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LORD RHONDDA GIVES OUT AN IMPORTANT INTERVIEW

The United States Called Upon to Supply Great Britain With Seventy-five Million Bushels of Wheat---Would Have Felt Despondent Had the Great Republic not Entered the War---Some Factors in the Food Question.

London, Jan. 23. — Great Britain calls upon the United States for 75,000,000 bushels more of wheat.

This was one of the important statements which Lord Rhondda, the British food controller, made in an interview with the Associated Press today.

The controller described the food shortage in Great Britain as most serious, but not such as would be detrimental to the health of the people with proper management of supplies and willingness on the part of the people to accept equally nourishing substitutes for some of the foods they have been accustomed to.

He referred to the difficulty of discussing the subject frankly without giving encouragement to the exaggerated hopes in Germany that this country was suffering very severely from lack of food. He drew a sharp distinction between conditions in Germany where the public health, particularly that of women and children had been dangerously undermined by lack of nutrition and semi-starvation and where the working effectiveness of the men had been reduced thirty per

cent., and in Great Britain, he said, the self-denial thus far criticised had actually improved the physical condition of the nation.

Shall Pull Through.

"With the help of the United States we shall pull through," he declared. "I would feel very despondent over the situation if the United States had not come into the war, but I have unbounded faith in your ability and good will to help us work out the problem. Our situation would have been napaathetic but for the aid of crops in Italy and France.

"The war will be won by England. It is a test of endurance between England and Germany. We are today where Germany was two years ago. I have no fear of failure on the fighting line."

Lord Rhondda spoke on the most important factors of the food question in detail. Concerning wheat he said: "Despite the saving of some 1,400,000 tons in the consumption of all cereals during the four months ending December 31, as compared with the same period in 1916, the possibility of a shortage is so threatening that wheat will now be milled in the United Kingdom up to ninety per cent. extraction, increasing the use of dilutents ten per cent. The restriction of the use of potatoes in bread to twelve and a half per cent. has been removed and the use of potatoes in bread making will become compulsory. Twenty per cent. of potatoes may be used.

"It is vital that shipments for the Allies from America in January, February and March shall be accelerated to the utmost. They must not be below the average of 1,000,000 tons per month. As a means toward securing this not only for ourselves but for our allies, we almost heartily welcome the news of Mr. Hoover's wheatless days and wheatless meals.

"The supply of bacon, hams and lard is so short that the January shipments now in sight are scarcely likely to be enough to fill the army's requirements for this month. Civilians probably will have to go without."

The Meat Question.

On the subject of meat generally Lord Rhondda said: "Figures, based on the number in the country show that there is likely to be a deficiency of nearly thirty per cent. for the civilian supply compared with last year, and about 45 per cent. compared with 1913-14. The shortage in home supplies is likely to continue until feeding on the pastures becomes possible in the spring. In the meantime we must rely on Mr. Hoover's meatless days to increase our imports.

"We are diverting tonnage in order to take all the meat he will give us. The butcher is only allowed to have fifty per cent. of the supplies he disposed of in October last, and economy in the use of meat is the natural result. With sugar compulsory rationing seems to be working well, but tonnage difficulties make it doubtful if we shall be able to maintain the weekly ration at a half pound per capita.

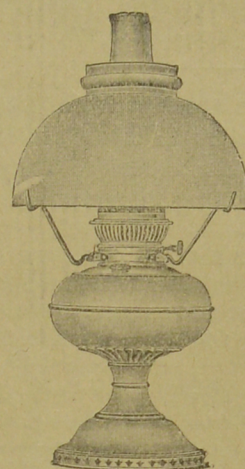
Dairy Produce Short.

"The supplies of butter, margarine and cheese are all very short throughout the country.

"The larger centres of population in the United Kingdom are being grouped into related areas, namely, London and the home counties, containing about one-third of the whole population. Area shipments are to be formulated, all providing for compulsory rationing of butter and margarine and many other commodities, including meat, bacon, lard and tea."

In illustration of his statement regarding the health of the country, Lord Rhondda cited the fact that the deaths in the United Kingdom for the third quarter of 1916 were 10.9 per thousand, compared with 13.5 in the third quarter of 1914 and the death rate among children was 91 compared with 126 in the same period. This with a large fraction of the most robust members of the population who serve in the army.

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