Soil bacteriology as a science is of comparatively recent development. Its newness is evidenced by the way in which the subject is taught, but more particularly by the fact that it is not included at all as a separate course in many of our agricultural college curricula.

With the accumulation of information regarding the bacteriology of the soil, however, resulting from the extensive investigations along this line in recent years, the importance of the subject is becoming more and more widely recognized and most institutions are now awakening to a realization of the fact that the study of soils is almost as incomplete without bacteriology as it would be without chemistry. Indeed, it is quite generally conceded that three factors, the chemical, the physical, and the bacteriological, control the fertility or crop-producing power of soils, and that these factors are of about equal significance.

The teaching of soil bacteriology is therefore a subject of much interest and importance at the present time. The purpose of this paper is to call attention to the need for special courses in this science and to discuss the place which such courses should occupy in the curriculum and the ways in which the subject matter may be presented.

Soil bacteriology is an applied science, an application of bacteriology to soil science, and thus to agricultural science. Hence the teaching of the subject will be considered only in connection with agricultural courses. General bacteriological courses should undoubtedly include some reference to the relation of bacteria to soils, but obviously mere