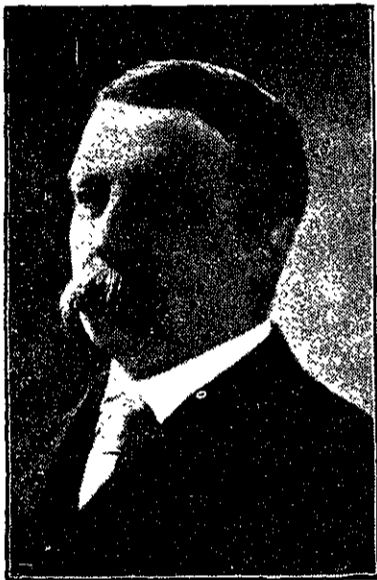


G. E. SUMMER SCHOOLS

By PROF. A. E. BURTON.

The first Summer School in connection with the course in Civil Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology was held at South Deerfield, Massachusetts, in June, 1888. It was an optional school, open to all students in Courses I., XI., and XII., who had completed satisfactorily the third year work. There was no extra charge for tuition, and it was not a required subject for the general civil engineering student. It was, however, a part of the required course in the option in Geodesy for Course I., and for the geological students.

The main object of this summer course was to give actual practice to students in the field methods of carrying on a geodetic and geological survey. In addition to this a special week of instruction was given in Hydraulic Measurements. A base line was measured and a system of triangulation extended from it. A topographical map was constructed, with the special ob-



PROF. A. E. BURTON.

ject of showing the relation of the topographic form to the geological structure, and the flow of the Connecticut River was determined by several different methods of gauging. Eight students were in attendance. Professor Swain conducted the Hydraulic Measurements; Professor Niles gave the instruction in Geology; and Professors Purton and Porter carried on the geodetic and topographical work. This experimental Summer School was such a success that President Walker determined that it should be made a permanent part of the instruction at the Institute, and mention was made of it in the Catalogue of 1889. Until 1903 it was given every year to students who had completed the third year in Courses I. and XI. In 1903 second-year students were admitted on the payment of \$25. tuition, and it was decided at this time to hold the school thereafter every other year. It has always been optional for the general civil and sanitary student. The total number of students attending these schools is two hundred and ninety-one; the average attendance at each school has been fifteen.

The last two schools, those of 1907 and 1909, were held at a camp on Rangeley Lake, Maine. In 1907 there were twenty-seven students in attendance. In the past the localities chosen for giving this field instruction were the Catskill Mountains, the Delaware Water Gap, the Adirondacks, Lancaster, Massachusetts, Lake Sunapee, N.H., and Machias, East Machias, Cherryfield, and Ellsworth, Maine. Detailed topographic surveys have been made at each of these sites.

It is the universal testimony of students and instructors that these optional summer schools in the past have been a great success, and that this success has been in a great part due to the conditions of living connected with the work. Instructors and students are thrown together in a way quite impossible under the conditions of Institute life in Boston; they are practically in camp together for four weeks.

There is a plan now under discussion for placing all second and third-year field work in a required summer course of five or six weeks. To do this satis-

factorily for one hundred or more students, who will then be in attendance, will require the establishment of a permanent camp, to be erected on some ground that has been selected for its adaptability for this work. Although no definite statement can be made in regard to the date of such a change in the course of instruction, it is pretty clearly evident that the plan is regarded favorably by the Corporation and the Department of Civil Engineering.

THE G. E. SOCIETY

By PRES. R. P. WALLER.

For some time previous to 1889 the men in the Civil Engineering Course at the Institute felt that much benefit would be derived if they could get some knowledge of practical work along with their theoretical studies. Accordingly, on Feb. 13, 1889, a few of the more energetic met in 21 Rogers Building for the purpose of forming a society to be known as "The Civil Engineering Society of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology" through which it was hoped, as the constitution says, "to awaken and maintain an active interest in the study of civil engineering among its members and to aid generally in their intellectual advancement and improvement." At this meeting the six Seniors and seventeen Juniors present got matters well under way; committees for framing a constitution and for consultation with the faculty were appointed and were to be ready to report on the following week.

At this second meeting, the minutes state: "President Walker spoke for twenty-five minutes. He was followed by Professors Swain, Burton, Allen, and Porter, whose remarks were also most interesting and valuable and created much enthusiasm among the students." From this time on the success of the society was assured, and well attended bi-weekly meetings were held throughout the year in the Rogers Building.

At these meetings papers prepared by the members on work they had been personally connected with were given, and not infrequently one of the professors or instructors of the Institute spoke to the society. This was the general character of the meetings, with now and then a practicing engineer called in to speak, till the spring of 1898, when a general agitation for a society banquet resulted in quite an elaborate affair at the Castle Square Hotel at one dollar a plate. This marked the formal acknowledgment by the society of a need for closer social relations between its members; and from this time increased attention has been paid to the development of this side of the society's activities.

The value of seeing problems being actually worked out was early recognized, and trips to various localities in the vicinity of Boston have been taken from time to time. Someone familiar with the work in question is secured to accompany the parties to point out the details which might be overlooked by the casual observer, and thus the excursions are made especially valuable. Individual trips by the students are also encouraged.

In addition to these dinners and excursions, meetings are held every few weeks which are addressed by some man of considerable experience in engineering who brings the work in the field nearer to the student than reading and study could possibly do. The desire to hear men of this character has grown of late to the exclusion of papers prepared by the members themselves. The Program Committee has not lost sight of that feature of the work, however, and in the near future meetings will be held in which the fellows alone are to take part. By the frequency and the informality of these gatherings it is hoped that a free discussion of all subjects will be indulged in by those present and that much value will be gained in this way.

Owing to the difficulty of securing speakers far in advance, a program for the entire year is next to impossible to arrange. However, a trip to one or two signal towers in the B. & M. R.R. yards, a lecture by Mr. Barber, and a dinner at the Union are the events projected for December. After mid-year meetings will be held every third week if it is within the power of the program committee.

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