

221 OF THE ENEMY

WORK ON THE WELLAND

Austrians and Bulgars in Charge
of One Man—Placed
Upon Honor.

BEEN THERE A WEEK

No Attempt to Escape and Caus-
ing No Trouble—From
Internment Camp.

Special to The Star.

St. Catharines, Ont., June 24.—The experiment of the Dominion Government of bringing over 200 Austrians and Bulgars here to work on the Welland Ship Canal to relieve the scarcity of labor problem was proven very successful.

A week ago 221 Austrians and Bulgars who had been in an internment camp were brought to the canal here in charge of one man. That one man is still in charge of the prisoners, and he is the only guard and so far not one of them has made any effort to escape.

The prisoners are fed, paid, and housed the same as any other laborers on the canal and they have proven excellent workmen. Some have been put at carpenter work, some concreting, others digging—in fact, these prisoners of war are working at almost everything on the ship canal.

Part of the experiment consisted in a test to see if the prisoners would try to escape and they were put largely on their honor. It was figured that if soldiers were required to guard them, it wouldn't be a very profitable investment for anyone.

The prisoners are, therefore, on parole. They wear no stripes or uniform to distinguish them. Like other laborers on public works they each have a number.

Two or three times a day the lone "guard"—superintendent he is, rather—makes a round to see if all his men are on the job. The same thing occurs at night. The prisoners sleep in the contractors' shacks.

The 221 men are distributed among several contracting firms.

It is scarcely likely that any of them will even try to escape because they know their description will be sent broadcast and they will be arrested again soon. They know they would be stopped at the U. S. border if they try to cross. No doubt their philosophy tells them it would be better to take what the gods bring them and be content. Certainly they are better off working than idling in the internment camp.

Among the Austrians is a dentist. There are many expert workmen in the party.

Seeing that this experiment has proved successful the Government will likely do the same thing with the rest of the Austrians and Bulgars interned. It is scarcely likely they will use the Germans yet for a while.