

CLIMATE.

British Columbia, or rather the southern part of British Columbia, from the main line of the Canadian Pacific to the international boundary, may be considered as a country with a temperate climate. Winter is comparatively short and mild, the summer only fairly hot, less so than in some parts of Ontario or even of Quebec, spring and fall are very fine. However, owing to the great difference in rainfall, the region must be divided into two parts, sharply defined, the part where irrigation is practiced and without which it would be very difficult to secure satisfactory crops, and the part under more favourable conditions, where irrigation is not necessary, the rain being more frequent, and the precipitation evenly distributed during the whole of the year. Thus there will be two kinds of tobacco of a very different type, that grown on irrigated land and the other on non-irrigated land.

However, until the present time, tobacco growing was practically limited to the Kelowna valley (irrigated part) and only "irrigated" tobacco was produced. Soon, however, new centres will open in non-irrigated districts and then it will be possible to compare the two products so different in principle.

The following observations apply more particularly to the Okanagan valley; however, with slight modifications, they may be of some use to future tobacco growers in other parts of the province. Besides, an endeavour will be made to divide the subject matter under two heads: tobacco growing on irrigated soils and on non-irrigated soils.

CHARACTER OF THE SOIL.

The soils of the Okanagan valley which have been selected for tobacco growing consist of a rather light coloured, grayish loam, light and deep, containing a large proportion of organic matter, and with a subsoil generally of a very porous nature.

Heavier soils have, at times, been utilized for tobacco culture and, naturally, the product obtained had a stronger taste. The presence of white alkali is not considered as an objection, unless it is in such proportion that the consistency of the soil is affected; it is a fact that the best burning tobaccos are grown on alkali lands. Unfortunately, while fermenting, such tobaccos become covered with a white efflorescence which, although it does not injure the quality of the product, detracts from its appearance and may render the sale of leaf tobacco difficult when dealing with manufacturers who are not aware of this peculiarity.

Tobacco has also been grown on bench land, in the immediate vicinity of Kelowna. The product obtained is far from being equal to that of the valley, the leaves being rather coarse in texture and the percentage of nicotine higher. It should be stated, however, that this tobacco was grown by inexperienced farmers. Probably, irrigation was carried to an excess, topping was done a little too low (that is to say the number of leaves left on the plant was too small) and harvesting a little too late. Such mistakes can easily be avoided, and it cannot be said, at present, that the benches of Kelowna are unfit for tobacco growing. At first sight, however, the soils of the valley appear to be preferable. But the proximity of the lake is not without objections. The ground water is at a shallow depth in the porous sub-soil of the Kelowna valley, and irrigation must be practised with caution, or else the effect might be more injurious than useful, on account of the imperfect drying of the surface soil and of the top part of the subsoil.