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Elementary Agricultural Education in British Columbia

The first annual report which has just been issued by Mr. J. W. Gibson, Director of Elementary Agricultural Education in this province, is very interesting reading. It deals with the summer schools for teachers which were held in Victoria during the last two summers, the conferences held with the school inspectors of the province last July, the circulars issued to the teachers and secretaries of school boards, and the establishing of school gardens.

A course of lectures on "Forestry" was also presented to the second-year students in rural science by Mr. H. K. Robinson, of the Provincial Department of Forestry.

Throughout the course of the plan of combining field and laboratory studies with lectures and class discussions was followed. Numerous excursions were conducted as a regular part of the course, all of which helped to make the course more concrete and practical, as well as more interesting.

and other persons interested in educational matters in each inspectorate.

Following the adoption of a policy with respect to agricultural education in the province, an official circular was published setting forth in some detail the methods and conditions under which the work was to be carried on. A copy of this circular was sent to every teacher in the province, as well as to the secretary of every School Board. The main points



The real place to begin school-gardening. The first class of British Columbia teachers in Rural Science, Victoria, July, 1914.

Summer Schools in Rural Science.

The first summer course in rural science for teachers in the public schools of the province was given in July, 1914, in the Victoria High School. The attendance was larger than had been anticipated, no less than 171 teachers completing the course, while at the summer school of 1915 the attendance showed an increase, the first year class numbering 183, and the advanced or second-year class totalling 77.

During the last week of the summer course of 1915, Professor L. S. Klinck, dean of the Faculty of Agriculture in the University of British Columbia, gave a series of illustrated lectures, dealing with the breeding and improvement of plants, which were much appreciated by all who heard them. During the same week, Dr. Judson F. Clark of Vancouver, delivered a valuable series of lectures on "Forestry" to the teachers taking the first-year work in rural science.

Excursions were run to the Dominion Experimental Farm at Sidney and to some of the best dairy-farms, orchards, and poultry-ranches in the district. The social life of the teachers in attendance was also considered and several evenings of a social and literary nature were arranged. Once during each summer session the whole student body organized a combined excursion and picnic, which proved in each case to be a most enjoyable form of outing.

Immediately on the close of the summer school of 1914, Mr. Gibson visited a number of districts in the province for the purpose of obtaining first-hand information with reference to agricultural conditions, as well as to observe for himself the general conditions with reference to the schools of the province. He continued this line of investigation throughout the autumn months, and, in company with several School Inspectors, attended a number of conferences with School Boards, teachers,

dealt with in this announcement of the policy of the Department were as follows:

(1) Special training for teachers in rural science by means of special summer courses, a preliminary course recognized by the granting of an interim certificate, and a second or more advanced course leading to a diploma in rural science:

(2) Special grants to be allowed to teachers holding either the interim certificate or the diploma in rural science, as well as to other teachers who successfully carry on an approved scheme of work in their schools:

(3) Special grants to School Boards to meet the extra expenses in connection with rural-science work:

(4) Assistance to School Boards conditional upon certain expenditures to be made in the general improvement of school-grounds:

(5) Special grants to School Boards and teachers for organizing and maintaining