

German Press Admits Food Privations

Supply of cattle very insufficient—Artificial manufacture of food not successful—Egg price is 400 per cent above peace quotations—Go Bare-foot to Save leather

Evidences of the increasing pinch of hunger in Germany and the rapidly rising cost of food continue to multiply. An article in the Glasgow "Herald" says:

"Those who are concerned about the duration of the war will find much to interest them in the German newspapers. Military men do not consider the economic factor, but it is quite evident that this must play a very important part in the plans of enemy governments. Official reports on feeding which come from German Government Departments may be colored for neutral and foreign use, but the complaints that appear in the columns of the press at least bear the imprint of truth.

"In an August issue of 'Die Konjunktur' Richard Calwer demonstrates the worthlessness of his food index numbers by quoting current prices. 'Quite recently', he writes, 'according to an announcement made by the District Commissioner in Bergen auf Rügen the following prices have been paid there: For 1 cwt. of early potatoes, 50s to 75s; 1 lb. of sweet cherries 1s 1d to 1s 4d; 1 lb. of onions, 1s 1d to 1s 5d; 20 eggs, 10s to 15s; 1 lb. of butter, 7s 2d to 8s 11d; 1 lb. of bacon or ham, 8s 11d to 13s 6d. Quite high prices, it may be said; but they are not the highest. In Great Britain prices stand still higher. Thus, a pound of butter costs quite 13s 6d and one egg 9½d. Of course one's experience of such prices in surreptitious trading is so limited that one is not justified in drawing general inferences.'

"One thing is evident, that surreptitious trading does not show a reduction on these figures. Recently, he states, the prices of foodstuffs in the surreptitious trade have advanced considerably, this being chiefly a consequence of increasing risks. The bread card swindle continues to flourish, and in Greater Berlin 2s 6d to 3s is being paid for an extra week's bread card, which enables an individual to obtain from two to four loaves for himself. Without these extra illegal bread allowances, it is added, a great number of workmen could not keep themselves fit. Evidently the leakage is at the printer's, for it appears that the printing of bread cards is being withheld more and more from Berlin firms and entrusted to firms in small towns and villages.

Potato Allotment, Small.

"These figures apply to the period before the harvest. In some districts more than half the harvest was threshed and delivered before August 31. The early threshing premium has resulted in much grain being cut in a damp state, so that its keeping qualities are impaired. As a result of the unexpectedly favorable harvest much of the grain had to be left in the hands of the farmers, whose storage accommodation is not satisfactory.

"The requirements of potatoes for the civilian population from the 1917 are to be reckoned on the basis of seven pounds per head per week as a maximum. The Welfare Commission at Dortmund passed a resolution demanding ten pounds as the very lowest ration the people ought to obtain. There were also protests against the use of potatoes in distilleries, but this was met by the reply that spirit was of great importance for war purposes. In Berlin the maximum retail price as from September was fixed at 10 pfennings (1¼d) per pound.

"The supply of cattle is very insufficient. 'Vorwaerts' on September 13 wrote: 'The deliveries of cattle by the cattle trading companies have almost completely failed during the current week. Only about 300,000 pounds out of 1,800,000 pounds required are available, so only a portion of the population can obtain meat this week. Owing to this circumstance the meat cards valid for this week will remain valid for the whole of the coming week.' The 'Berliner Tageblatt' three days later reported that the Berlin Administration had fixed the following retail maximum prices for beef, to take effect on September 17: Fillet or sirloin, 3 marks (3s) per pound; rib with bone, 2.60 marks; hind and fore quarters, 2.70 marks; other parts with bone, 2.10 marks; bones, 50 pfennings (6¼d); minced beef, 2.30 marks.

"Pork and bacon are steadily rising, notwithstanding the slaughter owing to scarcity of fodder. 'Vorwaerts' reports that 'in Hergesvoege, near Botterode, in Thuringia, a small farmer sold a ham to a tourist for 350 marks (£17 10s). For this sum he then pur-

chased a meadow which is now called the 'Ham Meadow.' There is a big surreptitious trade in fish, which are sold above the maximum prices. Supplies of carp, perch, tench and sturgeon from Roumania are now on the Berlin market.

Complaints Over Mills.

Complaints are rife as to the poor quality of the milk. The Greater Berlin Fat Board has decided to reduce the allowance for cards entitling to 1 liter of whole milk to ¾ liter. Throughout Germany the ration of whole milk for children between 4 and 5 years of age on October 1 was still ¾ pint, but children born in the three months previous to September 30, 1911, are only to receive skimmed milk in the future. For children under two years the ratio of whole milk is now 1 1-13 pints (instead of 1¼) per day. An extra allowance of ½ pint is to be made to nursing mothers in respect of children born after October 1, 1917. During November and December cards for skimmed milk will be obtainable by every household with children of between 6 and 10 years, but only one such card is to be issued to each household. The ratio of skimmed milk to be thus obtained is 1¼ pints per week.

Since September 1 the prices which may be charged by the product for the sale of butter must not exceed the following, free Berlin and exclusive of packing: Dairy butter, first quality, 240 marks per 50 kilograms (£12 per cwt.); second quality, 220 marks (£11 per cwt.); inferior quality, 180 marks (£9 per cwt.). Prices fixed for country-made butter must not exceed that chargeable for first quality dairy butter, but may be fixed by the authorities at a lower level. Certain additions are allowed to these prices on resale. When delivering butter to a Communal Union the wholesale dealer may charge 12 marks (12s per cwt.) above the foregoing prices; when to another wholesale dealer, 5 marks (5s per cwt.); and when to retail consumers, 18 marks (18s per cwt.). In the retail trade a further 6 marks per 50 kilograms (5s per cwt.) may be added where butter is sold in small packets to the consumer.

For the period September 10 to 23, one egg may be purchased at 39 pfennings (4½d) on handing over the proper coupon of the egg card. According to a further order the retail price both for foreign eggs obtained from the Central Purchase Company, and of home eggs obtained through the Berlin municipality, is fixed at 39 pfennings apiece. 'Vorwaerts' complains that eggs have increased already by 400 per cent. as compared with peace prices.

Artificial Food a Failure.

"The artificial manufacture of food has not been successful. The efforts to increase the supplies of fat have dwindled down to a new method of extracting fat from bones. In August, 1915, much was expected from 'food yeast' as a result of a process of producing albumen from the atmosphere through the medium of the yeast plant. But the 'Berliner Tageblatt' of August 30 confesses rather sadly that 'food yeast has proved to be a modest source of albumen, and has added a quite perceptible relish to our tasteless war diet, and although this benefit is only small it becomes an important one in present conditions.'

"Rad tobacco has become scarce. The latest feature of the streets is the cigar queue, now to be seen daily before the shops of tobacconists selling special brands of cigars.

"The restriction of central heating, due to labor and transport difficulties in the mines, and of gas has been mentioned from time to time in our columns. Miners are now being released from the army. Berlin tramway service has been considerably reduced, the price of electric light at Leipzig has been raised 30 per cent. Rhine steamboat companies have had to reduce their services, and doctors are asked to limit the prescription of medicinal baths. As to firewood 'unheard-of extortion has been practiced on the wood market.' Timber suitable for mines, carving, or paper must not be used for fire-wood.

"The Imperial Clothing Board has urged the people to abstain from wearing mourning clothes, the sale of used household linen is forbidden where any gain is made by the sale, acquisition or working up of such articles. Apparently valuable articles were being torn up to be utilized as lining for corsets, boots and shoes, etc. A nettle company is being formed in Ba-

varia to manufacture cotton substitute.

"Leather is extremely scarce. The headmaster of the Kaiser Wilhelm School at Neukölln, 'well known as the biggest school in Germany', has recommended the boys to come to school barefooted. This example has been generally followed, and, according to the 'Lokal-Anzeiger', in August 'boys belonging to good schools, as their caps show are, seen in the streets and squares barefooted. Only 400 out of the 1,400 German boot factories are at work. A war company for wooden soles has been formed."

WASTE-PAPER COLLECTION.

In 1900 Glasgow established a cleansing department for collecting the city refuse and utilizing waste products. One of the principal branches of this department is devoted to the collection of waste paper. During the past ten years the city has profited to the extent of nearly \$44,000 from the sale of waste paper, the revenue from this source in 1907-8 having amounted to \$3,010; in 1908-9, to \$3,120; in 1909-10, to \$4,215; in 1910-11, to \$5,725; in 1911-12, to \$4,765; in 1912-13, to \$2,315; in 1913-14, to \$2,675; in 1914-15, to \$2,950; in 1915-16, to \$1,360; and in 1916-17, to \$13,590.

The collection of waste paper from the city offices, warehouses, and better-class dwelling was originally introduced, apart altogether from the financial phase, with a view to curbing as far as possible the nuisance inseparable from the removal of paper from the public streets and in order to get hold of the material before it reached the dust bins and ash buckets. Bags for holding the paper, measuring 32 by 40 inches, are issued to business premises, etc., and are called for regularly by employees wearing a departmental armband. The contents of these bags are emptied into larger receptacles for removal to the paper mills. By means of this system the paper is not only kept off the streets but, being collected separately from the refuse, it forms a marketable commodity and becomes a source of revenue, as set out above.

In view of the Government's prohibition of the import of wood pulp, and consequent scarcity and increased value of waste paper, steps have been taken by the local city officials to collect waste paper on a much more extensive scale, even to the extent of salving all material picked out of the refuse at the various city garbage plants. The department is receiving valuable assistance from an organization known as the Women's Volunteer Reserve, the members of which engage in a door-to-door collection in certain districts of the city. In return for the services thus rendered the organization receives 20 per cent of the revenue derived from the paper so collected. An effort is also being made to reach the dwellings of the working classes through the medium of the school boards and pupils.

The service in this city is absolutely free. No charge is made for the use of the bags or for carting the paper away. All waste paper is sold, at Government-controlled prices, to paper-stock merchants in the condition in which it is collected. The total quantity collected and sold during the past fiscal year was 835 tons, the revenue realized therefrom amounting, as stated, to \$13,590. It is interesting to note that about ten times as much paper was collected during the past fiscal year as during the preceding one. For the first three months of the current financial year 342 tons were collected, with a total value of \$11,155. It is reliably estimated that the total value of the paper collected during the present financial year will reach \$50,000.

PLATES AND VICTUALS.

The Canadian Food Controller has issued a warning regarding the use of tin plate, which must be conserved. This would go to show that the department is gradually approaching its subject. After the plate question has been settled we may expect to hear something of the victuals.

One of the best stories concerning British weather is related by the bishop of Lydda. "Once, before I was bishop, I was on the top of an omnibus where were seated some Parsees," related his lordship. "A man said to me, 'What are they?' I replied, 'Indians—Parsees, you know. Men who worship the sun.' And the man replied, 'Oh, I see, and they have come over here for a holiday.'"

DEVELOP PATRIOTIC SPIRIT (Birmingham Age-Herald.)

Universal training would not only provide a large body of defenders, but would develop in young men of all walks of life the true patriotic spirit and a most wholesome appreciation of heroic discipline.