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THE FUNCTION OF CHRISTIAN AGRICULTURAL  
MISSIONS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, WITH  
SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NATAL.

By

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A Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for  
THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF SACRED THEOLOGY  
in  
The Biblical Seminary in New York

New York, N. Y.  
April 1947

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Completion of This  
Seminary Course

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

A. Statement of the Problem . . . . .	1
B. Justification of the Problem . . . . .	11
C. Definition of Terms . . . . .	111
D. Delimitation of the Problem . . . . .	111
E. Method of Procedure . . . . .	iv
F. Sources of Data . . . . .	v

CHAPTER I

THE AGRICULTURE OF THE NATIVE OF NATAL

A. Introduction . . . . .	1
B. Before European influence, about 1850 . . . . .	2
1. The Production of Crops . . . . .	2
a. The implements used in working the land . . . . .	2
b. The place and method of cultivation . . . . .	2
c. The kind of crops raised . . . . .	5
d. The enemies and the protection of the crops . . . . .	5
e. The superstitions and ceremonies connected with the production of crops . . . . .	7
2. The Raising of Cattle . . . . .	11
a. The size and use . . . . .	12
b. The supplying of food for the cattle . . . . .	13
c. The appearance of the cattle . . . . .	13
d. The deep affection toward the cattle . . . . .	14
e. The superstition regarding disease . . . . .	15
f. The enemies and protection of the cattle . . . . .	16
C. Some Present Day Problems . . . . .	16
1. Cattle Ownership . . . . .	16
a. Milk production and distribution . . . . .	16
b. Uneven distribution of ownership . . . . .	17
c. Over-stocking and soil erosion . . . . .	18
2. Population Density . . . . .	19
3. Soil Exhaustion Because of Poor Cultivators . . . . .	19
4. Lack of Workable Land . . . . .	20
5. Migrant Labor System . . . . .	21
6. Unsatisfactory System of Land Tenure . . . . .	21
7. Education has been Bookish . . . . .	22
8. Superstitions and Meager Existence . . . . .	22
D. Summary . . . . .	23

*June 2, 1948*

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## CHAPTER II

### SOME AGRICULTURAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF SELECTED MISSIONS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

A. Introduction . . . . .	24
B. Old Umtali . . . . .	24
C. Central Training School at Kambini . . . . .	27
D. Projects in Angola, Portuguese West Africa . . . . .	31
1. Galangue. . . . .	31
2. Dondi . . . . .	33
a. Currie Institute . . . . .	33
b. Means School . . . . .	35
3. Kamundongo Station . . . . .	35
4. Sachikela Station . . . . .	35
5. Bailundo. . . . .	36
E. Mariannahill Institute and Adams College . . . . .	36
1. Mariannahill Institute . . . . .	36
2. Adams College . . . . .	37
F. Mt. Silinda Institute and Chickore Station . . . . .	38
1. Mt. Silinda Institute . . . . .	38
2. Chickore Station. . . . .	40
G. Summary. . . . .	41

## CHAPTER III

### EVANGELISM WITH AGRICULTURE AS AN AID

A. Introduction . . . . .	42
B. The Place of the Church in Evangelism . . . . .	42
C. What is Evangelism . . . . .	45
D. Agriculture as an Aid to Evangelism . . . . .	47
E. Scientific Agriculture is not Evangelism . . . . .	50
F. Summary. . . . .	51

## CHAPTER IV

### THE FUNCTION OF AGRICULTURAL MISSIONS IN REACHING THE WHOLE LIFE

A. Introduction . . . . .	52
B. Agriculture in Providing Farm Home and Farm Family . . . . .	53
C. Guidance in Wider Distribution of Private Property . . . . .	55
D. Principle of Cooperation . . . . .	57
E. Recognition of Holy Earth . . . . .	58
F. Agriculture as a Means of Labor . . . . .	59
G. Summary. . . . .	61

CHAPTER V

GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A. Purpose Restated . . . . .	63
B. General Summary . . . . .	63
C. Conclusions . . . . .	65

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Primary Sources . . . . .	66
B. Secondary Sources . . . . .	69

## INTRODUCTION

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Statement of the Problem

Wherever there is sufficient mantle of soil, sufficient moisture either by rainfall or by irrigation, and enough light and warmth supplied by the sun, men till the land. Some do not produce enough to furnish sufficient food for their own families; others contribute their products to the life of other people and in return receive for their own use products of the toil of other men. Some of them live in isolation; others live in villages. Some have adequate homes, educational opportunities, and medical care; many more live in poverty and under the shadow of disease. Some till their farms with small wooden ploughs and oxen; others use tractors. Some have free access to as much land as each will cultivate; others find their small inherited farms becoming smaller with each generation. Some must supplement their limited income through work away from the farm. Across most of the fields of the earth farmers fight excessive loss of fertile soil by erosion, while in the valley of the Nile other farmers see fertility of their fields annually renewed by the silt left by receding flood-waters of the river. These are the rural people of the earth. We would see them know Christ.<sup>1</sup>

Christian missions date back to the Gospel of the New Testament where the twelve original disciples after Jesus' refusal in His own country, responded to Jesus' commission. "He called unto him twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits."<sup>2</sup> The work of Christian missions has made an impression upon the world, in some places radical changes,

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1. Rural Mission Cooperating Committee of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, New York; The Christian Mission Among Rural People, p. 3
2. Bible: King James Version, Book of Mark, Chap.6, Verse 7



while in other places missions have produced a change of heart attitudes, but no real transformation in social conditions. The latter failure resulted many times in convert's leaving their new-found faith and adopting paganism and superstition once more.

But where does scientific agriculture fit into the plan, "We would see them know Christ"? It may be said that the Gospel without its implication is not enough, but one must be equally careful about emphasizing social work such as training men, "how to do things", before the heart is changed. What, then, is the relation of agriculture as an aid to Evangelism? What is the function of agriculture as an aid to the Gospel in reaching the whole life?

For the answer of these two questions, this thesis proposes that scientific agriculture is a vital aid in the promotion of evangelism among the people of Natal and in the maintenance of normal living so as to establish the Christian convert.

#### B. Justification of the Problem

The importance of agriculture in relation to Christian missions is everywhere recognized. "In relatively unindustrialized countries like India and China, rural people account for seventy-five percent of all people. In parts of Africa, the percentage of rural people runs even

higher."<sup>1</sup> Natal is chiefly an agricultural province.

It is admitted that libraries are overflowing with books dealing with agriculture and Christian Missions, but only a few of those have viewed agriculture as an aid to Evangelism and maintaining Christian living. Therefore, this is a subject worthy of study.

#### C. Definition of Terms

The tendency in many cases has been to call the setting forth of scientific agriculture, evangelism, but a correct view of agriculture and evangelism must be grounded upon a proper interpretation of the terms.

"Evangelism" is the ecclesiastical word standing for a method of earnest presentation and appeal in preaching or promulgation of the Gospel. In using the term "social work" one must think of it as doing something physically to change the culture or environment of certain people. The meaning of "agriculture" is the working of the soil and raising of animals and crops. "Reaching the whole life" takes in meeting every need of an individual, spiritual, economic, racial, social, etc.

#### D. Delimitation of the Problem

The function of Christian Agricultural Missions

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1. Rural Missions Cooperating Committee of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, op. cit. p. 4

in Southern Africa covers such a broad field that it is impossible to do justice to the entire section. Therefore, it becomes necessary to limit the subject to certain definite lines of research, namely, with special reference to Natal, a province within the Union of South Africa.

In this study the subject of agriculture will be discussed as it relates to and lays a foundation for the promulgation of the Gospel. Therefore, it has been necessary to give historical background of the agriculture of the pagans and also of the work accomplished by agricultural missions.

#### E. Method of Procedure

After sufficient insight into the agriculture of the natives of Natal, namely the Zulus and Kafirs, prior to 1850 before European influence, it will be seen how some of the present day agricultural problems are similar to those of earlier days. This treatment will be followed by showing what Christian missions have already done by way of agriculture in the promoting of missions and lifting the social conditions of men. Next it will be the purpose of this thesis to show the aid agriculture lends toward the promotion of evangelism. Last but not least, there will be an explanation of the effect agriculture has with the Gospel in reaching the whole life.

#### F. Source of Data

The principal sources of information for such a study are naturally found in records left by those who themselves made history. Some of these have long since gone to their reward, while others are still on the field or on furlough. Such material is found in journals, books, magazines, and letters. Some of the problems were found in pamphlets put out by the government and health authorities of Natal. Still other sources used in discussion are taken from books having their origin entirely in the United States. Very helpful have been personal interviews and close connection with "Agricultural Missions Inc." and the "African Committee of Foreign Missions Conference" both of which have their offices at 156 Fifth Ave., New York City.

CHAPTER I

THE AGRICULTURE OF THE NATIVE OF NATAL

## CHAPTER I

### THE AGRICULTURE OF THE NATIVE OF NATAL

#### A. Introduction

To know the historical background of agriculture is one thing, but to understand the situation as it faces us today is quite another thing, especially, in reference to the Kafirs and Zulus of Natal, both members of the most intelligent and powerful of the Bantu races of South Africa. These are in type, culture and language identical to each other. In order to understand the primitive agriculture of these people, a study of farming prior to the European influence, about 1850, will be discussed. It is, also, important in light of the past to present some of the problems current today.

## B. Before European Influence About 1850

Originally the natives were fighters and hunters. Cattle and game supplied the few wants. The men herded the cattle and milked the cows.

### 1. The production of the crops.

The women were servants of the men and especially if they were their wives. Each one had her own little hut and particular work to do. The little planting which had to be done was assigned to the women.

#### a. Implements used in working the land.

The equipment used in tilling the soil was very primitive and crude. It could be said, that if the assagai and shield were symbolical of the man, the hoe certainly was emblematic of the woman. The hoe was a hewn stone, later it became an iron blade purchased mostly from European traders. The handle was a long stick being big on the end attached to the hoe, and smaller where one gripped it.<sup>1</sup>

#### b. The place and method of cultivation.

The fields were all shapes and sizes. It may seem a little ambiguous to speak of fields when they were nothing more than small patches of land. The garden, then, was irregular in shape, not always enclosed and so small as to look like a mere patch amid the surrounding wilderness

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1. Shooter, Joseph: The Kafirs of Natal and Zulu Country  
p. 17.

of natural vegetation.<sup>1</sup>

The Kafir was not restricted to a single garden and did not recognize private property in the soil beyond that of actual possession. He may break up whatever land that was unoccupied and thus cultivate as many gardens (Ama-Simi) as he pleased. Several gardens could belong to one kraal. Close at hand may be a plot of sweet potatoes, down in the valley a field of maize with pumpkin vines running among the plants and on the opposite hill another plot of corn.<sup>2</sup> In doing this he selected the soil to suit the crop. When a garden was worn out he could easily make a new one. The ground was never sufficiently ploughed, fields were cropped until fertility was exhausted, when they were either abandoned or allowed to lie fallow. Their ancestors had not taught them to use manure to enrich the soil.<sup>3</sup> Fields were given up because they were worn out or unfit for further cultivation by reason of erosion.<sup>4</sup>

When a piece of land had been selected for cultivation, the task of cleaning belonged to the men. If the ground was covered with trees, bushes and grass, it became a hard task with a small axe. When a large tree was

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1. Shooter: op. cit., p. 16
2. Ibid: p. 16
3. Hattersley, Alan F.: Portrait of a colony, p. 207
4. Huss, Bernard, B.A.: Agriculture Amongst the Natives of South Africa, Inter. Review of Missions, 1922, Vol. 11, p. 260



encountered, they only chopped off the branches and set fire to the trunk. They would often avoid the bush covered land, yet knowing that its soil was superior to any other.<sup>1</sup>

The women were the real labourers since the digging, planting, and weeding fell on them. The woman using the hoe, digs, plants, and weeds the garden. Digging and sowing were one operation. The seed was strewn on the ground before the soil was dug or picked with the hoe, to a depth of three or four inches. This is the same principle which American farmers follow in disking their small grain (oats, barley, wheat and rye) but of course for the native it was much more haphazardly done. The tufts of grass were taken off and all the rest remained there. The seed was imperfectly covered and thus when it came up there were spots of bare ground. When the corn was about a month old and the weeds were at a height which would astonish an American farmer, the ground was hoed again, and this was the end of the process of cultivation.<sup>2</sup>

"A walk through the fields of the Natives often presents a sad sight. Amongst a forest of flourishing weeds some poor cultivated plants seem to struggle for life, whereas on those fields the cultivated plants should flourish and weeds should fight in vain for existence."<sup>3</sup>

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1. Shooter: op. cit. p. 17
2. Ibid: p. 18
3. Huss: op. cit. p. 260

c. The kind of crops raised.

The variety of crops was somewhat limited as the natives only used those things which were food for them and which were known in their locality. The plants cultivated were maize, millet, sweet potatoes and some cucurbitaceous plants such as calabash, watermelon, pumpkin and cucumber.<sup>1</sup>

d. The enemies and the protection of the crops.

The crops were subject to great destruction from quadrupeds, birds and insects which conspired to destroy them.

In order to protect the crops from these four-footed beasts, two methods were employed, fences and watching. The fences were sometimes built around the garden, but more often the fence was built on the side of the garden that was being molested. These barriers were long and not often finished in one year. The length was increased because of the irregular direction given them, for the Kafir was good in describing a circle, but could not draw a straight line.<sup>2</sup>

When watching was resorted to, a platform of poles and sticks was erected in the garden with a small hut on top. This structure corresponded to the use of the lodge mentioned by Isaiah.<sup>3</sup> It was for the convenience of the watchers. In a large garden two or three were necess-

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1. Shooter: op. cit. p. 16

2. Ibid: p. 19

3. Bible, King James Version: Isaiah, Chap. 1 Verse 8

ary and women assisted the men in defending the crops from the four-footed beasts.

The wild pig, for whom many of these fences were built, was a special enemy of the crops. However, he was not the only one, for there was the porcupine who was hard to exclude; antelopes ate young plants; and the baboons, where they prevailed, stole the ripe maize. If it was a bushy district, the buffalo did damage; and if the garden was located near a river occupied by hippopotamuses, they were liable to make their visits. The elephant was most destructive not only for what he ate but also because his big feet trampled so much. The men would prefer the destruction of the crops rather than risking lives defending them. But the women who did all the work were not always so passive. Shooter tells of one wife who became frantically violent until finally the husband was forced to go out of the hut and attempt at least to drive off the elephants who were eating up the garden. Soon the man came running saying the elephants were coming toward the kraal and they must escape for their lives. They all made haste and ran to a neighboring hill because elephants run badly up hill. When it was safe to return they found the huts still standing but the crops were utterly ruined. What had not been eaten had been trampled and the garden was like a bare coral.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Shooter: op. cit. pp. 19-22

The birds, which were enemies of the farmers, are very beautiful but most destructive. Boys were put on guard to watch the garden for these enemies. When the birds became too troublesome, the witch doctor was called in and medicine resorted to.

The locust was by far the worst enemy, but it seems it was not known in very primitive times.

It was a singular fact that locust was not known in this quarter before 1829 or early in 1830: and the Zulus superstitiously attributed their visitations to the power of Sotshangana whom the Zulus were sent to attack by Tshaki in the district of Delagoa, and whom they followed on their retreat after having been defeated by that chieftain.<sup>1</sup>

e. The superstitions and ceremonies connected with production of crops.

"To the native mind, the chances of a crop failing were more dependent upon the good or bad spirits than on anything he could do."<sup>2</sup> Superstition was resorted to when plants did not thrive. In that case medicine was burned on a fire placed to the windward side of the garden. The fumigation which the plants received was suppose to improve the crops. It was believed that what would benefit one man's maize would hinder that of an adjoining proprietor, unless he burned it at the same time. Therefore, when a man used this mysterious medicine, he gave some to his

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1. Shooter: op. cit. p. 23
2. Hunnicutt, B.H. and Reid, W.W.: The Story of Agricultural Missions, p. 119

neighbor unless he wanted to run the risk of being an evil-doer.

When the birds were troublesome a medicine was resorted to. The medicine man (witch doctor) would obtain a small turtle, cut off its head, stuff the animal with corn and medicine and bury it. Then a fire was made on the grave and some of the heads of corn which had been partially eaten by the birds, together with some medicine were burned.

A chameleon, also, was stuffed with corn and medicine and when scarcely able to move it was placed in a tree. On the following day medicine was again burned in the garden. Until this had been done the people of the Kraal were placed under some restrictions as to their food. If the birds still came back, no noise was allowed, although sticks could be thrown at them. If they still persisted in their visits, after a certain time the remedy was considered to have failed and the doctor must return the whole or greater part of his fee.<sup>1</sup>

When crows would attack the maize, it was believed that if one of the cobs, which had been partially eaten, was thrown among another man's maize garden, the birds would follow it and devote their attention to the garden where it lay.

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1. Shooter: op. cit. p. 22

The belief in witch-craft was general and caused much suffering. If human or ox died, if sickness occurred, if an accident of any kind happened, if crops were blighted, it was attributed to the evil action on the part of some wizard or witch, unless there was some reason to believe an angry spirit was the cause. It meant destruction of property, torture and death and in extreme cases slaughter of all the relatives, both young and old.<sup>1</sup>

The time for seasonal operations was usually determined by recourse to magic.<sup>2</sup> A ceremony, which appears to have been common to all tribes in their original state was called the "Feast of First Fruits." The primitive custom was an act of thanksgiving for the fruits of the earth. Certain tribes added to it military rites and gave it the aspect of a war feast. The following are the principal customs which occurred in its celebration at the Zulu courts.

About the end of December, the people assembled at a designated place. A black bull was brought from the herd and the young men would grab the animal by its horns and twist its neck throwing it to the ground. The doctor would rush forth, make an incision in the side of the groaning animal and take out the gall bladder and squeeze part of its contents into a vessel containing medicine

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1. Theal, George McCall: Progress of South Africa in the century, p. 24
2. Hattersley, Alan, F.: Portrait of a Colony, p. 207

which had previously been boiled. The king would then dip his fingers into the concoction and proceed to put them to his mouth. Whether he ever swallowed any or not one never knows, but at least he squirted it over his body.

Other medicine was prepared into which bruised corn and various products of the garden were put. This was taken by the king in the same manner as before. With powders of various colors rubbed on his breast and face, he would take some of the mixture mentioned first into his mouth and squirt it on an assagai pointing the weapon to the sun. The witch doctor then killed the bull striking it on the head with an axe. It was skinned and the flesh thrown on the fire. Toward evening the boys would gather together to eat the beef, a privilege which lost a great deal of its real joy because they were not allowed to drink until morning. The common understanding was that if this rule was violated, the king would suffer defeat in war or be visited by some personal misfortune. As a result, the doctor and others kept a strict vigil over the thirsty soldiers and with sticks they would beat back anyone who attempted to leave the fire.

The next day a bull of another color was slaughtered with an assagai in the usual way. Some of the gall was mixed with the medicine which the men took with their fingers into their mouths. After this they would go to the stream and wash and upon returning, they gathered around

the witch doctor who was provided with pieces of bull's flesh previously cooked and rolled in medicine. Taking one in his hand he would throw it into the air and it would be caught by the nearest person who put it to his mouth and he in turn would throw it for another to catch, unless it fell to the ground, in which case the doctor would throw up another in its place.

The following day the king would come into the fold, dressed in grass, where the dance called umkosi took place. When this was ended, he retired to resume his proper dress. As he returned, the ceremony progressed. The chief feature, consisted in dropping a calabash to the ground, and all the people went and washed themselves while the witch doctor and the king's chief officers picked up parts of the calabash. These together with the grass which the king had danced in were burned where the black bull had been roasted. The ashes were immediately scattered about and the cattle were brought together to tread them into the ground. The king always concluded by addressing the people about their various duties and gave them permission to reap their harvest. As a general rule no crop could be harvested previous to the celebration of this feast.<sup>1</sup>

2. The raising of cattle.

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1. Shooter: op. cit. pp. 25-27



The Kafir placed a high value upon his cattle. It would seem ridiculous if an American dairyman praised a cow as much as a Kafir, but the cattle represented several things in the Kafir's mind. Cows enabled him to get wives; cows were needed to raise a family; oxen were furnished as sacrifices to appease the spirits; and if a man had more than enough for his own use, he may lend them to others and thus acquire dependents over whom he could exercise the authority of a petty chief. The cattle were the very idol which he worshipped.

a. The size and use of the cattle.

The Zulu cattle were small in stature. The average weight of a cow in good condition did not exceed four hundred pounds. They were very poor as milk producers, although, what they gave was very rich. Milk was a vital part of the Kafir's diet and it was preferred above all other food excepting flesh. It was usually eaten in the curdled state and only the very young and very old drank the fresh milk. A Kafir did not often slaughter his cattle except for sacrifices and marriage celebrations. Rich men killed an ox sometimes for the purpose of giving a feast for friends, but common people could not afford to do so because the native had such a tremendous appetite for beef. "I have heard a Kafir say he could eat a sheep in two days and that four men could finish a cow in three days."<sup>1</sup>

1. Shooter: op. cit. p. 29

With such an appetite for beef it is not difficult to believe that they ate animals which had died from disease. "The man just mentioned told me he would eat a cow which had been lying in the bush three days."<sup>1</sup> The thought back of this was that on the fourth day it was beginning to rot. The richer people would kill the sick animal for food instead of waiting for it to die. This they felt was better taste and culture.

b. The supplying of food for the cattle.

The Kafir had no difficulty providing food for his cattle. The climate was such that pasture was abundant and whether it was summer or winter, the native was thankful that food was supplied for his cattle. The only exertion required on the part of the native to secure proper pasture was to remove the old grass and this was easily done by setting fire to it. It necessitated a very close watch so that the fire would only burn one strip at a time so that there would always be green pasturage for the cattle. This was carried on by the men.

c. The appearance of the cattle.

The natives attached great importance to the appearance of their cattle and took great pains to try and improve their looks. They would cut the ends of the

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1. Shooter: op. cit. p. 29

ears to give them a jagged look. Four and three cornered pieces of skin were cut about the head and face of the cattle and allowed to hang down and heal in this manner. Incisions were made through the dewlap, and portions of it were severed and made to hang down. The horns of the oxen were forced to take all shapes and positions. This was accomplished by various methods of weights which gave a very unnatural aspect to their horns. Sometimes one horn would be bent downward while the other remained upright; others had their horns bent back toward their shoulders; others with one horn crumbled in front and the other tending downward and still others had horns which met in a point over the head and tended upwards. All this effort and time was used in order to beautify the cattle.

d. The deep affection toward the cattle.

The Kafir did not confine himself to mere physical aspects of his cattle. They were the joy of his heart and the pride of his life, and as far as he could he made them his worthy companions. He would talk to them, address them by name and praise them as if they could comprehend his meaning. They would answer back in peculiar sounds which naturally expressed a cow's satisfaction. It seems that the natives must have thought as much of their cattle as they did of their wives.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Shooter: op. cit. p. 30

e. The superstition regarding cattle.

In many places the African has cattle but may not eat the meat nor drink the milk because of old taboos and traditions that have all the weight of customs enforced by superstition, and, in all probability, by sad experience in other years.<sup>1</sup>

One can plainly see how superstition was a governing factor with anything that caused trouble. If any cattle became sick and died the following remedy was resorted to. The witch doctor came to the kraal where the herd had been collected. He would make a fire and burn medicine so as to fumigate the cattle. They were sprinkled with the concocted medicine. After this, the doctor took some of the melted fat of the dead cows into his mouth and proceeded to squirt it on a fire brand held before the face of each animal. Of course the beasts rushed away from such salutations, and in the process the herd became very excited. When the operation was completed the gate of the kraal was thrown open and the already excited cattle needed no urging. The persecution was by no means at an end for the whole kraal rushed after them, the men beating shields and the women rattling calabashes (gourds), and all shouting at the top of their voices with the hopes of driving the evil spirit away. The terrified beasts bellowed and galloped for the chase was mercilessly carried on for two miles. They were left to

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1. Hunnicutt and Reid: op. cit. p. 116

wear off the treatment which was so different for the cattle usually experienced gentleness. The doctor forfeited his fee if the remedy proved a failure.<sup>1</sup>

f. The enemies and protection of the cattle.

The cattle as well as the crops had their enemies. The most destructive of these was the lion. The mode for protecting the cattle was very similar to the hut built in the middle of the garden where a watchman was placed.<sup>2</sup> The cattle could sense the danger coming and thus awaken the watchman by the excitement which they caused in the kraal. The tigers, wildcats and other bloodthirsty animals were also their constant enemies.

C. Some Present Day Problems

1. Cattle ownership.

a. Milk production and distribution.

A study of cattle ownership and milk production was carried out in 130 homes of Umkomaas River Valley, Polela, Natal. This was conducted by the Polela Health Unit in Natal in connection with its family welfare plan for the people of Polela in 1942. It reports that the cattle ownership is somewhat of a problem. In a total of 130 homes, with a population of 887 people, 560 head of cattle was owned, the percentage being 4.37 per home, including bulls,

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1. Shooter: op. cit. p. 35  
2. Intra, Chap. I p. 5

oxen, cows and calves. Of the 560 head, 180 were cows, approximately one third of the total number of cattle. The percentage number of cows per home was 1.42 and even these could not be productive all the time. It is plain to see that milk production is far below the requirements of good health standards. Some fifty percent of the population have no milk in the summer-autumn seasons, and in the winter-spring months the position is even worse. Eighty to ninety percent of the people have no milk at all.<sup>1</sup>

b. Uneven distribution of ownership.

Not only is the total quantity of milk in the area inadequate at all seasons, but the bad distribution of ownership of cows reflects an even worse position than does a simple aggregate analysis. When one remembers that the system of agriculture is essentially individualistic, it will be realized that the percent number of cattle per home is not excessive. For not only is the percent number of cows per home or even the total number of cattle not excessive, but also there is a marked unevenness of distribution of ownership. The analysis shows that thirty-two of the 130 homes, 24.62 percent possessed no cattle at all in 1942, and almost one out of every three homes, 32.4 percent, possessed no cow at all; and of those who did possess

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1. Kark, Sidney L.: Cattle and Milk in Native Reserve, Race Relations, Vol. XI, No. 2, 1944, pp. 30-34

any cattle, thirteen homes, ten percent, owned 33.8 percent of the cattle. The result was that the upper ten percent owned as many head as did 70.8, ninety-two of the homes at the lower end of the scale.<sup>1</sup>

c. Overstocking and soil erosion.

The analysis of milk production would not be complete if the problem of overstocking were overlooked. The analysis indicates that the problem of overstocking is closely related to the population density and to the uneven distribution of ownership of stock.<sup>2</sup> Agricultural authorities state that the area is over-stocked. The problem of overstocking the land is an outstanding cause of soil erosion and does not only effect the quantity of milk produced, because of lack of rich soil for pasture, but all aspects of food production. This is largely because of the influence which excessive grazing has on soil erosion and thus on productivity of the soil. A mere reduction in the total number of cattle might alleviate the burden which the pastures are carrying, but unless other compensatory measures are undertaken it will still aggravate the already low standard of agriculture and milk production.<sup>3</sup>

Any remedy for this state of affairs must take

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1. Kark: op. cit. pp. 30-34
2. Intra: Chapter I p. 16
3. Ibid.: pp. 30-34

into account the ever increasing soil erosion, which in turn is closely related to overstocking, population density, agricultural methods and milk supplies. These considered together will tend toward an improved nutritional state.

## 2. Population density.

It has been, ever since the beginning, the practice to gather together either for protection or subsistence. The first may have been more real in early days while the latter may be more characteristic later. Whatever the cause or reason may be, we still find men living together having fellowship with one another. The native of Natal centered his life around the kraal. This has remained so until today except where the white man has separated and done away with the tribal customs. Because of this allegiance to a chief and all life centering around him, the land in that particular area has become overpopulated. The dense population tends for poor environment and exhaustion of the land.

## 3. Soil exhaustion because of poor cultivation.

Unless scientific methods of working with livestock and pasture are introduced, the reserves will soon become, have already in part, so completely eroded as to be incapable of reclamation.<sup>1</sup> The reasons for the decline in

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1. Roux, Edward: Collective Farming in Reserves, Race Relations, Vol. XI, No. 1, 1944, p. 10



the productive use of the soil can be summed up in three ways. 1. Many lands are badly eroded and only parts are capable of being used. 2. Many lands are regarded by the natives as unproductive through exhaustion and other causes. 3. The absence of males at labor centers. The women, children and old men are unable to cope efficiently with the heavy work of ploughing.<sup>1</sup>

4. Lack of workable land.

It is estimated that only fifteen percent of the Union of South Africa is cultivatable. In certain native areas forty percent of the heads of African families are landless. Economists say that agriculture is holding too many people on the land. For economic progress, much of the agrarian population will have to be transferred to occupations that will give them a higher level of living.

Agriculture in the Union contributes only little over twelve percent of the national income and therefore, it cannot uphold a high level of living. Were it not for the work in the mines and secondary industries the natives would long since have been bankrupt, even now many are in debt.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Webb, Maurice: Vanishing Lands and Migrant Labour, Race Relations, Vol. XI, No. 3 and 4, 1944, p. 44
2. Jones, J.D. Rheinalt: New Economic, Social and Political Conditions in Union of South Africa, Abundant Living in Changing Africa, Africa Committee of the Foreign Mission Conference, New York, 1947, p. 110

### 5. Migrant labor system.

In many native areas up to seventy percent of the males between the ages of eighteen and forty-five are away from home at any one time, earning money from Europeans in order to support their families. They work in gold and coal mines, secondary industries and on European-owned farms, with a result that people look to employment outside the native areas for economic salvation rather than to the soil where their families live. The effort put forth to interest them in the development and conservation of native areas evolve little response.

The African people themselves have found that employment in industrial areas yield far greater hope of advancement than living in native areas or working on farms. The census shows an enormous increase in the African population in the cities. This discloses the effect that migrant labors have had on native life.<sup>1</sup>

### 6. The unsatisfactory system of land tenure.

The greatest draw-back of the development of agriculture is the unsatisfactory system of land tenure over which the natives have no control. The greater part of the people live under the tribal system or on European-owned farms as tenants. The chief can give or withhold fields almost arbitrarily while the positions of natives as tenants on farms is not much better. The European of a nationality

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1. Jones: op. cit. p. 110

other than native, is down there mainly for exploitation and thus on that basis he would continually want low-priced labor and continue to pay them as such.

7. Education has been bookish.

The education which the natives received was bookish and tended to make them believe working with the hands was degrading. As a result many semicivilized natives despise manual work.

8. Superstition and meager existence.

Two problems which influence, to a large extent, the future development of agriculture lie enshrouded in ancient background. The one is that the peoples' wants are few and they are satisfied with a bare living. This has always been the case in a land where supplying one's food is not too difficult. They were alone as a group, and had no real interest or need for raising food for any one else or even using it as a medium of exchange.

The other lies in the fact that for centuries these natives have been influenced by witch doctors and evil spirits. Their life centers around such, and for this reason it can be seen today that they have very conservative characters and thus regard new things with superstition.

Rev. Robert Noel says, "Until faith in witch craft is eradicated, it will never be possible to educate the natives in scientific methods of stock farming and agriculture. At present all the methods and practices of civilized man are regarded as merely the superior magic of the white man."

#### D. Summary

The Bantus, of whom the Zulus and Kafirs claim their origin, who make up the natives of Natal, are probably the worst agriculturalists and most wasteful occupants of the world. The natives are enshrouded in superstitions which influence every phase of agricultural work. This problem along with problems of cattle, land erosion and exhaustion, primitive methods of farming, population density and migration, and education tend to make the native far behind in scientific farming.

CHAPTER II  
SOME AGRICULTURAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS  
OF  
SELECTED MISSIONS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

## CHAPTER II

### SOME AGRICULTURAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF SELECTED MISSIONS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

#### A. Introduction

In order to secure a substantial amount of data concerning the historical background of agricultural mission work in Africa, it is necessary to consider typical stations found in different parts of Southern Africa including Rhodesia, Portuguese East Africa, Angola and Union of South Africa. In discussing these agricultural mission projects, the procedure will be to relate the facts about location, history and purpose of each station and also its activities.<sup>1</sup> There will follow in successive order discussions of Old Umtali and Central Training School at Kambini because these are the most outstanding agricultural schools, and they will set a basis for our thinking on what follows.

#### B. Old Umtali

Old Umtali, a mission station of the Methodist church is located in Southern Rhodesia. When the Salis-

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1. Blackburn, Linwood E.: A Study of Agricultural Mission in Central and South Africa, p. 53
2. Smith, Edwin W.: The Way of the White Fields in Rhodesia, p. 66

bury-Beria railroad was being built, the line couldn't go through the town so the town was moved to the line. It was on the site left vacant by the town of Umtali that the Methodist mission, Old Umtali, was built. The land and remaining buildings were donated to the mission by Mr. Cecil Rhodes. From this interesting beginning in 1900, Old Umtali has developed to a point where it is doing the largest educational work in Southern Rhodesia.<sup>1</sup>

The departments in the Old Umtali Training Institution are literary, Biblical teacher training, agriculture and woodwork. The work of the agriculture department is outstanding and of particular interest in this discussion. The progress of the department of agriculture is the result of the work of George A. Roberts, the teacher and first-rate practical farmer of Old Umtali.<sup>2</sup>

Roberts, a native of a rural community in Iowa, was graduated from Iowa State College in 1906. While attending college, he volunteered to give his life as an agricultural missionary. He was sent to Old Umtali as the first trained agriculturalist by the Methodist Mission Board.<sup>3</sup> Excerpts taken from a letter written by Mr. Roberts will unfold the nature of his early work and the method em-

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1. Jones, Thomas Jesse: Education In Africa, p. 219
2. Jones: Education in East Africa, pp. 246-247
3. Reid, W.W.: George A. Roberts - Farmer, Teacher, Pastor  
p. 1

ployed in Old Umtali.

When I had been a short time at Old Umtali I was given some classes. I prepared some very elegant lectures. They were good. I delivered them before classes of African lads in our schools but they did not work! The classes listened all right. The truth was there, but it did not get hold of the people.

The next time I lectured, I brought some ears of corn and lectured about this corn along with the rest of the material written. The third time I found they had not learned much about what I said, but remembered the corn.

Later I brought up pots of all kinds of soils, black, red, yellow, sandy and cleaned washed river sand. I made three pots of these. In one we put barnyard manure; in the second, fertilizer; and in the third, plain soil as it was. I planted these and when the people saw the stuff grow better in the pots with the fertilizer, that settled agriculture in that country.

We sent for pigs and put them in stalls and stables. We had pure-bred large black Suffolk pigs and native pigs. Once in two weeks we had everyone weigh those pigs. They could read the scales and see for themselves the gain that amazed the people. They found out that the old poor pig gained for a little while and the young one a little more and that the pure-bred pigs gained nearly one and one-half pounds a day. Then we figured what those pigs increased in value. That was news.<sup>1</sup>

By this practical means of demonstration, in a manner a native could understand, Mr. Roberts was able to improve livestock breeding and care, methods of dairying and introduce the plow as an implement of farming in Rhodesia.<sup>2</sup> In fact Roberts found that the only successful way to teach the natives the better way of agriculture was to use the means of demonstration along with his classroom

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1. Reid, W.W.: op. cit. pp. 1-2

2. Ibid: pp. 3-4



theory.<sup>1</sup>

The results of the agricultural work at Old Umtali are numerous. Men are trained as pastor-teachers and are sent back to their home villages or to out-stations to teach others what they have learned. In this way they become "village life builders." Forty members of a pastor-teacher graduate's village now own plows and use oxen. The village has become self-supporting and the villagers have built a stone church with their money. As a result of the study of diseases and methods of preventing and curing, the tape worm, an awful menace in Rhodesia, has been cleaned out of this part of Africa.<sup>2</sup> The plow as an implement of farming and also fertilizer are being used by the native. Crops are being watered by irrigation and the use of milk is being increased. The results of the agricultural department of Old Umtali are helping to create a new African civilization.<sup>3</sup>

#### C. Central Training School at Kambini

The Central Training School of the Methodist Church is located at Kambini, Inhambane, Portuguese East Africa. About twelve hundred acres of real estate, farm machinery, work oxen, cows and calves are owned by the Kambini station. In connection with the station a model

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1. Hunnicutt, B.H. and Reid, W.W.: op. cit. p. 125

2. Ibid: p. 124

3. Reid: op. cit. p. 3

native village is operated. The village has its own government and related activities.<sup>1</sup> The missionary in charge of the agricultural work at Kambini is Julian S. Rea.<sup>2</sup> He quickly saw the importance of farming to the native life of Africa, and the accompanying problems and needs in the area of native farming methods. He began his work with the following purposes in mind:

- (1) To dignify farming and to develop a deeper appreciation of its importance in the mind of the native;
- (2) to train intelligent farmers;
- (3) to supplant the many undesirable superstitions practiced by the natives in their farming processes;
- (4) to work out a system of crops which would suit the conditions of the local section.<sup>3</sup>

The agricultural program at Kambini is not a course that has been added to the theological or normal departments, but is actual training in rural life. The station is a laboratory in living. For instance, the evangelistic and jeanes department enroll only married men and each man comes with his family and spends three years at the school. He grows his own food and in many cases builds his own home. Since 1928, the single boys in the boarding department have grown their own food and have constructed much of their living equipment. The day's activities for

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1. Jones: Education in East Africa, p. 310
2. Hunnicutt and Reid: op. cit. p. 128. Mr. Rea is a graduate of the Mass. Agricultural College and the Boston Univ. School of Theology. He is an Agricultural missionary of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Church and has been in Africa since 1925.
3. Mc Connell, Charles M. : The Rural Billion, pp. 76-77

each student are equally divided between classroom and field, shop and home.<sup>1</sup>

An outline of the agricultural program will serve to set forth something of the nature of the work at Kambini and give an indication of what is being done.

- I. In the Bodine Department
  - A. Classroom instruction
  - B. Classroom projects
  - C. Field demonstration
  - D. Direction of
    1. School projects
      - a. Cocoanut plantation
      - b. School herd of cattle
      - c. Banana Plantation
      - d. River garden
      - e. Field crops to feed the school  
corn, peanuts, sweet potatoes, etc.
    2. Group projects
      - a. Required - beautification of grounds and around homes.
      - b. Voluntary - planting fruit trees around houses, poultry and pigs plots of corn, sweet potatoes, etc.
    3. Individual projects
      - a. Corn and other plots to sell
      - b. poultry to sell

- II. Evangelistic (Theological) Department
  - A. Classroom instruction
  - B. Classroom projects
  - C. Field demonstration and study
  - D. Direction of
    1. School projects to develop an ideal village, planting flowers, trees, etc.
    2. Family projects - banana plantation river gardens and rice; field crops corn, peanuts, etc. poultry, pigs goats and donkey breeding

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1. Rea, J.S.: Our Rural Mission Program, Mimeograph Series No. 18 of the Agricultural Missions Foundation Inc. p. 4/  
This report of the Central Training School especially of its rural and agricultural program, was written by special request to provide data for a paper on the Problems of (Missionary) Agricultural Education. The information is so inclusive and so carefully presented that it is being mimeographed and sent to a select list of Missionaries in Africa.

3. Group cooperative activities-  
plowing corn, land with cattle, get-  
ting up digging bees, having harvest-  
ing bees, and marketing

### III. Jeanes Department<sup>1</sup>

The plan follows the same line of activi-  
ty as that of the Evangelistic dept.<sup>2</sup>

The extension program, or agricultural projects outside the School are not as well-organized as the program at the station itself, but attempts are being made to extend the influence of the agricultural program beyond Kambini. A close cooperation exists between the School for Girls, the outstation schools and the village schools. Visitors to Kambini carry away many of its ideas and ideas are spread by the boys during their vacation periods. Graduates take these ideas with them into their fields of activity and make use of exhibits and demonstrations. Extension agents for the agricultural program of Kambini are men who have graduated from the Jeanes department. Other means for extension and spreading influence are institutes held at conferences, circuit meetings and weekend gatherings in the Christian villages. Ideas are transmitted through the interdenominational paper, "Kuea Ka Mixo", which has a circulation of fifteen hundred. The supervisors of Sunday Schools include agricultural teaching of Kambini in their program.<sup>3</sup>

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1. The Jeanes School is an idea taken from rural schools among negroes in the United States, a system of supervisor teachers for a group of schools.
2. Rea, J.S.: op. cit. p. 5
3. Ibid: p. 8

Of course new methods of cultivation, new crops, better breeding and the use of livestock are goals of the mission. The natives are encouraged to cooperate with better health programs in order to use eggs, milk, greens and fruits, and a greater variety in the choice of foods and better preparation of foods.

Josefa Landela, a country preacher, attended the school at Kambini to prepare himself for more efficient service to his people. After completion of his work he was assigned to one of the villages, Xitsuku. This was by his own choice. Landela found Xitsuku to be a dirty and rundown village with no chance of survival unless it was rebuilt. He helped the villagers to rebuild their homes on new ground. He, with the help of natives, built a church for the village. He taught the natives to grow better crops and in turn to escape the menace of famine. This is only one of the many examples of the specific results of Kambini's rural program.<sup>1</sup>

#### D. Projects in Angola, Portuguese West Africa

##### 1. Galangue

An outstanding work in the training for rural life can be seen at the Galangue station of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in Portuguese West Africa. The station consists of a school for prac-

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1. Mc Connell: op. cit. pp. 137-138

tical education and sixteen outstations each with a small school.<sup>1</sup> The station has a full time agriculturalist, Mr. Samuel B. Coles, an American Negro and a graduate of Talladega College, Alabama; he has been on the field since 1922.<sup>2</sup>

The program and the specific results of the work at Galangue station can be seen by reports of the station's activities in the last few years. In 1936 the extension work was both interesting and beneficial. The villages and farms were visited by Mr. Coles and Snr. Jongola Malega; the visits of the agriculturalists are always welcomed by the natives. The emphasis of their visitation was instruction and guidance in planting wheat, putting out bananas, and the preparation for the dry season gardens. On this tour they distributed four hundred pounds of rice, four hundred pounds of peanuts, three hundred pounds of buck wheat and twenty pounds of cotton seed.

The year 1937 saw a distinct change in the technique of teaching agriculture. The new method allows the pupils to plant demonstration plots at their homes. Sixty-nine pupils took advantage of this idea and planted plots on the mission farm. This change has added a new interest to farming. Teachers are in charge of the pupils and assist

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1. Hunnicutt and Reid: op. cit. p. 130
2. From a personal interview of the author with Mr. Coles in Biblical Seminary in 1946

them in their work; the teachers also relate their classroom instruction to the experimental plots of the pupils.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Coles, in thinking over the agricultural job in Africa, especially that at Galangue, feels that although the Central School is doing a constructive piece of work, there are thousands in the outstations and missions that do not reach the Central School. These people are being denied through neglect the answer to needs in farming instruction. In view of this observation, he states:

Every boy and girl who goes through or spends three years in our mission school, should know something about the following trades: farm blacksmithing, carpentry, bricklaying, agriculture, care of livestock and village sanitation. The girls should know something about cooking, the care of the children and how to care for chickens and the garden.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. Dondi

### a. Currie Institute

Dondi, Angola, is the seat of the Currie Institute, a school of higher learning of the American Congregational Missions. Currie provides instruction of upper elementary and lower secondary grades to native teachers and religious workers.

Along with the other training, Currie emphasizes agriculture and its importance. Every student receives training in the preparation and cultivation of the soil, the use and breeding of livestock, dairying and the use

1. Coles, S.B.: op. cit.

2. Coles, S.B.: Excerpt from Reports of Galangue Station Angola, Portuguese West Africa, 1940

of farm machinery.<sup>1</sup>

In 1936, a specialization course in agriculture was added; five boys chose the course the first year and in 1941 there were twenty-one enrolled. A grant from the Women's Missionary Society made it possible to send out three Currie graduates as agricultural extension workers to Chessamba, Camundongo and Lutamo. Reports from these stations indicate that the work of these boys is very commendable. In fact, a white planter invited one of these boys to aid him in his farming problems. Also, Currie has received invitations from several stations to put on agricultural short courses during dry seasons.<sup>2</sup>

A noteworthy result of Currie's program in the form of a social movement was found in the 1938 reports of the station. The agricultural department of Currie has awakened the more progressive natives to the need of better homes, food and living conditions. They are leaving the villages and settling on little farms of their own. They plan to remain on these plots and improve them instead of moving their household every few years. These individuals are eager for help in soil conservation, the use of oxen and other modern methods of farming.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Jones: op. cit. pp. 239-240

2. Excerpts from the reports of Currie Institute, Dondi, 1936

3. Excerpts from the reports of Currie Institute, Dondi, 1938



### b. Means School

Dondi is also the location of the Means School, an institution for higher education. The school makes provision for the teaching of Biblical knowledge and theology, Portuguese studies as outlined by the curriculum, and a number of trades with special attention to agriculture.<sup>1</sup> Even though the holidays take four of the six months of the rainy season, in 1939 a definite progress in agriculture at Means had been reported. The agriculture work reaped extra supplies beyond the station's need in bananas, peanuts, soybeans, popcorn and rosella.<sup>2</sup>

### 3. Kamundongo Station

There are other mission stations in Angola which emphasize agricultural training and related activities in the program of the mission. Agriculture has been given a place of first importance at Kamundongo Station. The students, boys and girls alike, are required to give some hours each day to the field and garden. The students are taught rotation of crops, dry farming, break gardening and irrigation.<sup>3</sup>

### 4. Sachikela Station

The Sachikela Station has had many difficulties

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1. Tucher, John T.: Fifty Years in Angola, Portuguese West Africa, in I.R.M., Vol. 19, April 1930, p. 264
2. Excerpts from reports of Mean School, Dondi, 1940
3. Jones: Education in Africa, p. 242

in the farming endeavors; yet in spite of all this the missionaries do not count their farming a failure. They can see definite results in the actions of the pupils who have had the course at the Station's Yuvu farm. The outstations of the mission report forty-nine plows in operation. The desire to use the plows and the training of ways of using the plows were learned at Yuvu farm.<sup>1</sup>

#### 5. Bailundo.

Some agricultural training is given at the Bailundo station, but the missionaries realize that agriculture has not the place it should have in the program at the mission.<sup>2</sup>

#### E. Mariannahill Institute and Adams College.

##### 1. Mariannahill Institute.

A few miles west of Durban in Natal, South Africa, is located Mariannahill Institute, a Roman Catholic School and one of the most important schools in South Africa. Mariannahill is an old school founded by a pious monk, Abbot Franz, of the Trappist Order.<sup>3</sup>

The principal of the teacher training school was Father Bernard Huss, a man who was vitally interested in native music, recreation and agriculture. Father Huss was

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1. Excerpts from reports of Sachikela Station, Angola, 1935-36
2. Excerpts from reports on Bailundo Station, Angola, 1938
3. Jones: op. cit. pp. 209-210

instrumental in the elementary schools, in fact, he is the author of a standard textbook on agriculture for use in native schools.<sup>1</sup> As to the special activities of Father Huss, K.L. Butterfield, after his visit with him at Mariannhill in 1929, made the following statement about him:

. . . Whom I consider one of the wisest men on South African native affairs. He has written booklets for the natives on practical agriculture, on marketing and business cooperation and on rural credits; he has in preparation a similar booklet on rural sociology. Not only has he travelled thousands of miles and made hundreds of speeches but he has to his credit a successful effort to organize Farmers' associations and what seems an almost incredible achievement the organization of a number of credit societies. . . .<sup>2</sup>

The Native cooperative society affords a center for training individuals and groups of individuals. The Mariannhill Training School aids in this type of training by providing "social courses" for farmers and school teachers. The members of the groups are instructed in practical farming, simple economics, social psychology and domestic science. Father Huss was very successful in developing cooperative activities in Natal. The meetings of these cooperatives furnish a medium for the exchange of farming experience and the discussion of community problems.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Adams College

At Amanzintoti, near Durban, Natal, is the Adams Mission Station and Adams College of the American Board of

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1. Jones: op. cit. pp. 209-210
2. Butterfield, K.L.: Report on Rural Conditions and Sociological Problems in South Africa, p. 34
3. Davis, J. Merle: The Problems for Missions, in Modern Industry and the African, pp. 336-337

Commissioners for Foreign Missions. For several years this college had a trained agriculturalist on its staff; however, it has no agriculturalist at the present. The efforts of this trained work were not in vain and the influence is still felt among the Bantus. The station continues to sponsor an agriculture show each year. The show is one way of measuring the progress of the natives in farming.<sup>1</sup>

The show in 1939 was the best that had been held up to that time. The exhibits numbered twenty-six hundred, an increase of two hundred over previous years. After the show closed, which lasted two days, several hundred of the best exhibits were sent to Durban, for the native section of the big European Agricultural show. For several years the Adams exhibits have won the silver cup for the best lot of exhibits in the native section of the Durban show.<sup>2</sup>

#### F. Mt. Silinda Institute and Chikore Station

##### 1. Mt. Silinda Institute

Mount Silinda Training and Practicing School maintained by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions is located in Southeast Rhodesia, about one hundred and fifty miles from Umtali. The mission owns an area of about 34,000 acres. Over two hundred acres are

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1. Personal letter from J.A. Reuling of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, to the author.
2. Excerpts from reports of Adams Mission Station, Natal, South Africa, 1940

under cultivation, and it appears that the station farms on a large scale. The industrial and agricultural training in school ranks with the best in Rhodesia. The natives are instructed in both practical and theoretical agriculture.<sup>1</sup> The method of "home plots" as a means of teaching farming to the day students was added in 1937. In this plan each student has his own home plot to cultivate and has individual rather than mass training and supervision. The vegetables from the plots are used in the homes of the pupils, while extra products are sold in the community. This method also encourages a more varied diet and gives the students a chance to earn a little cash. Ways of caring for the "home plots" have been outlined in mimeographed form and distributed to the students. This is a plan so worked out that the idea can be introduced and followed in the outstations without too much difficulty and a minimum of supervision.<sup>2</sup>

David Chinguno, an agricultural demonstrator, is giving full time to farm work. He is supervising some thirty-seven native farmers who have plots of their own. He is teaching them improved methods of applying manure, plowing, and cultivation.

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1. Jones: Education in East Africa, pp. 247-248
2. Excerpts from reports of Mt. Silinda Institute, South Rhodesia, Africa, 1938

The Mission has an agricultural committee to formulate agricultural plans for the Mission. By now Mt. Silinda has a farmers' association.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Chickore Station

Another station of the American Board is the Chikore station, also in Southern Rhodesia. The agricultural work has gone forward, yet, it has been hindered by the lack of trained agriculture demonstrators. This need was answered in July 1938 when Bennied Dube, a demonstrator came to the station. He gives his entire time to teaching soil conservation and improved methods of farming on the mission farm. The staff of the mission is making a special effort to prevent and check soil erosion, a problem that has made more progress with the use of the plow.<sup>2</sup>

Some of the primary schools of the station have begun the use of "home plots" for cultivation and training; these are supervised by the regular and Jeanes teachers.

When the teacher has the right outlook and personality and the necessary enthusiasm, this appears to be the best method of really teaching agriculture beneficially, especially among the older children.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Excerpts from reports of Mt. Silinda Institute, South Rhodesia, Africa, 1939
2. Ibid., 1939
3. Excerpts from the reports of Chickore Station, Southern Rhodesia, 1939

### G. Summary

From this survey of typical agricultural missions, it is evident that agriculture plays an important part in South African life. The missionaries are becoming aware of the need for training in agriculture, and as a result many have added such departments to their mission schools. With proven success they are continually adopting new methods. The contributions include; building construction, raising crops, cattle management, poultry husbandry, farm mechanics, dairy work and animal husbandry.

CHAPTER III

EVANGELISM WITH AGRICULTURE AS AN AID



## CHAPTER III

### EVANGELISM WITH AGRICULTURE AS AN AID

#### A. Introduction

In the book of Acts it reads, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."<sup>1</sup> Here it is plainly seen that the Holy Ghost is the motivating force of Christian Missions. Evangelism by the individual is the channel by which this motivating force finds expression and touches the unrepentant heart. Although the Gospel is powerful in itself to put its message across to people, still it is not out of the way to use aids to put its message forward more readily. It will be the purpose of this chapter to discuss the place of the church in evangelism and agriculture as an aid to evangelism.

#### B. The Place of the Church in Evangelism

Amidst the multiplying of interests being thrust on the attention of the church today, it is well to be reminded that its governing objective, as

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1. Acts 1:8

well as its most highly multiplying work, is evangelism.<sup>1</sup>

Jesus Christ came to reveal the love of the Father to the world. The church of every age exists to reveal the same to the world of every age. Jesus came to save men; the church exists to be a soul-saving institution. Jesus is the Evangel and the proclamation of the Evangel, that of telling forth the good news of God's love and forgiveness in Christ - this is evangelism. The church is the divinely appointed instrument of evangelism in the world today.<sup>2</sup>

The church of the apostolic age understood this and there is no doubt that the expansion of the church from one Roman province to another was due to the conviction of the members of the Christian church that they existed for no other reason than to proclaim Christ to the world and the life in Him. The life of the church and its evangelistic witness were undoubtedly the secret of the expansion of Christianity in the apostolic age. The taking into the church of three thousand baptized Christians, giving instruction, common worship and the breaking of bread would have been impossible had it not been for the voluntary work of the one hundred and twenty on the day of Pentecost. Is it not reasonable to suggest that the

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1. Mott, John R.: Evangelism for the World Today, p. 3
2. Bishop of Dornakal, India: The Place of the Church in Evangelism, Madras Series, Vol. III, P. 31

churches of which we hear later in Judea (in Lydda Acts 9:32 and in Joppa 9:36), in Cyrene (11:20), in Samaria (8:5), in Damascus (9:2,3,10) in Galilee (9:31) and in Phoenicia (21:2 and 27:2) were founded by recipients of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost?

The church which later became the center of Missions to the Gentiles was founded by the scattered Christians of Cyprus and Cyrene.<sup>1</sup> Laodicea, Colossae, Hierapolis and other centers in Asia (except Ephesus) had churches not of apostolic but lay foundation.<sup>2</sup>

A person is naturally overwhelmed, as he reads the book of Acts, with the evangelistic missionary efforts of the Apostle Paul. He certainly carried the Gospel message to the principal cities of the provinces of Galatia, Macedonia, Achaia and Asia. We must assume that the establishment of the church in the rural parts of these provinces was due not so much to the personal efforts of Paul himself as to his converts. From the church in Thessalonica<sup>3</sup> had sounded forth the word of the Lord in Macedonia and Achaia. The church in Philippi<sup>4</sup> had entered into fellowship of the Gospel from the first day of their conversion. To be always ready to proclaim the good

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1. Acts 11:20

2. Acts 19:10; Col. 2:1; 4:13

3. I Thes. 1:8

4. Phil. 1:5

news is spoken of as part of the equipment of the Christian soldier.<sup>1</sup> The whole church is an army organized, engaged and equipped in a spiritual warfare against the forces that oppose God, His Word and His Gospel. John in describing his idea of the church as a city "coming down out of Heaven from God, having the Glory of God"<sup>2</sup> sees its gates in nowise shut<sup>3</sup> in order that the glory and honor of nations may be brought into it. Finally, when the glory of the Lord is fully revealed, the writer ends his book by giving the church's evangelistic call to all mankind.

The spirit and the bride say come; he that heareth, let him say come: and he that is athirst let him come: he that will, let him take of the water of life freely.<sup>4</sup>

One could go on giving confirmatory evidence of the part the whole church has continued to play in being the divinely appointed instrument in evangelism, but one does not need all that proof to establish his thinking.

### C. What is Evangelism

Dr. Toyohiko Kagawa, of the Kingdom of God Movement in Japan says, Evangelism means conversion of people from worldliness to Christ-like Godliness. Conversion is absolutely fundamental, for without the awakening of a spiritual hunger, there

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1. Eph. 6:15
2. Rev. 21:10-11
3. Rev. 21:25
4. Rev. 22:17

is no hope for an individual, a society, a race or a nation.<sup>1</sup>

There have been many such definitions given of evangelism but it is quite evident that the central fact emphasized in setting forth its meaning is namely, the telling of the truth and life of Christ by word and life in such a way as to persuade men to accept it and believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

There are four parties involved in the work of evangelism. The superhuman factor - the living God as revealed in Christ; the evangelist, or the person who conveys the Gospel message, whether by word of mouth by written letter or by printed page; the person to be evangelized; and lastly the individual witnesses or cooperators who by their prayer strengthen the individual desire of the person to be evangelized.<sup>2</sup>

The work of evangelism is first, last and always a superhuman process. It has its center in the living Lord of Life. It rests on the historic fact of Christ and the present day authentic experience of Christ. Christ is not only the foundation and author of faith in the process of evangelism, but He is also its perfecter in every stage. Evangelism is not something that stands still or motionless but it is as dynamic as Christ Himself is dynamic. It is

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1. Mott: What is Evangelism, Madras Series, Vol. 3, p. 45
2. Ibid: p. 56

not man that worketh to convert another; it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do.

While it is God who accomplishes the wonder work in the conversion of man, it is also a matter never to be overlooked that He invariably uses human instrumentality as a medium through which He works. He has commissioned His true followers to be His witnesses unto the uttermost parts of the earth.<sup>1</sup>

The core of evangelism is the presentation of the Gospel - the Christian message that God loves mankind and sent His Son into the world to save men through the life and death and resurrection of His Son and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Gospel concerns the individual, for it is equal to the deepest personal need. It enables him to make necessary readjustments which will overcome or remove the tensions which thwart him. It ushers one into a full creative and abounding life causing the redirection and remaking of his life.<sup>2</sup>

#### D. Agriculture as an Aid to Evangelism

The Gospel also meets the social needs and problems. This is where agriculture lends itself as an aid to evangelism. It is all the more apparent when we think of the vast areas of the world which depend upon the land

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1. Acts 1:8

2. Mott: op cit. p. 58

for a living. In Africa alone it is well over seventy-five percent who live off the land. Now if the Christian Gospel is to be evangelized "into all the world" it must effectively permeate these rural areas. The method by which this is to be brought about depends upon the aid agriculture gives as a means in leading men and women to be convinced of the power of the Gospel.<sup>1</sup> By this one does not need to doubt the ability of the power of the Gospel to reach the needs and desires of men's hearts, but rather to see agriculture as a supplementary aid, as an asset to evangelism. Think for a moment of a missionary going into a new field to evangelize. The missionary feels, that his first and foremost work is to present the Gospel by telling it. People are converted and begin to show external signs of this new life within, but find that, because of various customs which make up their mores, it is hard to fit themselves into their new-found life. The missionary recognizing this begins to show them better ways of tilling the soil; instead of using the hoe they are given a plow; better ways of enriching the land: instead of leaving it idle, fertilizers are used and crops rotated; better ways to conserve the land from erosion: instead of allowing the farms to be overstocked, they cut down the amount of cattle and build up the grade, etc.

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1. The Christian Missions Among Rural People: op. cit. p. 4

All of this is done for the converts to establish them in their own Christian experience and make for a strong community. But look what is going on in the meantime among the unconverted people; they cannot help but see how prosperous the converts are, the crops are more productive, the land is continually in use, the stock is fat and supplies more meat, and there is no superstition troubling them, for Christ has set them free. These people who have not adhered to the preaching of the Gospel as yet, are beginning to be convinced that there is something the missionary has that will benefit them. As a result agriculture has made them interested enough to listen to the missionary.

An extract from a report, of one of the pastors-teachers to the missionary at Old Umtali, Rhodesia, illumines the picture of this practical agriculture as an aid to evangelism.

All the people were in trouble about vegetable, about digging garden and when I talked to them about manure from the chickens, they say, "We are not dirty people."

Jesus said, Not all talking but doing.

I took my hoe and digged garden beds. Four beds I put manure. Four beds I did not put manure.

People say, "How can you take manure from chicken house! Are you not afraid 'tis bad smell?"

I asked the people, are you like to see my garden? I want you to see the different you go to find between them.

They say, "Some beds have poor vegetable, How 'tis happen?"

I say, It is the reason they have no manure. Tastes the vegetables in every bed. They bad taste? No, all they are right. You are believe



they have different. My teacher did teach me. I did put manure. That manure I did take from chicken house. If you want I will teach you." They say, "We do like you will teach us about gardens." <sup>1</sup>

#### E. Scientific Agriculture is not Evangelism

The farmer who knows little of scientific agriculture connects the everyday events of life to his religious belief. Spirits cause his misfortunes. A sick animal, a poor crop, a scanty monsoon is a sign of god's displeasure. Therefore, on a certain night in July he waves a torch in front of every animal in the village to defeat undesirable spirits. For that reason he sows seed on a certain day so that the harvest may be good. When one comes along and shows that animal diseases are due to certain bacteria, when a poor crop is traced to a fungus, when soil temperature, instead of the phase of the moon, governs sowing dates, the farmer's attention is distracted from the place of God in his fortune to these events. Thus the knowledge of science in agriculture can, if not precisely and fully stated and carefully supplemented, lead one away from rather than contribute to the understanding of an allegiance to the Kingdom of God as set forth by evangelism. <sup>2</sup>

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1. Hunnicutt and Reid: op.cit. p. 126
2. Mosher, Arthur T.: The Kingdom of God and Rural Construction, The Christian Rural Fellowship Bulletin No. 56, Nov. 1940, p. 3 - This will be referred to hereafter as C.R.F.B.

## F. Summary

Agriculture can be an aid to evangelism, as has been shown, and likewise the scientific method of agriculture may become a detriment. The missionary by keeping the goal in mind and having the presentation of the Gospel as the core of his evangelism will find agriculture being geared as an aid to evangelism.

CHAPTER IV  
THE FUNCTION OF AGRICULTURAL MISSIONS  
IN  
REACHING THE WHOLE LIFE

## CHAPTER IV

### THE FUNCTION OF AGRICULTURAL MISSIONS IN REACHING THE WHOLE LIFE

#### A. Introduction

There is a Presbyterian Church at Luebo, Africa, which refuses to receive a man into its membership who does not have a garden of his own. Such a rule might be hard on the men of some churches in America, but they base it on I Timothy 5:8 which reads: "If any man provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel." If the native church in Africa considers agriculture of such importance for church membership, is it not about time we in our mission work consider we have not done our full duty to our fellow Christians in mission fields until with the Gospel message we have also taught them to provide for their own families and for their own churches? This is, therefore, the text for the gospel of agriculture in missions for reaching the whole of the individual's life.<sup>1</sup>

Christian missions is an attitude of love that seeks expression in the process of sharing the best it

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1. Case, Brayton C.: Crops and Christians, p. 1

possesses with all who need its services. Christian missions sees man as a unit, recognizes and tries to meet the needs of the whole man, material as well as spiritual.<sup>1</sup>

What then are some values inherent in agricultural missions which make reaching the whole life possible?

#### B. Agriculture in Providing Farm Home and Farm Family

First is the religious value of rural life -- the establishment of farm home and family. All individual and social progress depends upon the condition of the home and family. Foreign missionaries tell us that they are severely handicapped in their work until they are able to secure something of the home and family ideal as a basis. This of course cannot be established until people have accepted Christ and have the desire from within to do something about it. That is when agricultural missions play an important part in establishing the home.

Picture in imagination, a well-kept farmstead. See the physical relationship of the house, its relationship to barn and fields. It is the radiating center of the family's manifold activities and this relationship goes deeper than geography. For a better farm home is the center of the whole life of the family; a cooperative enterprise in which each member makes his own diverse and distinctive contribution to the whole; a miniature democracy in which each counts for one and is accorded equal worth. In this complicated network

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1. Blackburn, Linwood E.: op. cit. p. 1

of attitudes and relationships which compose family living, the children hold a place of highest importance. And the better farm home is concerned about the whole life of its members: body, mind, soul -- food, clothing, shelter -- educational, economical and vocational opportunities, leisure, recreation -- character, personality. This home is a basic source of attitudes and ideals and a fellowship in which each member finds security and moral support. It seeks to bring to its members every resource for development of well-proportioned abundant lives.<sup>1</sup>

The farm home and farm family can have notable elements which have profound significance in a religious culture. The first may be unity. The second may be loyalty. The peculiar characteristic of farming as a vocation is that it not only requires these elements but it also provides them. The economic forces of farm life help to bind the family together. Cooperation and loyalty are the essence of success on a farm. Divorce is rare. Children are an asset on the farm whereas in urban centers they are a liability.

A great value agricultural missions can lend in reaching the whole life is found in outlining the basis for good farm home and farm family. John La Farge, S.J., says,

We honor farming as a way of life, because agriculture provides the best setting for the home, because it encourages home virtues, makes for sta-

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1. Smathers, Eugene: A Rural Church Program that makes religion the qualifying factor in every experience of life, C.R.F.B., No. 66, Nov. 1941, p. 1

bility and purity of family life, the foundation upon which society is built, the milieu in which the individual receives the best start in any form of life that he may later embrace, and that proves the best form of life for the majority of human beings. Where do we differ in this from the best Protestant tradition, or the immemorial tradition of Israel?<sup>1</sup>

This thesis shares this view. It is significant that the high ideals of home and family life, of solidarity, home cooperation, and of mutual respect may be found in rural homes.<sup>2</sup>

#### C. Guidance in Wider Distribution of Private Property

The second value agricultural missions can achieve in reaching the whole life is wider distribution of private property. This is a fundamental religious principle and essentially Christian. Now at this time of economic chaos when the world is in turmoil and confusion on that subject, it is well to think about agriculture and rural life as having within them a possible economic balance wheel. The family owned and operated farm provides within a nation's life the widest distribution of productive property. The farm provides an opportunity for a convert to stand upon his own economic feet, self-supporting and self-respecting. Other elements of valid independence

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1. Agriculture as a Way of Life, C.R.F.B., No. 27-2, Dec. 1937, p. 2
2. Ziegler, Edward K.: A Christian Rural Life Philosophy, C.R.F.B., No. 67, Dec. 1941, p.4

depend upon this one for their foundation. Ralph L. Williamson says,

There is a necessary place for collective or cooperative ownership and the farmer must have far more of it. There is a true place, however, for individual ownership and it has a powerful influence on character development.<sup>1</sup>

The present day peril in national life is the trend toward corporation farming and tenancy. But in spite of this trend, the fact is that out of eight million farms in this country, about four million are owned and operated by the people who live on them.<sup>2</sup> This is a very significant fact in national life of the United States. It is the best safeguard against the world-wide agitation and all forms of extreme economic radicalism. Therefore, it is a great part of agricultural missions to encourage family farm ownership. It is one of the best ways through which to spread the ownership of productive property; it enables a group of people to own and control the tools of their industry. Whenever anyone else or other group own and control the means of a man's livelihood, they control or own the man. This is the difficulty of minority groups within a nation and is the danger especially on the mission fields.

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1. Williamson Ralph L.: We Need a Rural Philosophy, C.R.F. B., No. 35, Sept. 1944, p. 5
2. Dawber, Mark A.: Agriculture Way of Life, C.R.F.B., No. 27-3, Dec. 1937, p. 3



#### D. Principle of Cooperation

The third value has to do with the principle of cooperation. Reference has already been made to this principle as it relates to the farm family. One can think now of agriculture and rural life in general. It may seem on the surface somewhat inconsistent to stress on the one hand the principle of wide distribution of productive property, as a matter of individual and also of social interest and value, and now to stress the need of cooperation on the other hand. As these are examined more closely, it is hardly possible for these to be conflicting or inconsistent. A person can cultivate all those things which go to the making of his highest development as an individual and at the same time achieve this in full cooperation with his neighbors in the community. The motto of the Christian rural community is "all for each and each for all". Through all the reaches of its program the church will seek to encourage the spirit of mutual helpfulness and service, preaching community cooperation as the practical expression of the Christian law of love. One needs to regain in modern setting and application, the spirit and practice of the pioneer rural community, with its clearings and barn-raisings and other activities of mutual helpfulness.<sup>1</sup> Cooperation is Christian and cut-throat competition is anti-

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1. Smathers, Eugene: op. cit. C.R.F.B., p. 4

Christian. Apart from its economic value cooperation is an important aspect of human relations. The farm makes demands upon the community that industry does not make. Agriculture and rural life have within them certain community qualities that make for cooperative endeavor. Economic cooperation can be secured only as the spiritual aspects of cooperation have been recognized and developed. Rural life has tremendous possibilities from the point of view of such spiritual cooperation.<sup>1</sup> "Bear ye one anothers burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ."<sup>2</sup> Agricultural missions shoulders the responsibility in making this a reality.

#### E. Recognition of Holy Earth

The fourth value is that of the land, access to the land and the use of the land as a means of livelihood. "The earth is the Lords and the fulness thereof."<sup>3</sup> Reverence for the soil is another element in rural philosophy. If God created the earth, so is the earth hallowed and if it is hallowed, so must one deal with it devotedly and with care that he does not despoil it, and be mindful of his relations to all beings that live on it. It must

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1. Dawber, Mark H.: C.R.F.B., No. 27-3, Dec. 1937
2. Gal. 6:2
3. Ps. 24:1

be considered religiously. "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."<sup>1</sup>

Not only the possession of the land, but the use of land for agricultural purposes carries with it significant spiritual as well as social and economic values. A sufficient use of the land is the first criterion of any civilization. Land is a teacher. Job had to face facts when he concluded, "Speak to the earth and it shall teach thee."<sup>2</sup> One cannot attempt to control the earth, but its still small voice has its impression upon its servants. Land is as patient as a father but as stern as a judge. The proper use of the land and the sense of holy stewardship will go far in establishing the Christian convert. Substitute the service motive for the profit motive and land becomes the healing power for most of the convert's ills. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."<sup>3</sup>

#### F. Agriculture as a Means of Labor

A fifth value arising from agricultural missions is that of labor. The dignity of labor needs to be revived. The education which many natives received was bookish and tended to make them believe work with the hands was de-

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1. Bailey, Liberty H.: The Holy Earth, C.R.F.B. , No. 1  
June 1935, p. 4
2. Job 12:8
3. Matt. 5:5

grading. As a result many semicivilized natives despise manual work.<sup>1</sup> These ideas need to be removed, for when the thought of drudgery and heavy toil is alleviated, life on the farm will be accompanied always by wholesome and exacting labor. Life in agriculture offers relief from the monotony of idleness, from the devastating time-killing, morally weakening trends of modern industrialism. Working with one's hands in harmony with one's mind and heart provides a Christian discipline that can best be achieved in a rural environment, in particular upon the farm. Farming is more than a way of making a living; it is more than a process of getting something material with which to sustain life; it is a way of life which is worthy of high honor and respect because of the rich spiritual values inherent in it, and the limitless opportunities it affords for the moral, cultural and spiritual development of persons who practice it. The farmer and his family cooperate with God in the creation of food for his children.<sup>2</sup> Agricultural missions reaches the whole life by proper emphasis in the right direction of labor and all its benefits.

Julian S. Rea, the Amherst graduate in charge of the agricultural work at Kambini, reports that the main features of the agricultural program carried on with this school as a center include famine prevention, the securing of new food crops and forage

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1. Ante., p. 22

2. Ziegler, Edward K. A Christian Rural Life Philosophy C.R.F.B., No. 67, Dec. 1941, p. 2

crops, the development of markets for the disposition of money crops which the African Christians are taught to raise, the development of new methods of cultivation, the invention and development of labor-saving devices, the teaching of better methods of preparing new and old foods, the introduction and development of new and better varieties of grain, peanuts, beans and other seeds, teaching the care and use of animals and their products. Mr. Rea and other missionaries in this region are planning in the near future to develop the use of the such natural resources as nut-bearing trees, and tropical plants that can be used as food or for their oils, medicinal plants and those yielding colors and dyes. In addition to this the wives of the evangelists at Kambini have been taught to make rough dishes by means of a simple potter's wheel, boys have been taught to make baskets from reeds grown in the neighborhood, and the use of a weaving loom, lathe, bellows, oil extractor, drying rack for fruits and vegetables and other mechanical devices which have been installed.

"I believe," concludes Mr. Rea, "that the Christ that came that the African might have life and have it more abundantly will bless the type of work outlined here, and use it for the real advancement of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. This alone will assure a delayed justice to the African."<sup>1</sup>

#### G. Summary

One could enumerate almost indefinitely these values which agricultural missions share in reaching the whole life as they are primarily inherent in rural life and must be revived and sustained if the convert is to be adjusted in his new found faith. Perhaps these values could be summed up as follows: worthy ideals grow out of common things and daily life and, in particular, in con-

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1. Hunnicutt and Reid: op. cit. p. 128-129

tact with nature; main impulses and satisfaction must come out of the individual in his new found faith and the background of shared community life only as he is directed by organizations such as agricultural missions whose main object is to relate things of the earth to Christ.

If this statement is accepted as the criterion of agricultural missions then certainly they have a part in reaching the whole life of man. The native is in peril of selling out his rural birthright for a mess of urban pottage. This becomes more evident as the men seemingly are forced to work in mines and other white-man jobs to make a living. It is not too late to stem this tide. We may still rescue for human society these native values of rural life by the establishment of more agricultural missions.

CHAPTER V

GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

## CHAPTER V

### GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

#### A. Purpose Restated

As stated at the outset of the present study, the purpose of this thesis has been to present scientific agriculture as a vital aid in the promotion of evangelism among the people of Natal and in the maintenance of normal living so as to establish the Christian convert. The two main questions to be answered by the thesis were: what is the relation of agriculture as an aid to evangelism, and what is the function of agriculture as an aid to the Gospel in reaching the whole life?

#### B. Summary

The procedure was to gain an insight into the agriculture of the natives of Natal, namely the Zulus and Kafirs, prior to 1850 before European influence. This was accomplished by considering the production of crops and the raising of cattle. The natives have been enshrouded in superstitions which have influenced every phase of their lives, especially farming. It was shown how witchcraft and spirits governed their planting and of the primitive methods employed. Many of the present day agricultural problems were listed and discussed. Some of



these were cattle ownership, population density, soil exhaustion because of poor cultivation, lack of workable land, migrant labor system, unsatisfactory system of land tenure, education too bookish, superstition and meager existence. Many of the present day problems are so because of the superstition which continues to control the natives.

This was followed by showing what Christian missions have done in the promoting of agriculture and lifting the social conditions of men. Specific stations were mentioned and discussed so as to make the data more concrete. Agricultural courses have been added to the schools and missions and special demonstrators have been sent out to rural communities. All this has helped to establish the Christian converts as tillers of the soil.

Next was shown how agriculture is an aid to evangelism; for the Christian missions in their evangelistic efforts have found agriculture as a supplementary aid in reaching the masses for Christ. The unconverted have seen the progress the Christian convert makes in his farming and it convinces them that it is an asset to learn the scientific way. This chapter was followed by an explanation of the effect agricultural missions have in reaching the whole life. Ways in which this was accomplished were: agriculture in providing farm home and farm family, guidance in wider distribution of private

property, principle of cooperation, recognition of the holy earth, and agriculture as a means of labor.

### C. Conclusions

Many writers consulted in the preparation of this thesis have stressed that agriculture is evangelism just as medical or educational work are also said to be. It has been the standing idea of this thesis that evangelism is the presenting of the truth and life of Christ by word and life in a way to persuade men to accept Christ as Lord and Savior. Agriculture, medical and educational work are direct results of and aids to evangelism. This thesis has endeavored to show how agriculture aids evangelism and agricultural missions reach out and include the whole life of the rural native.

The final conclusion reached in this writing is that agricultural missions must be emphasized in the future if a strong indigenous church is to be built.

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