

KEEN SACRIFICE IN ITALY.

STARTLING FACTS NOW REVEALED BY CANADIAN EDUCATIONIST.

Dr. James W. Robertson, who has just returned to Canada after an extended tour in the Allied lands of Europe, furnishes an illuminating, almost a startling, view for us in the Dominion of food conditions there. Indeed he has lifted the veil of what was almost an unknown world.

He looked at facts with the eyes of a Canadian having a wide knowledge of ample food supplies in his own country. His statements and deductions cannot be too attentively weighed by food workers.

No more interesting statement of food conditions in Italy—unquestionably the Allied land of which we know least on this side of the water—has been given than that supplied in his report to the Chairman of the Food Board.

Dr. Silvio Crespi, Italian Food Controller, replying to Dr. Robertson's questions on Italy's effort, said: "We have faced all forms of sacrifice. We have fought, and are fighting amidst the malaria or on the summits of most awful mountains; we have relinquished every comfort of life and have come near to hunger; we are giving the lives of our most splendid youth, while at home our farms are left to the care of women and children who are working heroically day and night with marvellous success to keep the country fed. We are now organized in the discipline of privations and under the most severe control of all foodstuffs in a manner which arouses the admiration even of our enemies. To-day we have made a religion of the war, and victory is our universal faith."

Less than German Ration.

Bread, paste (macaroni, etc.), flour, rice butter, oil and fats are rationed on the ticket system; meats are rationed to the butchers. Meat before the war was consumed in quantities four times as great as the present ration allows. Italy has three meatless days per week, and the individual ration for the four remaining days allows a little more than 4 ounces, or about 1 ounce per day. When the different rations allowed are added together, including bread, paste, rice, fats, sugar and meat, it will be seen that the Italians still receive a daily ration considerably short of 1 pound. Dr. Crespi added that for a long time a very large number was compelled to live for many months on a total ration of not more than 12 ounces a day of the staple foodstuffs per person. And he added: "The total ration in Germany is better than the Italian."

Signor Crespi's last words to Dr. Robertson were: "The rationing of food is equal for all classes, and in all cases in which exceptional rations are allowed, it is for the benefit of the working classes. This is the policy which keeps up the Italian morale. Profiteering has been checked so far as the supply of bread, cereals, sugar and fats is concerned. Good progress has been made also with regard to other foodstuffs. I have now practically all forms of foodstuffs under control. In cases where complete control is not possible, I check exorbitant prices by buying abroad or requisitioning on the home market."

Dr. Robertson's general conclusion was that the Italian crops of 1918 were uncommonly good, and the civilian population seemed well-nourished owing to the abundance of green vegetable foods. There were, however, marked shortages of wheat, meat and milk. He learned that the actual privation in Italy during the winter and early spring had been very great.

Store Cattle Slaughtered.

In order to meet the enormous army demands, the slaughter of cattle for the civilian supply had to be reduced from the pre-war consumption of 70 grammes a day per person to only 6 grammes a day. Nor could importation of frozen meat help the civilians, as all of it is reserved for the army. The extreme shortage of beef had reacted on the consumption of substitutes so that there was now a very great demand for these, especially fish in all forms and pork. There has also been a diminution of over 50 per cent in the production of milk, butter and cheese.