FIELD WORK OF THE SOIL SURVEY IN ALBERTA

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Previous to 1921 each Dominion land surveyor was required to take notes on the soils in the territory surveyed by him. However, these notes were extremely brief and gave but a very meagre idea of the actual soil conditions. Often they were entirely misleading. This can be readily understood when it is realized that the civil engineer is not generally primarily interested in soil series and types. He took notes on the soils only to comply with instructions, and this he did under protest.

The beginning of the organized soil survey in Alberta dates back to the summer of 1921, when about two months' time was devoted to field work. Since then from one to two parties have been in the field each summer. At the present time our soil surveys are conducted as a cooperative project between the Departments of Soils and Geology of the University, the Provincial Department of Agriculture, and the Dominion Department of Interior, Topographical Branch.

The members of the Soils department of the University conduct the field and laboratory work in connection with mapping the soil types, collecting the samples, making the laboratory analyses, and preparing the reports. Dr. J. A. Allan of the Department of Geology inspects the areas and prepares a chapter in the appendix dealing with the geology of the area covered by each report.

The provincial Department of Agriculture provides the funds for conducting the field work and printing the maps.

The Department of Interior, Topographical Branch, supplies us with base maps and township maps containing data from their revision surveys, and is responsible for the drawing, lithographing and printing of the soil maps.

Each party consists of two permanent members with at various times a third member who visits the area being surveyed at least two or three times during the season. All members of field parties are engaged during the winter months in analyzing the samples collected during the summer.

The party is equipped with a car, sampling apparatus, standard samples, base and township maps, field books, etc. The party works...