

TOBACCO GROWING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

(PRELIMINARY NOTES)

BY

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While in British Columbia, during the latter part of August 1910, the writer had an opportunity to see standing crops of tobacco in the Okanagan valley.

The observations made at that time are presented in bulletin form, for the guidance of intending tobacco growers in British Columbia and to help actual growers to improve their methods.

Although fairly well established, tobacco growing in the Okanagan valley is not, as yet, entirely out of the experimental stage, and we wish to point out here some important questions that require elucidation, and the means whereby these questions can be solved.

TOBACCO GROWING CENTRES.

There is practically only one centre of tobacco culture: the Okanagan valley and chiefly Kelowna, where this branch of farming is still quite new. It is only ten years since the first tobacco crop worthy of mention was grown in this district, but the industry has since progressed rapidly.

Until 1909 the growers were few in number, and the production of tobacco in Kelowna hardly exceeded 40,000 or 50,000 pounds; a larger area was planted in 1910, but even then the total land in tobacco was not more than 70 or 75 acres. This is quite insufficient considering the quality of Kelowna tobacco and its well deserved reputation, and we may expect to see the total amount of tobacco produced ten times as large at an early date.

Possibly, tobacco growing had been tried in other parts of British Columbia, but practically none of these trials was heard of until 1910. In 1893-94 an experiment was started at the Dominion Experimental Farm at Agassiz, but this experiment was not resumed, although the results were said to be encouraging by the experts to whom the products were submitted.

In 1910 there was a marked tendency in favour of tobacco culture in British Columbia. Numerous applications for seeds were received from different parts of the province by the Tobacco Division, and a careful experiment was undertaken by a large company, "The British Columbia Horticultural Estate, Limited," of Wallaheia, B.C. This experiment, if continued, might bring about a rapid increase in the production of tobacco in the province. The movement is not likely to stop and it may be assumed that, at an early date, in all parts of the province where good agricultural lands of sufficient size are to be found, tobacco will be one of the main crops.