

LIA GABUNIA

THE KUTAISI AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL

In the late half of the 19th century Imereti there arose a necessity for opening an agricultural school (the so-called "Farm") which would bring up the youth with knowledge and skills of plants convenient to the climate and soil of our natural conditions. The school would develop farming and promote its theoretical and practical importance. The school should have been established in Kutaisi but the early attempts failed without any practical results.

In 1869 Military Governor of Kutaisi ratified the contract between Carl Marr, the former leaseholder and Baron de Longene about the opening of the agricultural school. However, the school did not begin real functioning until July 6, 1892.

The first twenty-six students graduated from the school in 1897. After the qualifying examinations the school-leavers must have the practice in some estate. Only after that were they given the Atestat, (certificate of graduation). Together with the general subjects the school taught land-farming, vineyard care, viniculture, gardening, Seri-culture; apiculture etc.

From 1917-1918 the Georgian language substituted Russian as a language of instruction. Until 1920 the school provided three-year courses with two year preparatory ones. After that the school developed in to a higher type agricultural secondary school which then underwent many reorganization.