

WOMEN HEAR OF NEED.

Food Problem Received Much Attention at Conference of Women in Ottawa.

Thrift, economy and increased production of food were dominant notes at each session of the three days' conference of fifty representative women who were called together by the Cabinet and asked for their views on questions of national importance. The conference was held in Ottawa on February 28 and March 1 and 2. At the opening session addresses were delivered by His Excellency the Duke of Devonshire, Hon. N. W. Rowell, General Mewburn, Hon. T. A. Crerar, Minister of Agriculture, Sir George Foster, Senator Robertson and Mr. Henry B. Thomson, Chairman of the Canada Food Board. General Mewburn said that one of the most vital things in the war was food production. The soldier could not fight, nor could the civilian live, without food.

Europe's Supplies Going Lower.

Mr. Crerar emphasized the seriousness of the wheat situation and also the great decrease in the world's herds of food animals. It was inevitable that the food supplies of the Allied European countries would go lower and it rested with the North American continent to make good the deficit. The shortage of labour was one of the most serious factors in Canada. He believed, however, that by voluntary means and proper organization sufficient men could be secured for the farms without compulsion. He was hopeful that, despite this year's late start, a greater volume of food stuffs would be produced in Canada than ever before.

Sir George Foster emphasized the need for thrift and economy. "Every time you sit down to a good meal can't you see as by flashlight a woman or child suffering for lack of food over in Europe?" he asked. "And doesn't a message come to you, 'Eat no more than is necessary for your bodily existence. Share your abundance with those who need it?'"

Saving in Beef, Bacon, Flour.

Mr. Thomson referred to the saving which has been effected in beef, flour and bacon since the regulations governing eating houses went into force. He advocated the increased use of fish as a substitute for meat. Mr. Thomson's statement that regulations governing waste and boarding would soon be in effect was enthusiastically received. He favoured the wheatless meal rather than the wheatless day for Canada.

The following resolution was passed by the Thrift and Economy Section of the recent Women's Conference in Ottawa:—

"That the Conference, after hearing from the Chairman of the Food Board, is satisfied that adequate measures are about to be taken for the prevention of hoarding and waste of food and for the control of cold storage houses."

What was termed by the women "one of the most profitable hours of the whole Conference" was spent on the first night when Mr. Thomson answered questions by members of the Thrift and Economy committee, which was appointed by the Conference. Mr. Thomson explained the difficulties in the way of compulsory rationing. He also dealt with the sugar situation, emphasizing the importance of preventing waste but expressing the expectation that the supply available for Canada would be enough to go round.

One woman asked why the sale of bacon was not prohibited. It was explained that lumbermen and others engaged in heavy physical work needed such food and it would not be real economy to prohibit the sale of pork and to drive them to the use of beef. Representatives of the various Provinces gave interesting testimony of women's work on the farms. Miss Cora Hind, told of women running binders in Alberta. Stooking was done there almost entirely by old men and women, she declared. Another representative from Manitoba told of women leaving their children to do the housework while they turned into the fields. The same was true of British Columbia and Saskatchewan. Some women even repaired their own machinery by dint of necessity. The work of the Farmers' Co-operative Association in Quebec was described.

LIVING FROM HAND TO MOUTH.

The following is from a recent statement by the Ministry of Food:—

"We have reached a stage when every one must think and must realize the seriousness of the food situation. . . . Every one is bound to live from hand to mouth, country folk as well as townspeople. . . . The nation's food supply is uncertain, depending as it does on the ships. . . . The whole community has to get its stores from day to day. . . ."