



ESCUELA AGRICOLA PANAMERICANA
TEGUCIGALPA HONDURAS
MONTHLY NEWS LETTER

DECEMBER 1956. At the end of each year it is interesting to stop and look back; to reflect upon what has taken place in our particular field of action; and to repent our sins of omission and commission. Unfortunately, there is not space in a Monthly News Letter to ponder the latter adequately.

We are thinking only of tropical America, of course. We like the increase of interest in vocational training in agriculture. The problem seems to be personnel to do the training. Some years ago Nelson Rockefeller asked us, "How many institutions like Escuela Agricola Panamericana do we need in tropical America?" We started counting on our fingers and replied, "We could well use at least fifteen, but don't try to start fifteen all at once. They just simply could not be staffed." We look forward to the day when there will be fifteen or even more, all well staffed.

We also like the definite trend toward higher education in agriculture, and in this connection we wish particularly to express our appreciation of what has been done, and is being done, by the Rockefeller Foundation, by various governments, by the University of Florida and other educational centers. We believe in scholarships given on the basis of ability and interest in agriculture. We are enthusiastic regarding the achievements of young Latin Americans who have returned to their home countries after having been trained in technical fields by great men in great institutions. And we do not mean to say that all great institutions are in the United States or Europe or any other part of the world. There is a rapidly increasing number of able teachers in tropical America, and it is axiomatic that when a man wants to learn, he wants to sit at the feet of a good teacher. Not much else is necessary.

Without yielding an inch of ground in connection with our almost religious belief in vocational training, we wish to refer with profound satisfaction to the number of young Latin Americans who are not content with vocational training but who, after obtaining this, go ahead to earn the B.S. degree, the M.S. degree, and even the doctorate. These men are forming the nucleus of future agricultural science in our part of the world.

Finally, we desire to express our admiration for the work which is being done by such international organizations as FAO and ICA. Of course we particularly have in mind the extension services, because many of our graduates are taking part in these services.

We like to sit back and think how easy it is to help the small farmer by giving him better planting materials of corn and beans and rice and sugar cane and the like. He gets bigger crops without greater cash outlay and no more work. You can't beat that sort of proposition. And it most certainly is a fine start. After a few years the small farmer will have some money to buy equipment and fertilizers. But begin by giving him better planting materials and better blood in his livestock - if he is prepared to feed his livestock well. Not much use for better blood if it is not fed.

So at the end of this Year of our Lord 1956, we end by saying what we have said above: We need, and we believe we are seeing, many better trained farmers. We need, and we believe we are seeing, an increasing number of specialists who can attack our technical problems. And we are getting efficient help from the outside. The future never looked brighter!