

WHY WHEAT IS NEEDED.

Allies Must Have It as a Basis for Bread Loaf.

THERE appears to be some misunderstanding as to why wheat especially should be saved for export and why other cereals will not meet equally well the requirements of the Allied nations in Europe. It is important that the people of Canada should know the reasons for the Food Controller's regulations and appeals, and it is earnestly hoped that persons into whose hands this issue of The Bulletin may come will give as wide circulation as possible to the following facts:

Three grains—wheat, rye and barley—are peculiarly suited to making bread. They contain certain elements which can be kneaded when mixed with water. When yeast is added, they raise and maintain a continuity of structure. When the latter is baked it forms a loaf which will keep and can be transported. None but these three grains will make bread as it is commonly known. In a recent address on the wheat needs of the world, Dr. Alonzo Taylor said:

"As one follows each nation's development upward in an economic sense, one notes that they first eat barley. As it becomes more prosperous, barley is thrown to one side and rye is used; and finally rye is cast aside and it subsists upon wheat. This has been the history of most Aryan peoples. The United Kingdom depends almost entirely upon wheat for its bread. Italy consumes wheat bread, but bread is not so prominent as elsewhere. Rye is universally used in Russia, and barley is still employed as a bread grain. The reason why wheat supercedes rye and barley is because the bread is whiter, of a finer texture, and has unquestionably a better taste. The flour has somewhat better keeping qualities, and wheat flour lends itself to the making of pastries and fancy articles as no other flour does."

There are at least two strong reasons why the Allies cannot use other cereals entirely to make up their deficiency in wheat:

1. People who are working under unusual stress are not in a situation to tolerate any marked deviation from the normal diet.

2. European trade conditions make such substitution extremely difficult. In North America the bread used by more than half of the population is baked in the household and less than 50 per cent is purchased from the baker. If the Allies are not supplied with enough bread grains to make a loaf, then people must be taught an entirely new

use of cereals in their homes. Domestic baking is economically wasteful, in addition to the other objections to this alternative.

Quoting again from Dr. Taylor's address: "In England there is a large use of rice. In England, Scotland and Ireland there is a heavy use of oatmeal. The people of the United Kingdom will take corn also. The same thing is true of Italy. Corn in the form of polenta is used in Italy, and rice is also a frequent article of the diet. Wheat flour, although used for bread, is not entirely depended upon by the women of Italy.

"The women of France are absolutely dependent upon wheat bread, which forms 52 per cent of the total food of the French people (the present ration is 18 ounces per day); a larger percentage than with any other nation of the world. They eat no rice, no corn; they know nothing of oatmeal and rye, and of barley have little knowledge. The problem rises with France. If we were to estimate the wheat our Allies have raised, add to it the 200,000,000 bushels of exportable surplus wheat from Canada and the United States, and then send the balance of their need in other cereals, there would not be enough wheat flour to go around. You can not make good bread if you have as low an amount as 60 per cent of wheat flour with 40 per cent of other cereals. From a practical point of view, bakers fail to make bread under these circumstances. You can get along on the proportion of 75 and 25. Unless we wish to impose upon the French women the burden of entirely recasting their households, it is up to us to get more wheat to the Allies, and especially to France."

In this connection, Mr. Herbert Hoover, Food Administrator of the United States, says: "For a hundred years the wheat loaf has been the basis of life in Europe, with the exception of Italy. The art of household baking has long since been lost. Most of the bread is baked by bakers. For this reason alone it is almost impossible for them to substitute corn bread, which cannot be distributed by bakers. Furthermore, the actual household machinery of baking—ovens, etc.—has long since been out of existence in most European homes."

There are also serious transportation difficulties in connection with the sending of large supplies of other cereals than wheat to the Allied countries. With the exception of Italy they have few corn mills and