

Translation: Jasmin Günther

Zittau i/S, Brüederstrasse 3, 14th November 1905

To Your Grace

Count Linden

President of the Württemberg Association for Commercial Geography

Director of the Museum of Ethnology etc.

Stuttgart

Your Grace!

I have been delighted by your honorable letter of 10th November and I was indeed very glad to hear that the Philippine collection has finally arrived.

I blush due to your praise; on the other hand, your warm thanks and the prospect to work for you again in the future encourage me.

Because I am still running for an appropriate post in Germany, despite some unsuccessful attempts at the Federal Foreign Office in Berlin as you can see from the attached copy (a), I am very thankful that Your Grace strives to provide me with patronages by advertising the arrival and content of the collection when at an appropriate place.

My long-time protector, Exe. Baron Dr. von Holleben, who has erstwhile introduced me to Your Grace, explained to me some time ago – when I saw him again after years and told him about my wish to work for German interests just for once – that you only start to be given attention within the German homeland when you own titles and medals.

Attached copy (b) is my first attempt to have my perhaps humble but well-loved decorations from abroad approved within my home country. Maybe this document will allow me to come into sight as more worthy in the future. For the same reason, I have further attached my CV.

In deep gratitude and most respectfully,

Gustav Niederlein

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Curriculum Vitae

I, Ernst Gustav Niederlein, was born as son of Evangelical Lutheran parents on 18th October 1858 at a farmhouse in Gross-Dehsa close to Loebau i/S (in Saxony) and attended the Wendish village school until Easter 1870. From then on I attended the secondary modern school in Loebau until Easter 1873, where I received the following diploma:

Intellectual competencies: rather good

Attentiveness: excellent

Diligence: excellent

Organization: excellent

Obedience: excellent

Progress at:

Religion: excellent

German: excellent

History: excellent

Geography: excellent

Physical science: excellent

Natural history: excellent

Math: excellent

Geometry: excellent

Drawing: excellent

Writing: excellent

Singing: rather good

Latin: rather good

French: rather good

While I have been trained at the steel and metal goods store of Mr. Ewald Braun in Bautzen from Easter 1873 to Easter 1876, I also attended the "Handelslehranstalt" (school of commerce) for three years, where I received the following diploma:

Final grade:

Commercial sciences: very good

Accounting: rather good

Correspondence: rather good

Business calculations: rather good

History: rather good

Geography and commodity economics: rather good

Calligraphy: rather good

French: good with distinction

English: rather good

Geometry: very good

Algebra: rather good

Chemistry: with distinction

Diligence: very good

Manners: very good

After I have received the diploma, I joined the Royal Saxon 103rd Infantry Regiment as volunteer for a year. When my wish to be transferred to Hamburg for educational reasons was declined by the General of the Saxon Army in fall 1876, I decided to become a missionary after the termination of my military service and became a teacher at the Niesky Brethren assembly in Herrnhut.

The urge to work in faraway places caused me to search for further education in the natural sciences at the Museum of the Goerlitz Science Association and curator Dr. R. Pock (Peck? Peek?), where I was encouraged by a letter from famous botanist and traveler Dr. G. Schweinfurt and from where Prof.

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Dr. Georg Hieronymus took me with him to the University of Cordoba in Argentina as assistant in May 1878. While I was working at the Botanical Museum there, I attended lectures on botany at the University.

After a longer expedition to the Andes Mountains, I became – alongside Prof. Dr. P. G. Lorentz and Prof. Dr. A. Doering, who were members of the National Academy of the Hard (Natural) Sciences – a member of the scientific commission that was assigned to the general staff of the “Indianerfeldzug” [i.e. the “Conquest of the desert”] of the then minister of war and later President of the Argentinean Republic, general Julio A. Roca.

After completion of this expedition, which I participated in as major and extended by pursuing my research on the surrounding territory of the natives unknown to science, which has about the size of Germany, I took part in the work on the whole scientific material of this campaign, which was considered a national feat.

As soon as the scientific work was ready to print in August 1880, I returned to Germany in order to complete my insufficient academic training and attended, for this reason and upon the advice of S. E. the Royal German minister resident in Buenos Aires and later a German ambassador, Dr. von Holleben, the University of Agriculture in Berlin.

The Geography Association Geography in Berlin allowed me to use of their library and the adjacent chamber, called the Africa room, as an apartment.

During my studies I attended the following lectures:

Economic theory	Prof. Ad. Wagner
Practical economics	Prof. Ad. Wagner
Economics (exercises)	Prof. Ad. Wagner
Practical economics	Dr. R. Jannasch
Police science (Criminology? Public policy?)	Prof. Ad. Wagner
Police science (selection of subject area)	Dr. zu Putlitz
Finance	Prof. Ad. Wagner
(Maritime) Trade law	Prof. Lewis
Trade law (exercises)	Prof. Lewis
Penology	Prof. Berner
Agriculture business economics	Prof. A. Orth
Agriculture business economics	Prof. Settegast
Agriculture	Prof. A. Orth
Ethnology of the New World	Prof. Mueller

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Regional studies: Italy	Prof. Kiepert
Italian	Lector Rossi
General history of philosophy	Prof. Deussen
Geophysics	Prof. Foerster
Experimental physics	Prof. Boernstein
Meteorology	Prof. Boernstein
Organic chemistry	Prof. Landelt
Physical chemistry	Dr. Baumann
Chemistry (practicum)	Prof. Landelt
Mineralogy	Prof. Gruner
Mineralogy (practicum)	Prof. Gruner
Geognosis	Prof. Gruner
Anatomy and evolution of plants	Prof. Kay
Plant physiology	Prof. Frank
Plant physiology (experimental)	Prof. Kay
Botany (systematic)	Prof. Wittmack
Botany (agricultural and silvicultural)	Prof. Wittmack
Plants in Asia and Africa	Prof. Ascherson
Zoology	Prof. Peters
Animal physiology	Prof. Zuntz
Pedology	Prof. Gruner
Agricultural pedology	Prof. A. Orth
Agricultural pedology (laboratory)	Prof. Orth
Plant cultivation	Prof. A. Orth
Production of cane sugar	Dr. Degener
Agricultural feeding	Dr. Lehmann
Animal breeding	Prof. Settegast
Anatomy of domestic animals	Prof. Mueller

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Diseases of domestic animals	Prof. Deckerhoff
Physiology of domestic animals	Prof. Settegast
Horse breeding	Prof. Settegast
Cattle breeding	Dr. Hartmann
Sheep breeding	Dr. Hartmann
Wool production and trade	Prof. Settegast
Dairy	Benne Martiny
Geodesy	Ing. Schotte

During my student days I published – at the behest of my patron Dr. Gustav Nachtigal, Centre Admiral von Schleinitz and Dr. Paul Guesfeldt and others – the results of my travels in Argentina in the journal of the Geography Association in Berlin, in the publications of the Science Association in Goerlitz and other scientific journals. Furthermore, I gave lectures on Argentina and its importance for German colonization at the Central Society of Commercial Geography and Promotion of German interests abroad in Berlin, where they have also been published, as well as at the branch office in Leipzig and participated in the national movement for the support of an organized German emigration to Argentina, so that I was able to accompany the first German Colonial land examination expedition (of the Leipzig Colonial Association) to Argentina and Paraguay in 1883, which was initiated by my work.

Afterwards I returned to Germany, published the results of the examination and continued my studies at the University in Berlin.

In January 1884, I was appointed National Forest Inspector of the Republic by the Argentinean government. During my expeditions for the exploration of the Argentinean national territory, I realized that a territory of roughly 1000 square leguas has been occupied by Brazil, which legally belonged to Argentina and which I consequently reclaimed as such. As a result of this, I was appointed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Buenos Aires in 1885 in order to resolve this age-old border issue.

After a border contract between the two countries had been achieved, I became member of the Argentinean and Brazilian border commission until 1892. However, in 1886 and 1887 I had been occupied with research on the flora and fauna as well as the economic conditions and capabilities in the border areas.

In 1888, the Argentinean government instructed me to collect and identify exhibition objects for the World Fair in Paris. In 1889, I was sent to the World Fair as one of the Argentinean governmental commissioners.

Because I had been assigned with the writing of a paper on the diversity of the Argentinean forest in comparison to other countries and with the distribution of the exhibition items to 40 European museums after the World Fair, I stayed in Paris until May 189x and made a trip of inspection to the

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most significant museums in Europe until I returned to Argentina in the same year, where I was employed as natural scientist at the Museum of Argentinean Products. I published several works on various Argentinean crop plants in the bulletin of the museum as well as a summary of my results from my travels in Misiones, Corrientes and bordering countries (1883-1888).

In the following year I was appointed national inspector of the Agricultural Department by the government. I have published numerous articles in its bulletin as well, including two monographs, one about manioc production and one about tobacco production, which was also published separately and in several countries, such as Costa Rica, Mexico and Nicaragua. In the same year, I was entrusted with the selection of 1300 square leguas of land for the colonial business of baron Hirsch. However, my work was disrupted because the Argentinean chambers would not allow the selling of such land for a Jewish colonization. Back then I wrote a printed report for baron von Hirsch about the colonization potential of Paraguay and the Argentinean territories Misiones, Formosa and Chace Austral. I also examined other private landholdings for colonial purposes.

In 1892, I had again been assigned by the Argentinean government with the collection and scientific identification of exhibition items for the World Fair in Chicago. For this purpose I organized an expedition accompanied by 9 experts, for which the government provided two naval steamboats. After my return I had been send to the World Fair in order to act as one of the governmental commissioners once again.

After the World Fair, the city of Philadelphia demanded my services from the Argentinean government in order to organize a number of natural and commercial products from all around the world, around 13000, mostly oriental objects.

I had been in negotiations with the French Colonial Minister for the purpose of transferring French colonial products at negotiations, when I was recalled in spring 1897 in order to immediately travel to Mexico. During my tour (for the purpose of collecting [objects]), I also had to invite the President, provincial governors and honorable statesmen, merchants and industrialists to the first pan-American trade congress in Philadelphia.

After I have attended the congress as one of its directors ("Dirigent"), on occasion of which President McKinley also officially declared the Philadelphia Commercial Museum open, I participated in a 40-day-tour to the most important commercial and industrial centers in the Unites States alongside 65 other members, including Councilor of Commerce Paul Zilling, director of the Württemberg export sample stock in Stuttgart.

Following this, I traveled to the Central American exhibition in Guatemala, where I acquired rich collections and not only visited Guatemala but Honduras, Salvador, Coast Rica, Panama and British Honduras as well.

After my return, I wrote monographs on Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala and Honduras, of which three were published and – after a trip to Turkey and Russia – travelled east as head of the so called US Commercial Commission to China, where I stayed for one and a half years and not only got to know China, but also Korea, Japan, parts of Siberia, the Philippines and the Sandwich Islands. At the same time, I invited the governments, chambers of commerce, guilds, as well as important tradesmen of the respective countries to the World trade congress, which was held in October 1899

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around the same time of a National expert exhibition in Philadelphia organized by the Philadelphia Commercial Museum.

After I have attended this congress as director as well and reported especially on China, about which I have written several extensive monographs, I was sent to St. Petersburg (alongside thousands of Chinese import and export items as well as articles of daily use?) in order to come to an agreement with the Russian government, according to which the American exhibition of 1900 in Paris should have brought to either St. Petersburg or Moscow after its closure. Simultaneously, I opened negotiations with Minister Witte and Minister of Transport Hilkoﬀ because of a visit to the Russian railways by a larger group of American millionaires. The Boxer Rebellion in China blocked both projects. I spent the year of 1900 as general delegate of the Philadelphia Museums in Europe, partly in order to increase the commercial information material and the collections, partly in order to organize an international automobile exhibition for Philadelphia, partly in order to act as official delegate of the United States, Mexico and Siam at the World Fair in Paris and international congresses and in order to work as member of the international jury.

After the World Fair, I initially forwarded numerous exhibition items from all over the world to the Philadelphia Museums and devoted myself to the re-establishment of the French Colonial Museum at the Palais Royal in Paris, for which I have been offered all doublets, approximately 30000, for the Philadelphia Commercial Museum as salary. I worked on this project without interruption until May 1902 and studied and catalogued over 35000 items of all kinds and, at the end, published an adequate piece of work, of which a second edition has been released by the French government. I further prepared various exhibition items of the French colonies for the pan-American exhibition in Buffalo as vice president of the French-American committee and later a collection for the fishery exhibition in Ostende and another one for the French colonial exhibition in Hanoi in Indochina. In addition, it had been decided by the French government that I should undertake a longer journey through all French colonies for the purpose of collecting accompanied by the general secretary of the colonies. However, I had to turn down the offer because I had been appointed to Washington by the American Secretary of War in order to organize the Philippine participation in the World Fair in St. Louis. I then quit my position as scientific head of the town museums in Philadelphia and travelled to Manila.

Within a year I was able to return to America with a satisfying number of over 70000 exhibition items of all kinds, which had been collected under the most difficult circumstances.

In December 1903, I was quickly sent to Spain in order to purchase a large collection for the American government.

Since my return to St. Louis in February 1904, I have dedicated myself to the Philippine exhibition as Director of Exhibits. Apart from my work for the Philippine jury, which pressed on my shoulders only and which resulted in almost seven thousand premiums, I also had to act as jury for Argentina and Austria.

A well-known American author, Mr. William E. Curtis, wrote the following about my Philippine work in the Chicago Record-Herald on 22nd October 1904: „The Filipino exhibit occupies forty-seven acres of space and has cost to date 1400000 \$... it was collected and installed by Dr. Gustavo Niederlein, an eminent ethnologist, who was connected with the Latin-American department of the Chicago exposition and since been engaged with the Philadelphia Museums. Dr. Niederlein is a remarkable

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man, and no one else could have collected so large, so complete and so interesting an exhibit within the two years that he was employed. With phenomenal energy and skill he searched the Philippine Archipelago, seized everything he could find that illustrates the life, customs, commerce, arts and industries of the people, and installed this here in a scientific and attractive manner.”

Mr. A. L. Lawshe, auditor of the Philippine Islands and chairman of the exhibition commission, wrote the following in the official report: “The task of collecting the material devolved upon Dr. Niederlein, who as Director of Exhibits, was given sole charge of this work. He arrived in the islands for the purpose in October 1902. The exhibit is of itself a magnificent testimonial to his intelligence, zeal and energy, and is conceded by all to be the one surpassing feature of the World Fair in 1904.” Also, the following to the Secretary of War in Washington: “I have read the letter written to you by Dr. Niederlein, asking you for a recommendation which may secure to him a permanent position in his home country. In my opinion he deserves the strongest kind of a letter, which you and the President can write in his favor in order to assist him to the position he desires. In initiating the Philadelphia Commercial Museum and the Bureau of Information which has done so much for the extension of American export trade and completing the Museum in commerce products so that it stands unique in the world, and in serving as he did the Philippine Government in getting together this exhibit which I feel sure has done much good in the United States, he merits the consideration of yourself and the President. I sincerely hope that you will be able to procure for him a position at home.”

The Secretary of War, Mr. WM/H. Taft, wrote in his letter of 7th February 1905 to the American Ambassador Exe. Charlemagne Tower in Berlin the following: “Dr. Niederlein has been employed by the Government of the Philippine Islands the past two and a half years as a member of the Philippine Exposition Board at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition at St. Louis. Dr. Niederlein is a gentleman of much scientific learning who was on the staff of the Philadelphia Commercial Museum, and drafted in our service to go to the Philippines and make a collection of Philippine products and exhibits for the Philippine Governments participation at the World’s Fair at St. Louis. He not only brought to bear, in getting up this exhibit, extensive experience and scientific knowledge, but an indefatigable energy. He was in the Philippines about a year and a half, then came to the United States in the establishment and organization of the Philippine Exposition. The Exposition was a great one and an unqualified success, for which he was largely responsible. Both the Philippine Government and the War Department hold Dr. Niederlein in high respect...”

About my work for the Philadelphia Museums, the director Dr. W. P. Wilson passed the following judgment, which was published in the October issue of the World Fair Bulletin in 1902: It states: Dr. W. P. Wilson, Director of the Philadelphia Commercial Museum, says of Dr. Niederlein: “He is one of the most able man in diplomacy and special work with foreign governments I have ever had connected with the museums, or have been associated with. He is a thoroughly trained scientific and business man. He is a man of broad cultivation, speaking readily five different languages. A native of Germany, he spent ten years in the emp[ire?] of the Argentine Government as one of its officials. He had charge of their explorations and the study of their raw products, and was one of the most important investigators and witnesses on the boundary questions between Brazil and the Argentine Republic. He has been with me since the beginning of the museum. I have sent him on missions to the governments of Mexico and each one of the Central American States, every one of which was successfully accomplished. I have sent him to China, Japan and the Philippines, where he has in relation to those governments, made himself a power. I have also sent him on missions to almost every European Government. During the time of the recent French Exposition and up to the present

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moment, I have had him in Paris, where he first negotiated important concessions from the French Government, for our institutions, (...) where now the French Government, on account of his services to them in the Colonies and in the classification and mapping out of their various products and industries to their advantage, are urging him to come into their service. He is a very high class official, whom you could never find out of employment."

Concerning my work in France, the Director "Office Colonial" Mr. N. Auricoste reported to the "Chef du cabinet" of the Minister of the Colonies the following: "D'autre part, M. le Dr. Heckel, directeur de l'institut colonial de Marseille, qui s'est livré au cours de nombreuses visites, á un examen approfondi du travail accompli par M. Niederlein sur les collections de l'office colonial, a exprimé l'avis que ce présentait les plus sérieuses garanties scientifiques et qu'il était d'un intérêt inappréciables au point de vue de la reconstitution d'une Exposition permanente."

The report of meeting of the "Conseil d'Administration de l'office colonial" of 15th November 1901 includes occasional recommendation for mentioned travel (tour for the purpose of collecting) to the French colonies: "Á propos de la compétence particulière de M. Niederlein, de sa persévérance et de son esprit de méthode, M. Auricoste cite l'opinion de M. le Dr. Heckel, Directeur de l'institut colonial de Marseille, qui lui a rapporté avoir dit au Ministre qu'il n'aurait pas entrepris ce travail pour 50000 francs. M. Heckel a déclaré que le Ministre et le conseil d'administration méritaient la reconnaissance du monde coloniale pour avoir profité d'une pareille occasion de remettre á jour les collections de l'ancienne Exposition et que celles-ci n'avaient jamais été si (...) sèment cataloguées et classées."

Moreover, it is stated in the same report of the President, Mr. Eug. Étienne, currently Secretary of War (until recently Minister of the Interior of the French Republic): "Il estime, en effet, que cette proposition de M. Niederlein est une réelle bonne fortune pour l'office colonial et qu'elle lui permettrait de réaliser une œuvre considérable et des plus utiles qu'il serait difficile de mener á bien dans d'autres circonstances. M. Binger (Director of the Ministry of Colonial Affairs: Africa and Asia) est heureux de l'opinion que d'exprimer M. le Président. Il s'était, dans la précédente séance, (...) très partisan du projet, car il estime que le concours d'un homme (...) compétent que M. Niederlein permettrait á M. Noufflard de rapporter de cette mission des résultats très intéressants. M- le Président ajoute qu'il y voit un double avantage ; celui de permettre á l'office colonial de se munir de collections et de renseignements véritablement utiles aux commerçants et aux industriels et celui de fournir ces mêmes éléments d'informations aux États-Unis, où il estime que, grâce á l'enquête de M. Niederlein, nos colonies sont susceptibles de trouver des débouchés très avantageux. "

I was invited to become honorary member of the "Syndicat de la Presse colonial" and corresponding honorary member of the "Syndicat de la Presse agricole" in France. I received a medal of honor "en vermeille" from the "Société Nationale d'Encouragement au bien" for "Services distingués rendus aux colonies françaises. The French government appointed me as "Officier de l'instruction publique".

The Argentinean government gave me 4100 hectares of land. The government of Venezuela conferred a third class Bolivar medal on me. The King of Siam presented me with a Medal of the White Elephant. I received a first class medal of honor from the Philippine government. Since 1896, I am consul of Costa Rica and since 199x also consul of Guatemala in Philadelphia. Renowned scholars named numerous plants and animal species after me in order to honor me. G. Niederlein