THE TEACHING OF SOILS IN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES.¹

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The conference of soils teachers held in Kentucky last June is ample proof that the men who are responsible for the soils courses in the agricultural colleges of this country are determined to improve the teaching of soils of collegiate grade. This is a wise and timely decision for many reasons. During the past twenty-five years little or no organized effort has been made by our agricultural college teachers to outline and develop courses in soils that are reasonably uniform, that cover the whole field in logical sequence, that command and hold the interest of students, and that act as a challenge to really competent men to specialize in soils and pursue graduate study along this line. Even a superficial study of the soils courses that are outlined in many current college catalogs conclusively proves this statement.

At least a few of our agricultural college faculties apparently fail to look upon instruction in soils as worthy of a place of real importance in the curriculum. This attitude is no doubt due in part to the fact that in some colleges the soils work has not been presented in a forceful manner by competent teachers. But is not the real reason found in the fact that in many cases the instruction in soils does not measure up to the standard that it should have reached at this time, especially in the beginning or elementary courses? We may not agree on this point and it may not be important. However,

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