

# Dread Hunger is Rampant Through Germany at Present

### A Gloomy Outlook Reported From All the Enemy Countries—The Food Stocks Are Very Steadily Shrinking—Soldiers' Bread Reduced.

London, July 23.—These are critical weeks for the population of Germany. Food stocks are steadily shrinking, and bad as present conditions are, they will be worse before the harvest brings temporary relief. To count, however, upon an early collapse of the enemy's resistance from this cause would be foolish. Enough food will be forthcoming to maintain existence, and so long as the people can be deluded by hopes of ultimate victory they are likely to hold out.

Such is the substance of the latest testimony of the well-informed correspondent who has from time to time furnished reports on the economic conditions of the country. That the Kaiser's subjects are suffering severe privations there can be no doubt. The most drastic measures of regulations and requisitioning will not serve to make the supplies of necessities go round.

There is abundant evidence that serious miscalculations have been made as to the quantities of grain and flour available. Following the 20 per cent. reduction in the

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flour ratione—which led to the recent big strikes—desperate appeals have been made to the farmers to make sacrifices in the interests of the town dwellers. Whole sale requisitioning has been restored, the baking of cakes has been restricted or prohibited, flour deliveries to biscuit factories have been suspended, and, finally, the bread ration of the soldiers at the front has been reduced by one-third.

In addition to exaggerated crop estimates and the wholesale forgery of bread tickets, factors which have contributed towards

upsetting the official calculations the extreme lateness of the season has made it necessary to spread last year's supplies over an additional two or three weeks.

Gloomy forebodings are heard as to the prospects of the coming harvest, and with good reason. Labor is far scarcer than last year, the lack of manure is more seriously felt, and seed has been scarce and of inferior quality. The exceptionally severe winter caused injury to winter-sown grain. Last year's crops will be exhausted before the harvest, so that the new year will be entered with absolutely no reserves.

#### W EPIDEMIC.

Neutrals who have paid frequent visits to Germany during the war invariably comment on the deterioration in general conditions which has taken place during the past two or three months. A Norwegian merchant is reported to have declared that, after his experiences on a recent visit nothing could induce him to return to Germany while the war lasted. Even in Berlin he found there was no longer any attempt to keep up appearances. The streets were in a filthy condition, "and the persons he saw were ragged and dirty, with a universal look of despair on their faces."

Privations are beginning to tell more and more on the health of the people. A doctor who has spent several years in Berlin reports that a new epidemic is raging, especially in the towns, the symptoms being a general swelling of various parts of the body. This he attributes entirely to the scarcity and poor quality of the food, the illness yielding rapidly under good diet.

The latest vital statistics for Leipzig, if they are at all typical, point to a serious outlook for the future. In March the number of births was 673, as compared with 1,135 deaths, and during the first three months of the year the births were 1,785, and the deaths 2,980. In the first quarter of 1917 the average weekly birth rate was 137, as compared with 246 in 1914, while the death rate was 230 as compared with 150.

German letters quoted in the neutral press or intercepted in the post heighten the impression of the

prevailing distress. The daughter of a high official in Berlin writes to a friend in Switzerland, "Madame B. died last week as the result of privations. The dead are indeed fortunate." A Swiss gentleman resident in Berlin writes to his parents, "I implore you to send us as soon as you can some boxes of food; A—is fading away visibly." Again, a German writing to friends in Denmark, says,

"If you would make us happy send us now and then a little parcel with real food, even your breadcrusts would arouse enthusiasm here. The driest Danish breadcrust is delicious cake compared with what we here call bread."

#### SHORTAGE OF CLOTHING.

The majority of neutral witnesses however, hold that, despite their growing privations, Germany will continue to hold out. One gentleman has expressed the opinion that the people "would endure anything rather than submit to the horrible fate which they were carefully taught was in store for them in the event of defeat." It must be remembered that nothing is allowed to be wasted. The fullest use is made of everything—spoilt potatoes, decayed vegetables and fruit, offal from animals, waste from slaughter yards and even sewage from the scullery—nothing is too disgusting to be converted into either food for human beings or fodder for animals.

Gradual exhaustion of textiles has obliged the government to requisition clothing and clothing materials, and to take steps to enforce economy in the use of wearing apparel on the rich as well as

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on the poor. Minute regulations have been issued governing the size of the wardrobe which every individual is entitled to possess, and determining the exact amount of material to be used in each article of clothing. So great is the famine in leather that the State has extended its control to cover all dealings in rabbit, hare and goat skins.

The scarcity of soap appears to be the cause of almost as much inconvenience, if not of actual suffering, as the shortage of food and clothing. The stuff which is now supplied as soap is said to bear no resemblance to the real article, as there is neither fat nor oil in it. It is even directly injurious to the skin.

Laundry work is naturally much hampered, and the papers complain that the hardships involved in the new regulations limiting the amount of body and household linen which each individual is allowed to possess are greatly accentuated by the difficulty of getting any linen washed.

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## Keep the Potatoes Green and Growing

(Experimental Farms Note)

Many are growing potatoes in Canada this year for the first time and, as a result of the greatly increased number of growers the crop will probably be greatly increased. But to insure a good crop there must be an abundance of moisture in the soil and the tops must be protected from insects and disease.

#### Cultivation

The soil should be kept cultivated with the cultivator or hoe until the tops meet sufficiently to shade the ground. As most of the tubers develop in the three or four inches of soil nearest the surface, and as the tubers will not develop well in dry soil, quite shallow cultivation is desirable at this season of the year. In soil which is dry there may be good development of tops but there will be few tubers. The roots in such cases have gone down deep into the soil to obtain moisture but the tuber-bearing stems, which are quite different from the root system, do not develop well. Where the soil is a loose sandy loam, hilling is not necessary and may be injurious, as the soil dries out more than if left on the level. In heavy soils it is desirable to hill the potatoes as it will loosen the soil and the tubers will be shapelier than when the ground is left level. When there is sufficient rainfall and moisture in the soil hilling is likely to give best results in all kinds of soil as the soil will be looser and the tubers can push through it readily. As a great development of tubers takes place during the cooler and usually moister weather of the latter part of summer, it is very important to keep the plants growing well until then. In one experiment it was shown that during the month of September there was an increase of 119 bushels of potatoes per acre.

#### Protection of Potato Tops From Insects

It is very important to prevent the tops of potatoes from being eaten by insects, particularly by the Colorado Potato Beetle. The old "bugs" do not do much harm to the foliage, as a rule, and usually the plants are not sprayed to destroy these, although the fewer here are to lay eggs the less difficulty there will be in destroying the young ones. These begin to eat rapidly soon after hatching, and close watch should be kept so that the vines may be sprayed before much harm is done. Paris green kills more rapidly than arsenate of lead but does not adhere so well, and in rainy weather it is desirable to have something that will stay on the leaves so that they will be protected until it stops raining and thus prevent the tops being eaten. At the Central Experimental Farm a mixture of Paris green and arsenate of lead is used in the proportion of 8 ounces Paris green, 1-2 pounds paste arsenate of lead (or 12 ounces dry arsenate of lead) to 40 gallons of water in order to get the advantage of both poisons. It may be that it is not convenient to get both poisons when either 12 ounces of Paris green or 3 pounds paste arsenate of lead (or 1-2 pounds dry arsenate of lead) to 40 gallons water could be used, or in smaller quantities, say 1 ounce Paris green to 3 gallons or 3-1/2 ounces paste arsenate of lead or half that quantity of dry to 3 gallons of water. An experiment conducted for six years at the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, showed that, on the average, where the tops were sprayed to kill "bugs," the yield was 186.9 bushels per acre, while when the tops were not sprayed and allowed to be eaten, the yield was only 98.2 bushels per acre. It is desirable not to stop with one spraying which usually does not kill all the bugs but to spray several times, if necessary, so that as little foliage as possible is eaten.

## Protection of the Potato Plants From Late Blight and Rot

In some years the crop of potatoes is much lessened by the Late Blight disease and when it follows little of the crop may be left. It is, therefore, very desirable to prevent this disease from spreading. This is done by keeping the plants covered with Bordeaux mixture from about the first week of July, before there is any sign of the disease until September. Sometimes the first application of Bordeaux mixture is made before the potato beetles are killed when the poison for them may be mixed with the Bordeaux. While the disease is not very bad every year it is well to be prepared. There was an average increase per year of 94 bushels of potatoes from spraying with Bordeaux mixture in three years.

The formula for Bordeaux mixture for potatoes is 5 pounds copper sulphate or bluestone, 4 pounds freshly slaked lime to 40 gallons of water. While the bluestone will dissolve more quickly in hot water; if it is not convenient to get this, it may be suspended over night in a cotton bag in a wooden or earthen vessel containing four or five or more gallons of water. The lime should be slaked in another vessel and before mixing with the copper sulphate solution should be strained through coarse sack ing or a fine sieve. The copper sulphate solution is now put into a barrel, if it has not already been dissolved in one, and enough water added to half fill the barrel; the slaked lime should be diluted in another barrel with enough water to make half a barrel of the lime mixture. Now pour the diluted lime mixture into the diluted copper sulphate solution and stir thoroughly, when it is ready for use. The concentrated lime mixture should not be mixed with the concentrated copper sulphate solution, as if this is done, an inferior mixture will result. If the barrels are kept covered so that there is no evaporating, stock solutions of the concentrated materials may be kept in separate barrels throughout the season. It is important to have the quantities of lime and copper sulphate as recommended, but, in order to be sure that enough lime has been used and there is no danger of burning the foliage, let a drop of ferrocyanide of potassium solution (which can be obtained from a druggist) fall into the mixture when ready. If the latter turns reddish-brown, add more lime mixture until no change of colour takes place.

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