism is common, as a native often will go to his tribe for a few days whenever he has the desire.

Another type of work offered is research. A soils man in tropical areas would find soil high in phosphates and low in humus and essential minerals due to many centuries of leaching by tropical rains. Besides discovering deficiencies, he has the tremendous problem of restoring needed elements and yet making it practical for the native to undertake this soil amendment. Furthermore, he has to interest the native in doing so. In mountainous areas, terracing designs would delight the soul of the engineer. The agronomist has the opportunity of developing improved varieties of crops already being used and possibly introducing other crops which may prove advantageous. The animal breeder has problems in the tropics with sleeping sickness and insect infestation, whereas in mountainous areas he has to breed for resistance to extreme temperatures and ruggedness of build.

A third type is advisory work. Here one spends most of his time traveling, lecturing to groups and conversing with agricultural leaders in each area about new methods and techniques in agriculture.

In another phase of work the Agricultural Missionary tries to do all the aforementioned types of work and yet works with the individual native. It is an excellent way of gaining the confidence of the natives as they can see he is interested in them and is willing to do something for them. While working with the natives he has an excellent opportunity of telling them the plan of salvation as taught by the Bible.

* Mr. Tuttle is a graduate of the department of Agricultural Education. He is doing graduate work in Agronomy in preparation for work as an agricultural missionary.

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THE STAFF

LAUREN GRANGER GORDON SWANSON
HARRY KITTS A. M. FIELD
M. J. PETERSON, *Editor*

An example of the approach which may be used is to aid the native in improving his diet. The main constituent of the diet of the Congolese people is commonly known as the *Kassaba Root*. It is very high in starch and so sticky that the natives cannot chew it but merely swallow it. They raise very few vegetables and meat is scarce enough so that they eat rats, mice, and snakes. Because of a diet high in starch, many natives are literally potbellied. To counteract this the missionary may be able to introduce different varieties of vegetables to be grown by the natives and possibly teach them to grow adapted domesticated animals other than goats and a few battered chickens.

Many teaching positions are offered, either for the government worker or missionary. In many countries there are now tremendous demands for college instructors to train the local people because of the new awakening in agriculture since the war. Also arising with these demands are opportunities for pioneering in group activities with young people similar to our F.F.A., F.H.A., or 4-H clubs.

A few words of caution to anyone anticipating going into foreign countries. Do not go with the idea of westernizing their agriculture. They may or may not accept it. Also many areas will not afford utilization of extensive mechanized equipment as used in this country. Go with the idea of learning from the people first and then using your technical knowledge to improve their agricultural practices.

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Agriculture for the School Year 1953-54

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NOTICE TO AGRICULTURAL TEACHERS

Free copies of our periodical **AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH**, beginning with the December 1953 issue, will be available on request to all teachers of vocational agriculture.

Heretofore, copies have been distributed to only about 40 percent of the teachers. A recently approved increase in printing authorization will permit all vo-ag teachers to receive it.

Requests to be placed on the mailing list should be addressed to the Editor, **AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH**, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D.C.