

GOOD AGRICULTURAL RESULTS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Fruit Industry is Responsible for Increase in Small Holdings—Number of Sheep and Horses Doubled in Ten Years

In 1849 Vancouver Island was formally erected a British colony with Victoria as the capital. The first representative assembly was convened in 1856. The mainland, which now constitutes the greater portion of the province and known at an early date as New Caledonia, was in 1858 by an imperial edict established under the name of British Columbia with New Westminster as its capital. The two colonies were united under the name of British Columbia in 1866, and the legislature for the united provinces met for the first time on December 17th, 1867. On July 1st, 1871, it became a province of the Dominion.

The province has an area of 226,186,370 acres land and 1,560,830 acres water, making a total area of 227,747,200 acres or 355,855 square miles which is nearly three times the area of the United Kingdom and $1\frac{3}{4}$ times greater than either France or Germany. The province has a land area greater than the total area of Belgium, Denmark, Holland, Norway and Sweden combined.

In 1901 the population was 178,657, of which 88,478, or 49.5 per cent. was rural, while the returns of the last census show that 188,796, or 48.1 per cent. out of a total population of 392,480 was rural. As at the date of the census there were no incorporated towns or villages in the province the classification of the population as urban and rural is not strictly comparable with the other provinces where town and village municipalities exist.

Eighteen Thousand Farm Holdings.

The number of farm holdings in 1901 was 6,739, of which 5,938 contained five acres and over as compared with 14,071 farms of five acres and over, and 4,396 of less than five acres, or a total of 18,467 holdings in 1911. The number of holdings of 50 acres and under increased from 2,086 in 1901 to 11,000 in 1911, which is a gain of 427 per cent. in ten years. The number of holdings over 50 acres was 4,653 in 1901, as against 7,467 in 1911, a gain of 60 per cent. in the decade. The development of the fruit industry is no doubt responsible for the rapid increases in the number of small holdings.

The area of improved land in 1911 was 477,576 acres as compared with 473,646 acres in 1901, an increase of only 3,930 acres in the decade. This small increase is more apparent than real owing to the stricter interpretation given the term "improved land" in the 1911 census. In this census only such areas as had been brought under cultivation and had produced a crop and were fitted for producing crops were regarded as "improved land." In previous censuses no clear definition was given of the term "improved land" with the result that under this heading were included non-tillable areas and natural meadows used as pastures.

Nine Millions for Field Crops.

Land in field crops increased from 171,424 acres in 1900 to 239,820 acres in 1911. The number of acres under crops in 1910 was 214,069, being an increase in the area under field crops in 10 years of 42,645 acres. The land under orchard and nursery increased from 7,502 acres in 1901 to 33,606 acres in 1911; land in vegetables increased from 2,840 acres to 9,213 acres; land in vineyards increased from 18 acres to 309 acres.

The acreage under small fruits, which in 1901 was included with vegetables, is placed in this census at 1,280 acres.

While the area under grain crops fell from 56,979 acres in 1900 to 47,402 acres in 1910 the land under hay and clover and alfalfa increased from 102,751 acres in 1900 to 137,058 acres in 1910, and the land devoted to hoed crops rose from 11,694 in 1900 to 29,609 acres in 1910. For 1911 the area under grain crops was 67,462 acres, under grasses 141,776 acres, under hoed crops 30,582 acres, being increases of 20,060 acres, of 4,718 acres and 973 acres respectively in one year.

The statistics of horticulture show that there were increases in the number of bearing and non-bearing fruit trees and in the production of fruit for 1910 over 1900. This is especially noticeable in non-bearing trees which represent the advancement made in more recent years.

The average yield per acre for grain crops in 1910 does not on the whole show any wide differences from the figures of the previous census.

The total value of field crops, vegetables and fruits in 1910 was \$9,619,281 as against \$3,536,371 in 1900, being an average per holding for the last census of \$520.88 as compared with \$524.73 in the previous one. The large acreage represented by non-bearing fruit trees, indicates the setting out

of new orchards and not being producing, the consequence is that the average value of farm products per holding is kept down.

Horses and Sheep Doubled in Numbers.

The statistics of live stock for 1911 places the number of horses at 57,415, of milch cows at 33,953, of other horned cattle at 105,230, of sheep at 39,272, of swine at 33,604, of turkeys at 8,926, of geese at 6,808, of ducks at 27,898 and of hens and chickens at 967,841 as compared with 37,325 horses, 24,535 milch cows, 100,467 horned cattle, 33,350 sheep, 41,419 swine, 2,790 turkeys, 3,786 geese, 9,371 ducks and 346,480 hens and chickens in 1901. The figures show increases for all classes of animals except swine. The number of pure-bred horses and of sheep have more than doubled in the decade, and an increase of 65 per cent. is shown in the number of pure-bred cattle.

The average value of horses in 1911 was \$136, of milch cows \$58.88, of other horned cattle \$28.56, of sheep \$6.71, of swine \$10.75, as compared with an average value for 1901 of \$55 for horses, of \$43.22 for milch cows, of \$23.83 for other horned cattle, of \$5 for sheep, and of \$6.55 for swine. The total value of live stock in 1911 was \$14,135,477 against a total value of \$6,184,313 in 1901.

The value of live stock sold in 1910 was \$3,296,647 which is an increase of \$2,860,853 or 656 per cent. over the figures of ten years ago. The value of animals slaughtered on the farm rose from \$307,397 in 1901 to \$413,614 in 1911. The value of dairy products which was reported at \$1,159,993 in 1901 increased to \$2,620,495 in 1911. There was an increase in the value of wool of \$10,463 and of eggs or \$601,247.

Gross Earnings of Farming Business.

The number of weeks of hired labor on the farm in 1910 was 159,088, and the value \$1,952,875 being an average wage per week of \$12.28 as against 135,597 weeks in 1900 with a total value of \$1,223,230 and an average of \$9.02 per week. This is an increase in the cost per week of farm labor of over 36 per cent. from 1900 to 1910.

The total value in 1911 of lands owned, buildings, farm implements and live stock on hand was \$179,359,601, with an average value per holding of \$9,712 as compared with a total value of \$33,386,886 and an average value of \$4,954 in 1901. The gross returns to the farmers of the province as represented by field crops, fruits, live stock sold, dairy products, animals slaughtered on the farm, wool, eggs, honey and wax aggregated in the last census \$17,874,932, or an average per holding of \$968 as compared with \$5,879,412 and an average per holding of \$872. From the gross earnings must be deducted the cost of seeds, of feed for animals and of labour before the net earnings can be even approximately estimated.

HOW IT IS DONE.

Extract from a report of the Union Life inquiry at Toronto.—

Further along the line of disbursements the official enquirer found a bill for \$9,525 which had been paid to a Mr. Wm. Schooling. Mr. H. P. Evans, corrected this sum up to \$10,500. Mr. Schooling, he added, was an insurance expert who wrote for various English papers, chiefly for Truth and the Telegram. In addition to his services along this line, Mr. Schooling had revised the prospectus and spent a great deal of time in its preparation.

"To us, in the colonies," Mr. Masten suggested, "that seems a large sum of money to expend for such a purpose. Why did you agree to pay it?"

"I wanted to make the issue a success. I may say he also had a large meeting among newspaper men and addressed them. He kept the name of our stock prominently before the papers."

"It is a lot of money to pay out for that purpose," Mr. Masten continued.

"Anyway, it is what we did," added Mr. Evans.

Twenty-five freighters carrying about 8,000,000 bushels of grain cleared from Fort William on November 30 to avoid having their insurance extended.