

## CHAPTER I.—RETAIL PRICES AND PRICE INDEXES.

### § 1. Collection of Information as to Retail Prices.

The retail prices of the extensive range of commodities and services in common demand (generally referred to as the "regimen") used in compiling the All Items ("C" Series) Retail Price Index (see list on pages 11-13 hereof) have been ascertained at frequent and regular intervals since 1923 for each of the six capital cities and for 27 of the more important towns of Australia. Comparable information is available for the month of November in each year 1914 to 1922 for each of the six capital cities.

The retail prices of food and groceries in approximately 200 towns throughout Australia were collected as at November of each year from 1913 to 1942 when collection was discontinued.

Retail prices of food and groceries and average rentals of houses for earlier years extending back to 1901 were collected by this Bureau, and in some cases have been recorded by the Statisticians of various States as far back as 1864.

The methods by which prices used in the "C" Series Index are ascertained and the measures adopted to ensure their accuracy and comparability are briefly as follows:—

- (i) Representative and reputable retailers are selected for each city and town covered by the index and each is required to furnish information as to prices monthly in respect of food and groceries and quarterly in respect of other items. Prices for each item are obtained where practicable from ten or more retailers in each of the capital cities, and from five or more retailers in each of the provincial towns. To cover all commodities in the regimen, collection is made from approximately 60 retailers in each capital city and 30 in each provincial town.
- (ii) Information is collected under authority of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905-1949* which requires that information be supplied accurately and promptly and ensures that particulars supplied by individual retailers will not be divulged to any other person or Government authority. Penalties are provided against failure to supply information, against supplying false information and against failure to answer truthfully any question asked by an authorized officer in respect of the contents of any return.
- (iii) The actual collection of returns is carried out by qualified Field Officers of the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics working under the supervision of the Statisticians of the respective States. These Field Officers have very wide powers of investigation, including entry of premises and inspection of goods, records, etc.
- (iv) The Field Officers not only receive and check returns but visit the retail shops concerned, whenever necessary, to obtain requisite information. In respect of articles of clothing and the like where variation of quality may be considerable Field Officers are equipped with samples of the goods used for price comparisons. In such cases the Field Officers visit every retail informant at each quarterly collection and personally inspect the relevant goods and prices thereof.

- (v) Before each quarterly collection Supervising Field Officers review the standards of the whole of the items for which prices are collected after making extensive inquiries among manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers. These Supervising Field Officers periodically accompany Field Officers at their price collections and check their work. This not only ensures accuracy and assiduity but also that all Field Officers work on uniform lines and that, as far as care and effort can make it possible, prices for identical goods and quality will be recorded at all times and for all places.
- (vi) The list of items in the regimen and the standards thereof are revised from time to time to keep them in harmony with changing conditions. Where such changes become necessary suitable adjustment is made in computing the retail price index to ensure that it reflects changes in price with due precision and that it is not vitiated by the influence of other changes. (*See also* § 9, p. 32 below.) Because of rapidly changing conditions since 1948, prices have been ascertained for a large number of items not embraced in the index and for an increasing number of types of "regimen" items. The purpose of this is to ensure that the index is kept representative and reliable within its definition.
- (vii) Returns of rents for unfurnished houses of four and five rooms are made at the middle of each quarter by a representative number (ranging up to 30) of house agents in each city and town covered by the index, for brick and wooden houses respectively, classified according to number of rooms. These returns show the weekly rental of a substantial number of individual houses each of which is selected by the Field Officer as suitable for inclusion in a sample designed to measure the quarterly ratio of change in weekly rentals. The aim is to measure variations equivalent to change in price for a constant standard. The ratio of change is used to vary basic average rentals derived from the Census of 1933 and other records and was checked with the results of the Census of 1947. Although expressed in money terms, the average rentals as published are essentially indexes. As such they do not necessarily indicate the average amount of rental actually paid for all rented houses, and still less do they indicate the rental at which vacant or new houses can be rented (*see footnote on p. 10*).

## § 2. Retail Price Indexes.

I. **General.**—The basic principle of a retail price index is relatively simple. It is to select commodities representative of the field to be covered and to combine their prices at regular intervals in accordance with their relative importance in that field. The aim is to measure the degree of change in prices for the selected field taken as a whole.

In practice the application of this principle over a term of years presents great difficulty by reason of the numerous changes which occur in the type, grade and relative quantities of many of the items commonly used.

A full explanation of the methods adopted and an analysis of problems involved is contained in the Appendix to Labour Report No. 9.

For convenience the group of selected items is called a "regimen", and the quantities consumed per annum of each item used in the index are called "mass units" or "weights". These terms are used herein. In compiling the index the price of each item is multiplied by its quantity "weight" and then by its appropriate population or household "weight". The sum of these products for all items at any given date represents an "aggregate expenditure". The "aggregate expenditures" for successive periods are converted into an index by denoting the aggregate of a selected or "base" period as 1000, and calculating all index-numbers to such base by the proportions which their aggregates bear to that of the base period. (See par. 2, p. 13.)

**2. Essential Features.**—Apart from clear thinking, common sense and sound arithmetic, the prime essentials in compiling a retail price index are—

- (a) that prices be accurately ascertained at regular intervals for goods of constant grade and quality;
- (b) that the regimen be as representative as possible of the field to be covered;
- (c) that the weights be in approximate proportion to quantities actually used in the selected field.

**3. The Regimen.**—The regimen must be a selected regimen because it is impossible in practice to ascertain at regular intervals prices of every item of goods and services entering into household expenditure. Even in normal times there is considerable difficulty in ensuring that the selected items are always a true sample. Some items which it would be desirable to include must be excluded because comparative prices cannot be accurately ascertained for them at different times and different places. It is deemed better to limit the regimen of the index to items for which price variations can be ascertained with reasonable accuracy than to distend the regimen by including items for which price comparisons are necessarily inaccurate. Similarly, many items of small aggregate or individual importance are excluded. The regimen of the index therefore is not (as is sometimes erroneously supposed) a basic wage regimen nor yet is it a full list of component items in a standard of living. It does not imply that any particular goods or any selected grades or quantities of these goods should enter into determination of a basic or living wage. In fact the regimen used for the "C" Series Index is simply a selected list of items combined in certain proportions for the purpose of measuring price variations. The items are representative of the fields covered, and the proportions approximate to those in average consumption so far as can be ascertained.

The regimen and "weights" used in the "C" Series Index are published in full on pages 11 to 13.

**4. Purpose of Retail Price Indexes.**—Retail price indexes are designed to measure the extent of changes in price levels only. While they may be used as indicating proportionate variations in cost of a *constant* standard of living, they do not measure the absolute cost of any standard of living, nor the cost of changes in the standard of living. In other words, they measure as nearly as may be the proportionate change in the aggregate cost of specified quantities and qualities of the selected regimen of items included in the index. The regimen is representative of a high proportion of the expenditure of wage-earner households. (See top of page 37.)

5. **Effects of Abnormal Conditions on Indexes.**—Under abnormal conditions since 1940 scarcity of certain types of goods, erratic supply and changes of grades in common use have created unusual difficulty in obtaining the data necessary for measuring variations in prices. In some instances, this has rendered it necessary to substitute new grades, qualities or types of articles for those formerly used as indicators of changes in price. This has been the case more particularly in the clothing, household drapery and household utensils sections of the regimen. Substitutions of similar kind were necessary at times under normal conditions in order to meet changes of fashion and usage. Such substitutions are not injurious to the index provided the transitional difficulties can be solved as they arise. No change in principle is involved. The index continues to measure, as accurately as may be, price variations, and price variations only. Just as in the pre-war period, those differences in prices which are solely due to substitution of a new item for one which has ceased to be available or in common use are neutralized by taking the price of the old item as typical of price variation in its class up to the time of substitution, and the prices of the new item as typical of such changes in price thereafter.

In normal times, popular usage of items in general consumption changes slowly and the weight of items and groups in the regimen is changed only at long intervals. In abnormal times, scarcity of supplies of some goods, rationing and kindred factors actually produce short term changes in usage. The "weights" applicable to the items in the regimen cannot, however, be changed frequently and at short intervals. (See § 9 (5), page 35.)

### § 3. Various Retail Price Indexes.

Two main series of retail price index-numbers are compiled and shown in some detail in the following pages, namely:—

- (i) the "B" Series Index relating only to food, groceries and housing, continuously available from 1907;
- (ii) the "C" Series Index relating to food, groceries, housing, clothing, household drapery and utensils, fuel and light, and other miscellaneous items of household expenditure, continuously available from 1914.

The "B" Series Index comprises only the food, groceries and housing sections of the "C" Series Index. Reference is made on pages 37 to 40 of this Report to the "A" Series Index and the "D" Series Index (which are no longer compiled), the "Court" Series Index and various other series of retail price index-numbers.

The "C" Series Index in total provides a reliable measure of aggregate variations in retail prices (as well as of group indexes for component sections) of a high percentage of goods and services used in wage-earner households. This index is compiled for:—

- (a) the capital city of each of the six States,
- (b) four other principal towns in each of the six States,
- (c) weighted average of five towns (including capital city) in each of the six States,
- (d) weighted average for the Six Capital Cities combined,
- (e) weighted average for the Thirty Towns (including capital cities),
- (f) separate indexes for Warwick, Port Augusta, Whyalla and Canberra.

The "C" Series Index forms the basis of the "Court" Series Index used by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration for the "cost of living" adjustments of wages prescribed by awards made by the Court. (See §§ 10 and 11 of this Chapter.)

#### § 4. Retail Price Levels ("C" Series Index) 1914-1951.

1. **Significant Dates.**—The aggregate indexes for November, 1914, 1921 and 1922, and the years 1923 to 1951, for the Thirty Towns are published in summary form on pages 21-23 hereof, while the following table furnishes the relevant index-numbers for the Six Capital Cities as a whole, for certain significant dates since November, 1914—the earliest date for which this index is available.

#### ALL ITEMS ("C" SERIES) RETAIL PRICE INDEX-NUMBERS.

##### WEIGHTED AVERAGE OF SIX CAPITAL CITIES.

(Base: 1923-27 = 1,000.)

1914, November	.. ..	687 (Beginning of War I.)
1918, November	.. ..	905 (End of War I.)
1920, November	.. ..	1,166 (Post-War peak)
1922, November	.. ..	975 (Post-War trough)
1929, Year	.. ..	1,033 (Pre-Depression peak)
1933, Year	.. ..	804 (Depression trough)
1939, September Quarter	.. ..	916 (Pre-War II.)
1943, March Quarter	.. ..	1,123 (Pre-Price Stabilization)
1943, June Quarter	.. ..	1,143 (War II. peak)
1945, September Quarter	.. ..	1,126 (End of War II.)
1951, December Quarter	.. ..	2,042

The index reveals a rise of approximately 32 per cent. during the first world war, followed by a further rise of 29 per cent. in the two post-war years (November, 1918, to November, 1920). From November, 1920 to November, 1922, there was a fall of 16 per cent., and the index remained relatively stable until the onset of the depression in 1929. During the four years of the depression 1929 to 1933 the index fell by 22 per cent., rising thereafter steadily until 1939 when it was nearly 14 per cent. above the level of 1933, and approximately at the level it had occupied at the date of the Armistice of 1918. Between the outbreak of war (September, 1939) and March, 1943 (pre-price stabilization), the index rose by approximately 23 per cent. to a level slightly below that reached at the height of the post-war boom in 1920. Compared with March Quarter, 1943, the index-number at the close of the war was practically unchanged. At December Quarter, 1951, the level was approximately 75 per cent. above that of the 1920 peak period.

Immediately after the outbreak of the war price control was established by the Government under Regulations dated 28th September, 1939, and a national policy of price stabilization was applied as from 12th April, 1943, backed by more stringent price control and price subsidies. The retail price level, as measured by the index, remained relatively steady

throughout 1944 and 1945 at the level of March, 1943. This stabilized level was approximately 23 per cent. above that of 1939 and 63 per cent. above the level prevailing at the beginning of the first world war in 1914. Since June Quarter, 1946, war-time controls, subsidies, etc., have been progressively modified and inflationary influences have supervened. The retail price index for December Quarter 1951 was 123 per cent. above that of September Quarter 1939, and 81 per cent. above the level of September Quarter 1945.

An account of price control measures and of price stabilization in Australia was published in *Official Year Book of the Commonwealth* No. 37, pages 458-463 and No. 38, page 414.

2. All Items ("C" Series) Retail Price Index, Six Capital Cities, 1914-1951.—The movement in the various groups of the index, and in the index as a whole for each year for which it has been compiled is shown in the following table for the six capital cities as a whole:—

All Items ("C" Series) Retail Price Index and its "Group" Index-Numbers (a)  
for the Six Capital Cities combined, 1914 to 1951.

(Base of Each Group: Weighted Average of Six Capital Cities, 1923-27 = 1,000.)

Period.	Food and Groceries.	Housing (4 and 5-roomed Houses) (b)	Food, Groceries and Housing (4 and 5-roomed Houses) ("H" Series).	Clothing.	Miscellaneous.	All Items ("C" Series) Index.
1914 (c)	641	649	644	754	749	687
1915 (c)	844	659	777	792	786	782
1916 (c)	812	665	760	881	802	795
1917 (c)	836	685	782	992	882	847
1918 (c)	851	722	812	1,097	972	905
1919 (c)	1,026	768	934	1,238	1,036	1,022
1920 (c)	1,209	851	1,082	1,365	1,194	1,166
1921 (c)	950	877	924	1,246	1,010	1,013
1922 (c)	945	929	939	1,052	999	975
1923	1,009	950	988	1,045	999	1,003
1924	969	988	975	1,003	1,004	987
1925	998	1,008	1,002	991	992	997
1926	1,023	1,026	1,024	986	998	1,011
1927	1,000	1,030	1,011	975	1,008	1,002
1928	985	1,066	1,014	997	1,010	1,009
1929	1,044	1,073	1,054	996	1,007	1,033
1930	941	1,047	978	951	999	975
1931	826	901	852	853	973	873
1932	796	817	803	804	958	830
1933	751	804	768	787	950	804
1934	783	810	792	785	944	817
1935	806	839	818	783	946	832
1936	825	879	844	792	947	850
1937	831	912	872	811	960	873
1938	886	942	906	829	961	897
1939	927	965	939	841	962	920
1940	939	973	950	956	998	957
1941	947	976	956	1,118	1,008	1,008
1942	1,031	976	1,007	1,308	1,112	1,091
1943	1,037	973	1,011	1,440	1,160	1,131
1944	1,026	976	1,004	1,435	1,165	1,126
1945	1,034	975	1,009	1,425	1,161	1,126
1946	1,036	976	1,010	1,505	1,167	1,145
1947	1,100	977	1,050	1,566	1,199	1,188
1948	1,256	979	1,145	1,744	1,257	1,295
1949	1,394	982	1,230	1,997	1,338	1,415
1950	1,566	987	1,336	2,286	1,435	1,560
1951	2,041	1,009	1,634	2,749	1,679	1,883

(a) See footnote (a) on page 10.

(b) See footnote (b) on page 10.

(c) November.

**All Items ("C" Series) Retail Price Index and its "Group" Index-Numbers (a)  
for the Six Capital Cities combined, 1914 to 1951—continued.**

*(Base of Each Group: Weighted Average of Six Capital Cities, 1923-27 = 1,000.)*

Period.	Food and Groceries.	Housing (4 and 5-roomed Houses) (b)	Food, Groceries and Housing (4 and 5-roomed Houses) ("B" Series).	Clothing.	Miscellaneous.	All Items ("C" Series) Index.
Quarter—						
1939—September ..	920	967	936	836	961	916
1945—March ..	1,628	975	1,005	1,421	1,161	1,123
June ..	1,037	975	1,011	1,416	1,161	1,125
September ..	1,040	975	1,013	1,415	1,161	1,126
December ..	1,030	975	1,007	1,448	1,161	1,129
1946—March ..	1,036	976	1,010	1,456	1,164	1,134
June ..	1,042	976	1,014	1,494	1,167	1,143
September ..	1,029	976	1,006	1,521	1,167	1,146
December ..	1,037	976	1,011	1,550	1,170	1,156
1947—March ..	1,071	976	1,032	1,525	1,181	1,165
June ..	1,088	976	1,042	1,534	1,184	1,174
September ..	1,104	977	1,052	1,566	1,213	1,192
December ..	1,158	977	1,073	1,639	1,217	1,221
1948—March ..	1,190	978	1,105	1,661	1,231	1,248
June ..	1,229	979	1,129	1,720	1,248	1,278
September ..	1,274	979	1,156	1,778	1,271	1,311
December ..	1,330	980	1,190	1,818	1,277	1,341
1949—March ..	1,361	981	1,209	1,840	1,304	1,364
June ..	1,388	981	1,226	1,963	1,325	1,403
September ..	1,396	982	1,232	2,043	1,345	1,428
December ..	1,429	983	1,252	2,132	1,378	1,466
1950—March ..	1,473	984	1,279	2,156	1,402	1,491
June ..	1,520	986	1,308	2,261	1,473	1,534
September ..	1,582	987	1,346	2,316	1,432	1,572
December ..	1,689	989	1,412	2,410	1,492	1,643
1951—March ..	1,790	1,004	1,480	2,487	1,564	1,713
June ..	1,925	1,007	1,503	2,746	1,641	1,833
September ..	2,136	1,010	1,602	2,833	1,715	1,943
December ..	2,311	1,013	1,800	2,930	1,794	2,042

(a) See footnote (a) on page 10.

(b) See footnote (b) on page 10.

### § 5. Increases in Retail Prices since Outbreak of War in 1939.

**I. Australia.**—The following statement shows for the six State capitals and Canberra separately and for the six State capitals as a whole, the percentage increases which have taken place in retail prices of items included in the "C" Series Index from September Quarter, 1939, to December Quarter, 1951, inclusive. The proportionate increase in the total index for each capital city is shown in the line marked "Total." In the column headed "C" Series Index the total percentage rise is dissected to show what part of it was due to the rise in prices in each of the four main groups of items. Thus, of the 125.1 per cent. increase for Sydney, 56.8 was due to food and groceries, 0.4 to house rent, 50.1 to clothing and 17.8 to miscellaneous items. The column headed "Group Index" shows the percentage increase in prices of items in each group considered as a group. Thus, for Sydney, prices in the food and groceries group increased by 158.2 per cent., house rents by 1.6 per cent., prices of clothing by 252.4 per cent. and prices of miscellaneous

items by 95.5 per cent. These when weighted and combined in the proportion of the "C" Series Index showed a rise of 125.1 per cent. For the Six Capital Cities as a whole the increase over the period was 122.9 per cent.

**All Items ("C" Series) Retail Price Index.**

**Percentage Increases September Quarter, 1939, to December Quarter, 1951.**

Group.	Sydney.		Melbourne.		Brisbane.		Adelaide.	
	"C" Series Index.	Group Index.	"C" Series Index.	Group Index.	"C" Series Index.	Group Index.	"C" Series Index	Group Index.
Food and Groceries	(a)56.8	158.2	(a)55.1	150.4	(a)53.6	150.9	(a)51.4	144.9
Housing (4 and 5-roomed Houses)	(a) 0.4	1.6	(a) 0.6	2.4	(a) 2.4	10.8	(a) 1.8	7.9
Clothing ..	(a)50.1	252.4	(a)49.4	250.7	(a)51.5	243.4	(a)51.2	244.0
Miscellaneous ..	(a)17.8	95.5	(a)16.4	83.7	(a)15.8	77.4	(a)16.0	76.7
Total ...	125.1	125.1	121.5	121.5	123.3	123.3	120.4	120.4

Group.	Perth.		Hobart.		Six State Capitals.(b)		Canberra.	
	"C" Series Index.	Group Index.	"C" Series Index.	Group Index.	"C" Series Index.	Group Index.	"C" Series Index.	Group Index.
Food and Groceries	(a)47.4	126.0	(a)53.1	145.9	(a)54.7	151.2	(a)54.4	137.5
Housing (4 and 5-roomed Houses)	(a) 4.9	21.8	(a) 3.3	14.0	(a) 1.2	4.8	(a) 0.5	2.0
Clothing ..	(a)52.0	256.1	(a)50.7	245.3	(a)50.2	250.5	(a)50.7	258.2
Miscellaneous ..	(a)15.7	80.5	(a)16.5	85.5	(a)16.8	86.7	(a)15.5	91.9
Total ..	120.0	120.0	123.6	123.6	122.9	122.9	121.1	121.1

(a) Dissection of percentage rise in total index to show amount due to rise in each group

(b) Weighted average.

The foregoing comparisons refer to two points of time (i.e., the months immediately preceding the war and the closing months of 1951), at each of which special temporary factors may have influenced relative price levels. For instance, prices of certain foods (e.g., meat) fluctuate with seasonal conditions. The percentage increases shown do not, therefore, necessarily indicate the degree of increase due solely to causes peculiar to the war and post-war period.

2. **International Comparisons.**—The following table shows the increase during this period in Australia and certain other countries. The increases during the first world war have also been included.



## Retail Price Index-Numbers.

(FOOD, RENT, CLOTHING, MISCELLANEOUS HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE.)

Date.	Australia.	United Kingdom.	Canada.	New Zealand.	Union of South Africa.	United States of America.
(A): 1914-1919.						
1914 July .. ..	(a) 100	100	100	100	(b) 100(c)	100
1915 Year .. ..	114	125	97	108	103	102
1916 " .. ..	116	148	102	115	106	109
1917 " .. ..	123	180	130	125	114	128
1918 " .. ..	132	203	146	135	118	156
1919 " .. ..	149	208	155	145	126	175

(a) November.

(b) Food, Fuel, Light and Rent.

(c) Average for year 1914.

## (B): 1939-1951.

1939—					(a)	
September Quarter	100	100	100	100	100	100
1940—Year(b) ..	105	119	105	104	104	100
1941— " (b) ..	110	104	111	109	109	105
1942— " (b) ..	119	129	116	117	118	116
1943— " (b) ..	124	128	117	114	126	123
1944— " (b) ..	123	129	118	116	130	125
1945— " (b) ..	123	131	119	118	133	127
1946— " (b) ..	125	131	123	118	135	138
1947— " (b) ..	130	102(d)	134	122	141	158
1948— " (b) ..	141	108	154	132	149	170
1949— " (b) ..	154	111	160	134(e)	154	168
1950— " .. ..	170	114	165	142	160	171
1951— " .. ..	206	124	183	157	172	185
1950—March Quarter	163	113	161	136	157	166
June " ..	167	114	163	140	160	168
Sept. " ..	172	114	167	145	160	172
Dec. " ..	179	116	169	147	164	176
1951—March Quarter	187	118	174	149	168	182
June " ..	200	123	181	155	171	184
Sept. " ..	212	127	187	161	173	185
Dec. " ..	223	129	189	164	176	187

(a) Food Rent and Miscellaneous Expenditure. (b) Quarterly indexes appear in preceding issues.  
 (c) War-time Index linked to former series. (d) July-December new Series. Base: 17th June, 1947 = 100. (e) Consumers' (Retail) Price Index linked to former series.

At various stages during the first world war most of these countries introduced some measures of price control. But in the second world war they introduced price control measures at an early stage and these became more stringent as the war progressed, culminating in a policy of price stabilization.

Immediately after the outbreak of war in September, 1939, the Commonwealth Government took steps to control prices, and, by proclamation issued from day to day, pegged prices of various commodities at those ruling on 31st August, 1939. The National Security (Prices) Regulations proclaimed on 28th September, 1939, under the authority of the National Security Act, established the basic principles of war-time price control, provided for the appointment of a Commonwealth Prices Commissioner and conferred upon him extensive powers to control the price of goods declared for that purpose by the Minister for Trade and Customs. In *Official Year Book of the Commonwealth*, No. 37, pages 458-463, a brief summary of the development of this control is published, while in No. 38, page 414, reference is made to the transfer in September, 1948, of price control to the Governments of the States.

### § 6. Construction of All Items ("C" Series) Retail Price Index.

I. **The Regimen.**—The regimen from which the "C" Series Index is compiled consists of a list of commodities and services which commonly enter into the consumption of the average household and in respect of which comparative prices can be ascertained with due precision from time to time and place to place. (See § 2 (3) and (4) page 3 above.) The regimen is divided into the following Groups and Sections:—

Group.	Section.
I. Food and Groceries	A.—Groceries. B.—Dairy Produce. C.—Meat.
II. Housing	D.—House Rent.
III. Clothing	E.—Clothing—Man. F.—Clothing—Woman. G.—Clothing—Boy (10½ years). H.—Clothing—Girl (7 years). J.—Clothing—Boy (3½ years).
IV. Miscellaneous	K.—Household Drapery. L.—Household Utensils. M.—Fuel and Light. N.—Other Miscellaneous.

The "C" Series Index includes the whole of the foregoing Groups, but for many purposes indexes are required for individual Groups or Sections. For this reason the following indexes are regularly compiled at the intervals shown, and published in this Report and other publications issued by the Bureau:—

Group. (a)	Content.	Frequency.
I.	Food and Groceries .. .. .	Monthly
II.	Housing (4 and 5-roomed houses) (b) .. .	Quarterly
I. and II.	Food, Groceries and Housing (4 and 5-roomed houses) ("B" Series) .. .. .	Quarterly
III.	Clothing .. .. .	Quarterly
IV.	Miscellaneous Household Requirements .. .	Quarterly
I., II., III. and IV.	Food, Groceries, Housing (4 and 5-roomed houses), Clothing and Miscellaneous ("C" Series)	Quarterly

For convenience of reference two of the indexes mentioned above have been given the "series" designation shown against them. These indexes are dealt with in turn in the following pages.

(a) "Group" or "Sectional" index-numbers in the various tables throughout this Report cannot be compared with each other in order to show the relative cost of Food and Groceries, Housing, Clothing or Miscellaneous requirements, since each "Group" or "Section" (or combination thereof) has its own Base = 1,000, viz., the weighted average cost for the Six Capital Cities as a whole during the five-yearly period 1923-27 for that "Group" or "Section". (b) *Test*—The rent index-numbers shown in the tables in this Report measure the proportionate rise and fall in the average weekly rentals paid for houses of four and five rooms taking corresponding houses throughout. They are "price" indexes in the strict sense, i.e., they are designed to measure only the "price" element in rent fluctuations. Similarly, "average rents" where shown are indexes of "price" changes in rentals expressed in terms of pence. They are not the average of rents actually paid by all tenants of 4 and 5-roomed houses. It would be inappropriate to include the average of rents actually paid in an index designed to measure price changes only. The average of rents actually paid is ascertained periodically by Census methods—(see also page 2 above). Rentals of new tenanted houses completed since the end of the war are not taken into account.

The articles and services included in the various regimens now used for the purposes of the indexes referred to are shown in the following table:—

**Retail Price Indexes—Regimen.**  
**GROUP I.—FOOD AND GROCERIES.**

No.	Item.	Unit.	"Weight" or Mass Unit (per capita).	Cost of Items in Regimen as percentage of aggregate cost—Melbourne, Dec. Quarter, 1950. (a)
<b>SECTION A.—GROCERIES.</b>				
1	Bread, white flour (cash delivered) ..	2-lb. loaf ..	100	3.41
2	Flour, ordinary ..	2 lb. ..	25	0.58
3	Flour, self-raising ..	2-lb. pkt. ..	12	0.48
4	Tea ..	1-lb. pkt. ..	8	1.28
5	Sugar, white granulated, 1A ..	1 lb. ..	100	2.01
6	.. ..	.. ..	..	..
7	Sago, seed tapioca ..	1 lb. ..	1	0.03
8	Jam, plum ..	1½-lb. tin ..	8	0.54
9	Golden Syrup ..	2-lb. tin ..	1	0.04
10	Oats, flaked, loose ..	1 lb. ..	8	0.21
11	Raisins, seeded ..	1-lb. pkt. ..	5	0.40
12	Currants, loose, 2-Crown ..	1 lb. ..	2	0.12
13	Apricots, dried, loose, 2-Crown ..	1 lb. ..	1	0.10
14	Peaches, canned ..	30-oz. tin ..	3	0.25
15	Pears, canned ..	30-oz. tin ..	1	0.09
16	.. ..	.. ..	..	..
17	Potatoes, new and old ..	7 lb. ..	18	2.09
18	Onions, brown ..	1 lb. ..	14	0.28
19	Soap ..	1 lb. ..	16	0.74
20	Kerosene, lighting, bulk ..	quart ..	4	0.12
<b>SECTION B.—DAIRY PRODUCTS.</b>				
21	Butter, factory "choicest" ..	1 lb. ..	30	3.03
22	Cheese, ordinary, mild ..	1 lb. ..	4	0.28
23	Eggs, standard, new laid ..	1 doz. ..	6	0.89
24	Bacon, rashers, best middle ..	1 lb. ..	12	2.06
25	Milk, condensed, sweetened ..	1 tin ..	5	0.29
26	Milk, fresh—in sealed bottles or not bottled ..	quart ..	72	3.35
<b>SECTION C.—MEAT.</b>				
<b>Beef (fresh)—</b>				
27	Sirloin (Roast) (bone in) ..	1 lb. ..	18	1.68
28	Prime Rib (Roast) including bone ..	1 lb. ..	22	1.79
29	Steak—Rump ..	1 lb. ..	11	1.44
30	Steak—Chuck (stewing) ..	1 lb. ..	20	1.38
31	Sausages ..	1 lb. ..	7	0.40
<b>Beef (corned)—</b>				
32	Silverside ..	1 lb. ..	14	1.25
33	Brisket, rolled ..	1 lb. ..	15	1.00
<b>Mutton (fresh)—</b>				
34	Leg ..	1 lb. ..	20	1.38
35	Forequarter ..	1 lb. ..	15	0.68
36	Loin, without flap ..	1 lb. ..	4	0.25
37	Chops—Loin ..	1 lb. ..	30	2.00
38	Chops—Leg ..	1 lb. ..	10	0.70
<b>Pork (fresh)—</b>				
39	Leg ..	1 lb. ..	3	0.42
40	Loin, best end ..	1 lb. ..	3	0.43
41	Chops ..	1 lb. ..	3	0.44

**GROUP II.—HOUSING.—SECTION D.—RENT.**

42	House Accommodation(b) ..	week ..	52(d)	13.74
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(a) Percentages for the various sections of the remaining Groups—III. Clothing and IV. Miscellaneous—of the "C" Series Index are shown on page 16. (b) Four and five-roomed houses. (c) Per household.

## Retail Price Indexes—Regimen—continued.

## GROUP III.—CLOTHING.

No.	Item.	"Weight" or Mass Unit (per capita).	No.	Item.	"Weight" or Mass Unit (per capita).
<b>SECTION E.—CLOTHING—MAN.</b>			<b>SECTION G.—CLOTHING—BOY (10½ YEARS)—cont'd.</b>		
1	Suit, ready-made, Worsted (Australian)	0.67	46	Overcoat, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	0.33
2	Trousers, working, Cotton Tweed (Australian)	2.00	47	Cap, Skull, Cloth	1.50
3	Overcoat, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	0.25	48	Shirt, Sports	3.00
4	Hat, Fur Felt (Australian)	1.00	49	Singlet, Wool (short sleeves)	1.00
5	Shirt, Fashion	1.67	50	Singlet, Cotton (athletic)	1.00
6	Shirt, Working, Drill	4.00	51	Braces	1.00
7			52	Stockings, Golf, All Wool	4.00
8	Singlet, Wool (short sleeves)	1.00	53	Pyjamas, Winceyette	1.50
9	Singlet, Cotton (athletic)	1.00	54	Pullover, All Wool	0.50
10	Underpants, Wool (full length)	1.00	55	Shoes, Box Yearling a (3-13)	1.00
11	Underpants, Cotton "Shorts"	1.00	56		
12	Sox, All Wool a (4.65)	2.00	57		
13					
14	Braces	1.33	<b>SECTION H.—CLOTHING—GIRL (7 YEARS)</b>		
15	Handkerchief, Cotton	6.00	58	Tunic, Wool	1.00
16	Pyjamas, Winceyette	1.50	59		
17	Pullover, All Wool	1.00	60	Dress, Cotton	3.00
18	Shoes (for best wear), Box Calf	0.50	61	Top Coat, Tweed (Australian)	0.33
19	Boots, working, Box Hide	1.50	62	Hat, Wool Felt (Australian)	1.00
			63	Hat, Straw	2.00
			64		
<b>SECTION F.—CLOTHING—WOMAN (b)</b>			65	Petticoat, Rayon	1.00
20	Costume, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	0.50	66	Singlet, Wool and Rayon	0.50
21	Shirt, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	1.25	67	Singlet, Rayon	0.50
22			68	Bloomers, Cotton, fleecy-lined	2.00
23	Hat, Fur Felt (Australian)	0.75	69	Bloomers, Rayon	1.00
24	Hat, Straw	1.50	70	Sox, Anklet, Rayon and Lisle	4.00
25	Frock, ready-made, Cotton	1.50	71	Pyjamas, Winceyette	0.33
26	Frock, ready-made, Rayon	1.50	72	Pyjamas, Rayon	0.33
27	Brassiere	4.50	73	Pullover, All Wool	0.50
28	Undervest, Wool and Rayon	1.50	74	Shoes (for best wear), Patent Leather	0.67
29	Undervest, Rayon	1.50	75	Shoes (school), Box Yearling	1.50
30					
31	Bloomers, Rayon	4.50	<b>SECTION J.—CLOTHING—BOY (3½ YEARS)</b>		
32	Princess Slip, Rayon	1.00	76	Shirt, Ranger	3.00
33	Stockings, Silk, Nylon	6.00	77	Pants, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	3.00
34	Stockings, Lisle	3.00	78	Overcoat, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	0.33
35	Gloves, Fabric	2.25	79	Hat, Cloth	1.33
36	Gloves, Nappa	0.75	80	Singlet, Wool	1.00
37	Nightdress, Rayon a (2.49)	1.50	81	Singlet, Cotton (athletic)	1.00
38	Pyjamas, Winceyette	1.50	82	Sox, Anklet, Rayon and Lisle	4.00
39			83	Pyjamas, Winceyette	2.00
40	Apron, Cotton	6.00	84	Pullover, All Wool	0.50
41	Cardigan, All Wool	0.50	85	Shoes (for best wear), Patent Leather	1.00
42	Shoes (for best wear), Glace Kid	1.50	86	Shoes (for ordinary wear), Tan Yearling	2.00
43	Shoes (for ordinary wear), Box Calf	1.50			
<b>SECTION G.—CLOTHING—BOY (10½ YEARS).</b>					
44	Suit, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	1.00			
45	Pants, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	3.00			

(a) Mass unit actually applicable, and includes "weight" transferred from similar article now deleted.  
 (b) The mass units were raised by 50 per cent throughout this Section to restore its due proportionate "weight" in the Clothing Group of the Index as from September Quarter, 1936.

## Retail Price Indexes—Regimen—continued.

## GROUP IV.—MISCELLANEOUS.

No.	Item.	"Weight" or Mass Unit (per household).	No.	Item	"Weight" or Mass Unit (per household).
<b>SECTION K.—HOUSEHOLD DRAPERY.</b>			<b>SECTION L.—HOUSEHOLD UTENSILS—continued.</b>		
1	Blankets, D.B. (pair) ..	0.07	26	Knife, Table (stainless) ..	0.10
2	Blankets, S.B. (pair) ..	0.14	27	Spoon, Tea ..	0.08
3	Quilt, D.B. ..	0.25	28	Spoon, Dessert ..	0.08
4	.. ..	..	29	Fork, Table ..	0.10
5	Sheets, D.B. (pair) ..	0.50	30	Globe, Electric Light (gas-filled) ..	3.00
6	Sheets, S.B. (pair) ..	1.00	31	Iron, Electric (full size) ..	0.10
7	Pillow Slip, Cotton ..	5.00	<b>SECTION M.—FUEL AND LIGHT.</b>		
8	Towel ..	5.00	32	Firewood (blocks) (cwt.) (b) ..	40
9	Table Cloth ..	0.20	33	Gas, cooking (units) (b) ..	1,518
10	Tea Towel (yard) ..	4.00	34	Electric lighting (units) ..	130
<b>SECTION L.—HOUSEHOLD UTENSILS.</b>			35	Electric power (units) (b) ..	130
11	Cup and Saucer ..	2.00	<b>SECTION N.—OTHER MISCELLANEOUS.</b>		
12	Plate, Dinner (Stone China) ..	2.00	No.	Item.	Amount per week (per household).
13	Jug, Quart (Earthenware) ..	1.00	36	Union Dues ..	d.
14	Teapot ..	0.25	37	Lodge Dues ..	(c)
15	Basin, Pudding (Enamel), 6½-inch	1.00	38	Medicine ..	(c)
16	Tumbler (8-oz.) ..	1.00	39	Newspapers ..	(c)
17	Kettle, Enamel (4-pint) & (0.37)	0.20	40	Recreation ..	(c)
18	.. ..	..	41	Smoking ..	(c)
19	Saucepan, Enamel (3-pint) ..	0.40	42	Fares ..	(c)
20	Bucket, Galvanized (11-inch) ..	0.20	43	School requisites ..	(c)
21	Dipper ..	0.20			
22	Broom, Millet ..	0.50			
23	Broom, Hair, complete (12-inch)	0.31			
24	Brush, Scrubbing (10-inch) ..	1.50			
25	Mop, Polishing, complete ..	0.20			

(a) Mass unit actually applicable, and includes "weight" transferred from similar article now deleted.

(b) Standard mass units. In certain provincial towns where gas and/or electricity are not used the mass units differ from the standard.

(c) A basic amount per week is varied quarterly (where necessary) in accordance with changes shown by an index of variation.

## 2. The Mass Units (or "Weights") and Method of Tabulation.—

(i) The "mass units" (or "weights") are multipliers representing the approximate average annual consumption *per head* or *per household* under normal conditions. The index-numbers are computed on a "total annual aggregative expenditure" basis, i.e., the total annual expenditure from time to time by a *standard population* in respect of the selected regimen of commodities and services commonly entering into household consumption, and of a constant *standard quality*. As a first step, therefore, it is necessary to multiply the price of each item by its "weight" per head or per household as the case may be. Thus, the "weight" of bread is 100 2-lb. loaves per head; of sugar 100 lb. per head; of towels 3 per household; and of housing 52 rent-weeks per household. The result of this initial calculation is designated the "P.MU" aggregate (i.e., Price x Mass Unit).

The sum of the above "P.MU" results for each Section or Group is then multiplied by its appropriate population or household "weight" to produce the respective annual aggregate expenditures. Thus, Sections A to C (Food and Groceries) would be multiplied by the total population; Section D (Housing) by the total number of households; Sections E to J (Clothing) by the proportion of the total population applicable to each; and Sections K to N (Miscellaneous) by the total number of households.

The combination of the aggregates from the last paragraph gives the "total annual aggregate expenditure" for the whole regimen, from which the "C" Series index-number is derived by applying to 1,000 the ratio which the aggregate for any period bears to the aggregate for the base period of the index. In the process of tabulation all prices are converted to pence for these final aggregates.

For tabulating purposes some of these "mass units" are varied when necessary to make up a deficiency or cancel out an excess in the aggregate resulting from a *change in the standard* of any item upon which prices are collected, to ensure that such changes shall not be wrongly recorded by the index as *variations* in prices. The "mass units" published above, however, still continue to show the correct *relative* consumption "weights" actually applicable to the commodities and services in the regimen for the *constant standards* used in the index. See also § 2 (3) and § 6 (3) of this chapter.

(ii) The five sections into which the clothing group is divided are somewhat arbitrary, but they follow those adopted by the Royal Commission on the Basic Wage (see p. 106). The sections for men and women are now regarded as being applicable to persons aged seventeen years and upwards. The section for a boy aged ten and a half years is taken as representative of both sexes from ten to sixteen years; the section for a girl aged seven as representative of both sexes from five to nine years; and the section for a boy aged three and a half years is taken as representative of children aged four years and under.

(iii) In estimating the annual average consumption per head of food and groceries for household purposes, small adjustments in the crude average consumption were made in two ways. Consumption by factories, when the product did not go into household use in Australia, was deducted. On the other hand, the "weights" given to some foods, such as dried apricots and canned peaches, cover also the consumption of other similar foods. The "weights" of individual food items were not adjusted to take account of war-time scarcities and rationing.

(iv) Some foods of some importance, such as fresh fish, and fresh fruit and vegetables other than potatoes and onions, are not included in the regimen because comparable prices for a standard grade cannot be obtained from time to time or place to place and because of marked seasonal

fluctuations in supplies and consumption. The inclusion of such items, therefore, would impair the accuracy of the index. In the original regimen certain omissions were made partly on account of the difficulty of securing comparable prices. Some cuts of meat, for example, are excluded because they are not uniformly standardized. Mutton is included and not lamb because the latter, in many places, is available only seasonally. However, the appropriate total weight for meat is distributed amongst the cuts included in the regimen. Proprietary lines of breakfast foods are excluded because they are not universally available.

(v) In the case of Food and Groceries (Group I.) the "weights" adopted are, approximately, the annual average consumption per head for household purposes of the various articles during the years 1927 to 1929. The "weights" allotted to items in Clothing (Group III.) and Household Drapery (Section K of Group IV.) are based largely on the results of the inquiries of the Royal Commission on the Basic Wage, which reported in 1920 and 1921. After exhaustive inquiries the Commission published a "regimen" for an average working family of five persons, and set out the constituent items in its "Indicator List". This list, so far as it related to the articles in question, was followed substantially in the original compilation of the "C" Series Index and has been adjusted by subsequent investigations of the Bureau to accord with changes in popular usage. The mass units used for fuel and light are based, indirectly, on the findings of the Commission. Until September Quarter, 1936 fixed amounts were used for the miscellaneous items of Section N, but since the date mentioned, provision has been made to vary certain of these amounts periodically, in accordance with ascertained changes.

(vi) The "weights" allotted to the items were not adjusted to take account of war-time shortages or rationing, and the index therefore measured war-time price changes in relation to a normal (or pre-war) apportionment of household expenditure. (See § 2 (5) and § 9 (5) of this chapter.)

3. **Relative "Aggregate Expenditure" of Items and Groups.**—In the *base period* of the index (the years 1923 to 1927) the relative importance of each of the four main groups, expressed as a percentage of the weighted average "aggregate expenditure" in the Six Capital Cities (from which all relative index-numbers are derived) was as shown in the third column of the following table. Although the "weights" of each item in the regimen are kept virtually constant, the relative "aggregate expenditure" of the various items and groups varies from time to time as relative prices change.

The percentage distribution for Melbourne in the *base period* was practically identical with that of the Six Capital Cities as a whole, and has continued to be representative of the relative movement of prices in the capital cities up to the present time. For this and other reasons, therefore, the percentage distribution of the Melbourne "aggregate expenditures"

has been published in previous issues of this Report, and these figures for December quarter, 1950, are shown in the last column of the table for comparison with those of the base period.

Group.	Section.	Proportion of Aggregate Expenditure.			
		1923-27. (Base). Six Capital Cities.		Dec. Qtr., 1950. Melbourne.	
		%		%	
I. Food and Groceries	A Groceries ..	17.44	38.66	12.77	37.71
	B Dairy Produce ..	10.28		9.70	
	C Meat ..	10.94		15.24	
II. Housing ..	D House Rent— (4 and 5-roomed houses) ..	21.26	21.26	13.74	13.74
	E Man ..	8.69		12.48	
III. Clothing ..	F Woman ..	9.12	23.04	14.45	31.88
	G Boy, 10½ years ..	2.89		2.33	
	H Girl, 7 years ..	1.36		1.75	
	J Boy, 3½ years ..	0.98		0.87	
	K Household Drapery	1.09		2.17	
	L Household Utensils	0.49		0.66	
IV. Miscellaneous	M Fuel and Light ..	4.92	17.04	4.34	16.67
	N Other Miscellaneous	10.54		9.50	
		100.00		100.00	

**4. Base Periods of the Indexes.**—The base period originally adopted by the Bureau for its retail price indexes was the year 1911. When the collection of the prices of clothing and miscellaneous items was undertaken for the purposes of the "C" Series Index, the month of November, 1914, was adopted as the base period for this series. The desirability of computing retail price indexes to a new base was considered by a Conference of Statisticians in 1929, and it was resolved that from 1st January, 1930, the five years 1923-27 should be adopted as the base period. Commencing with Labour Report No. 21 for 1930, therefore, the retail price indexes have been published on this base. The aggregate to which all index-numbers are related is the weighted "aggregate expenditure" of the regimen in the six capital cities during the period taken as base expressed as an index-number of 1,000.

Conferences of statisticians in 1949 and 1950 left consideration of the adoption of a new base period to be made in conjunction with the next general review of the index. In the *Monthly Review of Business Statistics* the index is recomputed with the three years ended June, 1939, as base.

Indexes on the earlier bases mentioned will be found in previous issues of the Labour Report, as follows:—

(i) 1911 Base.—Food and groceries; rent of all houses; and food, groceries and rent of all houses ("A" Series Index)—Labour Reports Nos. 1 to 15.\* Food and groceries; rent of 4 and 5-roomed houses; and food, groceries and rent of 4 and 5-roomed houses ("B" Series Index)—Labour Reports Nos. 16 to 20.

(ii) 1914 Base.—Food and groceries; rent of all houses; clothing; miscellaneous; all items of household expenditure (subsequently retrospectively revised to include rents of 4 and 5-roomed houses only)—

\* These index-numbers appear in the Appendix to each Labour Report Nos. 16 to 28 and also in the *Quarterly Summary of Australian Statistics* up to No. 155, June, 1938.



Labour Reports Nos. 12 to 16. Food and groceries; rent of 4 and 5-roomed houses; clothing; miscellaneous; all items of household expenditure ("C" Series Index)—Labour Reports Nos. 17 to 20.

The conversion of these indexes from one base to another may be readily effected by multiplying the index-number to be converted by the appropriate factor shown in the following table:—

Group:	1911 to 1914 (a).	1914 (a) to 1911.	1911 to 1923-27.	1923-27 to 1911.	1914 (a) to 1923-27.	1923-27 to 1914 (a).
Food and Groceries ..	0.87230	1.14639	0.55929	1.78800	0.64116	1.55970
Housing (4 and 5-roomed houses) ..	0.94279	1.06068	0.61161	1.63500	0.64872	1.54150
Food, Groceries and Rent ("B" Series)	0.89750	1.11420	0.57785	1.73060	0.64384	1.55320
Clothing .. ..	..	..	..	..	0.75412	1.32610
Miscellaneous ..	..	..	..	..	0.74891	1.33530
All Items ("C" Series)	..	..	..	..	0.68715	1.45530

(a) November.

The results obtained by the method above will, of course, be only approximate, but the error will not be greater than one point in the unit figure.

5. Relative Population Weights for Towns.—Weighted averages for any combination of towns or States may be calculated approximately by multiplying the index-numbers\* of the towns or States to be included by their population weights, and dividing the sum of the products by the sum of the multipliers. The population weights used in the computations of these weighted averages for 1934 and succeeding years are as follows:—

#### Relative Population Weights Used for Different Towns.

New South Wales.		Victoria.		Queensland.		South Australia.		Western Australia.		Tasmania.	
Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.
Sydney ..	1235	Melbourne ..	992	Brisbane ..	300	Adelaide ..	313	Perth, etc.	208	Hobart ..	60
Newcastle ..	105	Ballarat ..	38	T'woomba ..	26	Kadina, etc.	11	Kalg'lie, etc.	17	Launceston ..	33
Broken Hill ..	27	Bendigo ..	29	Rockham'n ..	29	Pt. Pirie ..	12	Northern ..	5	Burnie ..	4
Goulburn ..	15	Geelong ..	39	Townsville ..	26	Mt. Gamb'r ..	5	Bunbury ..	5	Devonport ..	3
Bathurst ..	10	W'nambool ..	9	Bundaberg ..	11	Peterbor'gh ..	3	Geraldton ..	5	Queenst'wn ..	4
Total ..	1392	Total ..	1107	†Total ..	392	Total ..	344	Total ..	240	Total ..	106

† Townsville and Bundaberg were substituted for Charters Towers (7) and Warwick (7) in the "five towns" tabulation in March Quarter, 1937.

The weights used are based on the 1933 Census results, and represent to the nearest 1,000 the actual population at that date.

These weights produce results which differ only very slightly from those obtained from the weights previously in use. The latter were based upon the 1921 Census results, and were last published in Labour Report, No. 23.

\* The official index-numbers are calculated by operating on the "aggregates" of the towns concerned, a procedure which may produce slightly different results from the above.

### § 7. Tabular Statements of Retail Price Index-Numbers.

1. **General.**—The results of inquiries into price movements are available as follows :—

(i) *Monthly.*—The *Monthly Review of Business Statistics* contains annual, quarterly and monthly index-numbers to the latest available date.

(ii) *Quarterly.*—A statement is issued about three weeks after the end of each quarter giving the "C" Series index-numbers for that quarter and immediately preceding quarters in respect of each of the 30 cities and towns originally adopted and for certain other towns, e.g., Canberra, for which "C" Series index-numbers are now compiled. The *Quarterly Summary of Australian Statistics* contains annual, quarterly and monthly index-numbers to the latest available date. This publication also contains the average prices of the items of food and groceries, for each month of the last available quarter, in the 30 towns covered by the investigation. Particulars of movements in certain average rents of 4 and 5-roomed houses in these towns are also shown therein.

(iii) *Annual.*—The Labour Report contains index-numbers over a number of past years, and the monthly and quarterly results for at least the last available year. The average prices for the last year of the items of food and groceries, and house rents, are also published in this Report. The *Official Year Book* also contains information similar to, but in less detail than that published herein.

2. **All Items ("C" Series) Retail Price Index.**—On pages 6-7 above is published a table of weighted averages for the six capital cities combined, of "C" Series index-numbers, together with index-numbers for the four main groups of items in the "C" Series Index for each year 1914-1951.

In the pages immediately following are published :—

- (i) the "C" Series index-number for the last quarter of each of the years 1939 and 1945 to 1950 (page 19) and for the month of November of each of the years 1914 to 1920 (page 20), for each capital city and for the six capital cities combined, and showing also separate indexes for each of the four groups of items ;
- (ii) the "C" Series index-numbers for November, 1914, 1921 and 1922, the years 1923 to 1950, the September Quarter, 1939, and each quarter during the period March Quarter, 1944, to December Quarter, 1950, for each of the 30 towns, with the weighted averages of the 5 towns in each State, 30 towns and the six capital cities (pages 21-23) ;
- (iii) the "C" Series index-numbers for the years 1939 to 1950 and the twelve quarters ended 31st December, 1950, for four additional towns not included in the weighted averages in (ii) above, and showing also separate indexes for each of the four groups of items (page 24) ;
- (iv) "Group" index-numbers for each of the four groups of items in the "C" Series Index for places mentioned in (ii) above for November, 1914 and 1921, the years 1939 and 1943 to 1950 and the four quarters ended 31st December, 1950 (pages 25-27).

**All Items ("C" Series) Retail Price Index-Numbers(a) : Capital Cities.**  
*(Base of each Group: Weighted average of Six Capital Cities, 1923-27=1,000.)*

Period.	Sydney.	Melbourne.	Brisbane.	Adelaide.	Perth.	Hobart.	Six Capitals. (b)
<b>GROUP I.—FOOD AND GROCERIES.</b>							
Dec. Qtr. 1939 ..	940	942	859	888	926	941	927
" " 1945 ..	1,029	1,055	963	1,001	1,051	1,062	1,030
" " 1946 ..	1,047	1,044	996	996	1,052	1,084	1,037
" " 1947 ..	1,138	1,160	1,092	1,112	1,132	1,180	1,138
" " 1948 ..	1,326	1,355	1,280	1,305	1,324	1,416	1,330
" " 1949 ..	1,421	1,451	1,367	1,398	1,488	1,514	1,429
" " 1950 ..	1,713	1,724	1,551	1,606	1,707	1,665	1,680

Period.	Sydney.	Melbourne.	Brisbane.	Adelaide.	Perth.	Hobart.	Six Capitals. (b)
<b>GROUP II.—HOUSING (4 AND 5-ROOMED HOUSES). (c)</b>							
Dec. Qtr. 1939 ..	1,040	960	855	891	882	930	969
" " 1945 ..	1,043	973	863	892	886	934	975
" " 1946 ..	1,043	973	863	895	886	936	976
" " 1947 ..	1,045	974	864	899	887	936	977
" " 1948 ..	1,047	974	866	905	890	938	980
" " 1949 ..	1,049	977	873	914	897	941	983
" " 1950 ..	1,050	979	898	937	904	941	980

Period.	Sydney.	Melbourne.	Brisbane.	Adelaide.	Perth.	Hobart.	Six Capitals. (b)
<b>GROUPS I. AND II.—FOOD, GROCERIES AND HOUSING ("B" SERIES INDEX).</b>							
Dec. Qtr. 1939 ..	977	947	855	887	907	935	941
" " 1945 ..	1,032	1,021	922	957	984	1,010	1,007
" " 1946 ..	1,043	1,014	942	955	985	1,024	1,011
" " 1947 ..	1,099	1,084	1,001	1,026	1,034	1,082	1,073
" " 1948 ..	1,214	1,203	1,116	1,146	1,152	1,226	1,190
" " 1949 ..	1,273	1,263	1,171	1,206	1,254	1,287	1,252
" " 1950 ..	1,451	1,429	1,293	1,341	1,390	1,379	1,412

Period.	Sydney.	Melbourne.	Brisbane.	Adelaide.	Perth.	Hobart.	Six Capitals. (b)
<b>GROUP III.—CLOTHING.</b>							
Dec. Qtr. 1939 ..	854	862	865	869	840	867	858
" " 1945 ..	1,459	1,445	1,446	1,433	1,423	1,447	1,448
" " 1946 ..	1,555	1,551	1,552	1,529	1,548	1,558	1,550
" " 1947 ..	1,639	1,649	1,619	1,618	1,647	1,653	1,639
" " 1948 ..	1,831	1,801	1,817	1,809	1,835	1,807	1,818
" " 1949 ..	2,161	2,117	2,072	2,113	2,155	2,129	2,132
" " 1950 ..	2,447	2,389	2,355	2,390	2,408	2,401	2,410

Period.	Sydney.	Melbourne.	Brisbane.	Adelaide.	Perth.	Hobart.	Six Capitals. (b)
<b>GROUP IV.—MISCELLANEOUS.</b>							
Dec. Qtr. 1939 ..	943	983	960	1,027	957	945	967
" " 1945 ..	1,163	1,158	1,133	1,213	1,139	1,099	1,161
" " 1946 ..	1,175	1,165	1,141	1,222	1,147	1,110	1,170
" " 1947 ..	1,245	1,201	1,157	1,266	1,160	1,140	1,217
" " 1948 ..	1,279	1,273	1,249	1,350	1,242	1,191	1,277
" " 1949 ..	1,389	1,397	1,316	1,410	1,305	1,234	1,378
" " 1950 ..	1,527	1,482	1,418	1,555	1,374	1,383	1,492

Period.	Sydney.	Melbourne.	Brisbane.	Adelaide.	Perth.	Hobart.	Six Capitals. (b)
<b>GROUPS I. TO IV.—ALL ITEMS ("C" SERIES) INDEX.</b>							
Dec. Qtr. 1939 ..	943	932	874	906	899	919	926
" " 1945 ..	1,147	1,137	1,074	1,106	1,107	1,120	1,129
" " 1946 ..	1,177	1,157	1,110	1,128	1,136	1,155	1,156
" " 1947 ..	1,242	1,227	1,163	1,198	1,189	1,216	1,221
" " 1948 ..	1,359	1,345	1,291	1,327	1,316	1,344	1,341
" " 1949 ..	1,486	1,472	1,393	1,440	1,459	1,459	1,466
" " 1950 ..	1,680	1,646	1,546	1,608	1,607	1,601	1,643

(a) See footnote (a) on page 10. (b) Weighted average. (c) See footnote (b) on page 10.

All Items ("C" Series) Retail Price Index-Numbers(a) : Capital Cities.  
(Base of each Group : Weighted average of Six Capital Cities, 1923-27 = 1,000.)

Period.	Sydney.	Melbourne.	Brisbane.	Adelaide.	Perth.	Hobart.	Six Capitals. (b)
GROUP I.—FOOD AND GROCERIES.							
Nov. 1914 ..	638	616	614	683	746	687	641
" 1915 ..	844	835	860	858	819	858	842
" 1916 ..	833	791	748	835	854	807	812
" 1917 ..	877	798	825	805	828	949	836
" 1918 ..	877	843	882	862	816	918	861
" 1919 ..	1,073	975	1,069	1,012	987	1,041	1,026
" 1920 ..	1,225	1,220	1,117	1,225	1,113	1,293	1,209
GROUP II.—HOUSING (4 AND 5-ROOMED HOUSES).(c)							
Nov. 1914 ..	758	608	463	611	586	525	649
" 1915 ..	780	611	472	574	581	571	659
" 1916 ..	791	625	467	573	592	574	665
" 1917 ..	797	657	492	606	602	586	685
" 1918 ..	832	699	526	656	619	614	722
" 1919 ..	866	744	604	707	650	746	768
" 1920 ..	980	807	634	783	718	904	851
GROUPS I. AND II.—FOOD, GROCERIES AND HOUSING ("B" SERIES INDEX).							
Nov. 1914 ..	680	613	560	658	689	630	644
" 1915 ..	825	756	722	758	734	756	777
" 1916 ..	818	732	648	742	761	724	760
" 1917 ..	848	748	707	734	748	820	782
" 1918 ..	861	792	756	789	746	810	812
" 1919 ..	1,000	893	904	904	867	936	934
" 1920 ..	1,138	1,074	945	1,068	973	1,155	1,082
GROUP III.—CLOTHING.							
Nov. 1914 ..	755	780	657	756	698	825	754
" 1915 ..	805	797	690	821	760	833	792
" 1916 ..	903	870	779	919	849	940	881
" 1917 ..	1,009	976	899	1,049	980	1,041	992
" 1918 ..	1,102	1,103	1,025	1,066	1,135	1,200	1,097
" 1919 ..	1,237	1,213	1,192	1,303	1,277	1,344	1,238
" 1920 ..	1,323	1,422	1,274	1,384	1,359	1,430	1,365
GROUP IV.—MISCELLANEOUS.							
Nov. 1914 ..	766	728	728	770	780	699	749
" 1915 ..	798	770	756	803	822	770	786
" 1916 ..	808	784	766	832	869	780	802
" 1917 ..	889	879	836	883	926	865	882
" 1918 ..	988	950	931	988	1,035	945	972
" 1919 ..	1,059	1,016	968	1,035	1,120	1,006	1,036
" 1920 ..	1,209	1,181	1,139	1,200	1,262	1,124	1,194
GROUPS I. TO IV.—ALL ITEMS ("C" SERIES) INDEX.							
Nov. 1914 ..	712	671	611	699	707	687	687
" 1915 ..	816	768	721	780	755	776	782
" 1916 ..	836	773	698	798	800	783	795
" 1917 ..	892	823	773	832	832	879	847
" 1918 ..	938	890	848	887	885	923	905
" 1919 ..	1,065	988	981	1,018	1,005	1,042	1,022
" 1920 ..	1,193	1,172	1,054	1,164	1,111	1,213	1,166

(a) See footnote (a) on page 10. (b) Weighted average. See pages 21-23 for corresponding figures for years 1921 to 1950. (c) See footnote (b) on page 10.







Retail Price Index—Numbers : Group (a), "B" Series and All Items ("C" Series)  
Additional Towns not included in Weighted Average, Thirty Towns.

(Base of each "Group", &c. : Weighted Average of Six Capital Cities, 1923-27 = 1,000.)

ANNUAL.

Table with columns for Town (Warwick, Qld., Port Augusta, S.A., Whyalla, S.A., Canberra, A.C.T.) and years 1939-1950. Section: GROUP I.—FOOD AND GROCERIES.

Table with columns for Town (Warwick, Qld., Port Augusta, S.A., Whyalla, S.A., Canberra, A.C.T.) and years 1939-1950. Section: GROUP II.—HOUSING (4 AND 5-ROOMED HOUSES). (b)

Table with columns for Town (Warwick, Qld., Port Augusta, S.A., Whyalla, S.A., Canberra, A.C.T.) and years 1939-1950. Section: GROUPS I-II—FOOD, GROCERIES AND HOUSING ("B" SERIES INDEX).

Table with columns for Town (Warwick, Qld., Port Augusta, S.A., Whyalla, S.A., Canberra, A.C.T.) and years 1939-1950. Section: GROUP III.—CLOTHING.

Table with columns for Town (Warwick, Qld., Port Augusta, S.A., Whyalla, S.A., Canberra, A.C.T.) and years 1939-1950. Section: GROUP IV.—MISCELLANEOUS.

Table with columns for Town (Warwick, Qld., Port Augusta, S.A., Whyalla, S.A., Canberra, A.C.T.) and years 1939-1950. Section: GROUPS I-IV.—ALL ITEMS ("C" SERIES) INDEX.

QUARTERLY.

Table with columns for Town and quarterly data for 1948, 1949, and 1950. Section: GROUP I.—FOOD AND GROCERIES.

Table with columns for Town and quarterly data for 1948, 1949, and 1950. Section: GROUP II.—HOUSING (4 AND 5 ROOMED HOUSES). (b)

Table with columns for Town and quarterly data for 1948, 1949, and 1950. Section: GROUPS I-II.—FOOD, GROCERIES AND HOUSING ("B" SERIES INDEX).

Table with columns for Town and quarterly data for 1948, 1949, and 1950. Section: GROUP III.—CLOTHING.

Table with columns for Town and quarterly data for 1948, 1949, and 1950. Section: GROUP IV.—MISCELLANEOUS.

Table with columns for Town and quarterly data for 1948, 1949, and 1950. Section: GROUPS I-IV.—ALL ITEMS ("C" SERIES) INDEX.

(a) See footnotes (a) on page 10. (b) See footnotes (b) on page 10.









3. "B" Series Retail Price Index: Food, Groceries and Rent.—This index measures the prices of food and groceries and the rent of 4 and 5-roomed houses. It was first compiled for the year 1925, and retrospectively for several earlier years. It was designed to replace the "A" Series Index (food, groceries and rent of all houses), which was the original index compiled in 1912. The first of the following tables covers only the six capital cities and gives index-numbers for the two Groups of the regimen involved split up into their various Sections, while the second table gives the "B" Series Index dissected into its two Groups for each of the 30 towns, the weighted averages of the 5 towns in each State, the six capital cities and the 30 towns. The "B" Series Index (split up into its two Groups) for four additional towns not included in the weighted averages appears on page 24.

**Retail Price Index-Numbers(a): Capital Cities—"B" Series.**

(Base of each Section: Weighted Average of Six Capital Cities, 1923-27 = 1,000.)

TOWN.	1907.	1911.	1914.	1921.	1930.	1946.	1947.	1948.	1949.	1950
<b>SECTION A.—GROCERIES.</b>										
Sydney ..	510	574	627	1,115	994	969	1,036	1,167	1,298	1,411
Melbourne ..	461	521	564	1,070	957	929	991	1,153	1,296	1,416
Brisbane ..	547	614	607	1,103	944	935	994	1,165	1,305	1,387
Adelaide ..	510	541	598	1,076	939	944	995	1,144	1,263	1,374
Perth ..	574	720	628	1,103	966	966	1,032	1,183	1,268	1,380
Hobart ..	391	566	604	1,087	947	934	991	1,143	1,272	1,390
SIX CAPITALS (b)	499	564	599	1,093	969	950	1,008	1,161	1,292	1,404

<b>SECTION B.—DAIRY PRODUCTS.</b>										
Sydney ..	551	574	656	1,080	851	956	977	1,165	1,306	1,439
Melbourne ..	571	567	635	1,087	885	965	998	1,189	1,330	1,441
Brisbane ..	495	581	588	983	793	930	955	1,115	1,233	1,312
Adelaide ..	548	651	705	1,018	800	893	928	1,136	1,258	1,353
Perth ..	709	733	735	1,152	870	981	1,000	1,166	1,292	1,436
Hobart ..	564	587	695	1,091	844	963	989	1,181	1,319	1,410
SIX CAPITALS (b)	563	591	654	1,072	853	952	978	1,165	1,301	1,418

<b>SECTION C.—MEAT.</b>										
Sydney ..	519	501	668	960	935	1,202	1,343	1,456	1,571	1,899
Melbourne ..	557	485	663	1,030	968	1,288	1,366	1,502	1,649	2,000
Brisbane ..	535	488	610	897	822	1,079	1,223	1,343	1,453	1,695
Adelaide ..	513	541	784	1,095	920	1,188	1,288	1,423	1,543	1,776
Perth ..	789	824	881	1,103	958	1,248	1,290	1,411	1,785	2,025
Hobart ..	668	638	780	1,244	961	1,338	1,446	1,662	1,945	1,962
SIX CAPITALS (b)	558	522	691	1,010	936	1,223	1,332	1,458	1,603	1,909

<b>SECTIONS A, B AND C COMBINED.—FOOD AND GROCERIES.</b>										
Sydney ..	523	553	646	1,062	936	1,039	1,110	1,258	1,388	1,572
Melbourne ..	577	523	610	1,003	942	1,052	1,110	1,274	1,418	1,605
Brisbane ..	530	569	603	1,014	864	981	1,055	1,208	1,332	1,462
Adelaide ..	532	570	679	1,006	897	1,006	1,067	1,230	1,351	1,494
Perth ..	670	733	728	1,166	938	1,059	1,104	1,251	1,437	1,597
Hobart ..	565	592	678	1,133	923	1,069	1,132	1,316	1,495	1,574
SIX CAPITALS (b)	533	559	640	1,064	927	1,036	1,100	1,256	1,394	1,566

<b>SECTION D.—HOUSING (4 AND 5-ROOMED HOUSES). (c).</b>										
Sydney ..	593	701	760	989	1,035	1,043	1,044	1,047	1,049	1,050
Melbourne ..	455	569	628	820	955	973	974	974	976	979
Brisbane ..	585	573	466	630	854	863	864	866	869	883
Adelaide ..	510	706	635	809	888	894	897	903	912	929
Perth ..	458	524	589	739	881	886	887	889	895	901
Hobart ..	405	452	518	881	925	936	936	937	940	941
SIX CAPITALS (b)	497	612	662	862	965	976	977	979	982	982

<b>ALL SECTIONS COMBINED.—FOOD, GROCERIES, AND HOUSING.</b>										
Sydney ..	548	606	687	1,036	972	1,038	1,082	1,173	1,252	1,365
Melbourne ..	495	539	616	977	945	1,019	1,054	1,154	1,243	1,357
Brisbane ..	442	500	554	877	858	932	978	1,149	1,249	1,333
Adelaide ..	524	618	671	975	891	960	998	1,100	1,177	1,270
Perth ..	594	672	679	982	914	989	1,017	1,107	1,222	1,323
Hobart ..	508	542	621	1,044	922	1,014	1,053	1,165	1,275	1,324
SIX CAPITALS (b)	520	578	648	992	939	1,010	1,050	1,145	1,230	1,336

(a) See footnote (a) on page 10. (b) Weighted average. (c) See footnote (b) on page 10.



"B" Series Retail Price Index-Numbers : Thirty Towns—continued.  
(Base of each Group (a) : Weighted Average of Six Capital Cities, 1923-27 = 1,000.)

Period.	QUEENSLAND.					SOUTH AUSTRALIA.							
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba.	Rockhampton.	Townsville.	Bundaberg.	Weighted Average, 5 Towns.	Adelaide.	Kadina, Mounta and Whyalla.	Port Pirie.	Mt. Gambier.	Peterborough.	Weighted Average, 5 Towns.	
GROUP I.—FOOD AND GROCERIES.													
Nov. 1914 ..	614	..	..	..	..	..	683	..	..	..	..	..	
" 1921 ..	955	895	949	981b	936c	950	941	945	968	923	997	943	
Year 1939 ..	864	823	901	961	912	872	897	973	996	937	984	904	
" 1943 ..	975	974	995	1,041	1,033	982	1,003	1,044	1,076	984	1,039	1,007	
" 1944 ..	965	1,003	1,002	1,049	1,027	977	993	1,030	1,061	990	1,033	997	
" 1945 ..	966	1,009	1,016	1,055	1,025	980	1,002	1,034	1,074	1,014	1,054	1,006	
" 1946 ..	981	1,018	1,016	1,071	1,039	993	1,006	1,049	1,079	1,027	1,056	1,011	
" 1947 ..	1,055	1,092	1,097	1,148	1,112	1,068	1,067	1,103	1,141	1,071	1,117	1,071	
" 1948 ..	1,208	1,228	1,244	1,295	1,255	1,219	1,230	1,234	1,294	1,220	1,269	1,233	
" 1949 ..	1,312	1,352	1,373	1,442	1,383	1,340	1,351	1,386	1,422	1,332	1,393	1,355	
" 1950 ..	1,462	1,480	1,523	1,560	1,515	1,476	1,494	1,531	1,585	1,557	1,534	1,500	
1950 Mar. Qtr.	1,402	1,418	1,444	1,499	1,438	1,414	1,428	1,457	1,501	1,413	1,467	1,432	
" June ..	1,421	1,441	1,461	1,537	1,464	1,435	1,446	1,487	1,516	1,448	1,485	1,450	
" Sept. ..	1,473	1,486	1,529	1,568	1,517	1,485	1,496	1,542	1,591	1,592	1,525	1,502	
" Dec. ..	1,551	1,574	1,658	1,635	1,639	1,568	1,606	1,643	1,733	1,776	1,620	1,614	
1950 January ..	1,395	1,411	1,434	1,493	1,434	1,407	1,419	1,443	1,495	1,398	1,462	1,423	
February ..	1,402	1,416	1,443	1,497	1,436	1,413	1,431	1,461	1,502	1,413	1,466	1,435	
March ..	1,409	1,425	1,455	1,507	1,445	1,421	1,435	1,466	1,506	1,427	1,473	1,436	
April ..	1,416	1,437	1,458	1,533	1,459	1,430	1,442	1,474	1,512	1,438	1,479	1,448	
May ..	1,425	1,443	1,461	1,543	1,463	1,438	1,447	1,482	1,519	1,440	1,479	1,451	
June ..	1,423	1,443	1,465	1,536	1,471	1,436	1,449	1,486	1,517	1,467	1,496	1,453	
July ..	1,442	1,457	1,480	1,551	1,493	1,455	1,463	1,501	1,540	1,502	1,512	1,468	
August ..	1,457	1,494	1,484	1,551	1,509	1,467	1,465	1,517	1,550	1,533	1,517	1,471	
September ..	1,519	1,537	1,623	1,602	1,548	1,534	1,559	1,604	1,684	1,740	1,545	1,567	
October ..	1,540	1,574	1,649	1,623	1,623	1,558	1,571	1,615	1,717	1,757	1,557	1,580	
November ..	1,548	1,563	1,643	1,626	1,630	1,564	1,612	1,639	1,723	1,701	1,627	1,619	
December ..	1,564	1,585	1,682	1,656	1,665	1,583	1,634	1,675	1,759	1,811	1,675	1,643	
GROUP II.—HOUSING: (4 AND 5-ROOMED HOUSES). (d)													
Nov. 1914 ..	463	..	..	..	..	..	611	..	..	..	..	..	
" 1921 ..	629	547	470	428b	535c	594	810	566	603	404	566	781	
Year 1939 ..	834	817	753	861	640	840	888	388	710	686	753	864	
" 1943 ..	882	859	768	865	668	850	893	383	713	715	755	866	
" 1944 ..	905	859	767	863	672	850	892	385	713	715	754	866	
" 1945 ..	893	861	768	863	674	851	892	386	713	715	755	866	
" 1946 ..	863	862	773	865	681	851	894	390	712	716	755	867	
" 1947 ..	864	864	780	866	682	833	897	395	711	718	755	867	
" 1948 ..	866	874	785	866	685	855	903	402	710	718	757	876	
" 1949 ..	869	883	796	867	689	859	912	407	710	721	762	887	
" 1950 ..	883	904	823	868	704	874	929	407	712	731	764	900	
1950 Mar. Qtr.	873	898	816	868	692	865	921	407	710	729	762	893	
" June ..	874	898	816	868	692	868	925	407	710	729	762	896	
" Sept. ..	884	906	823	868	716	875	942	407	714	732	762	903	
" Dec. ..	898	915	837	868	716	887	937	407	714	734	770	908	
GROUPS I.—II.—FOOD, GROCERIES AND HOUSING.													
Nov. 1914 ..	560	..	..	820b	..	..	688	..	..	..	..	..	
" 1921 ..	840	771	779	794c	824	898	811	839	770	844	883	883	
Year 1939 ..	858	830	843	920	804	882	891	743	832	838	890	920	
" 1943 ..	929	927	904	976	888	928	958	784	932	877	926	930	
" 1944 ..	923	945	908	975	886	926	951	776	923	884	922	944	
" 1945 ..	924	949	917	979	886	928	957	779	931	895	935	949	
" 1946 ..	932	955	919	989	897	936	960	790	933	903	936	952	
" 1947 ..	928	1,001	971	1,036	942	982	998	825	971	931	973	990	
" 1948 ..	1,072	1,087	1,063	1,125	1,030	1,071	1,100	907	1,063	1,022	1,067	1,091	
" 1949 ..	1,149	1,170	1,145	1,211	1,110	1,153	1,177	1,001	1,147	1,091	1,144	1,168	
" 1950 ..	1,233	1,252	1,247	1,286	1,195	1,238	1,270	1,089	1,241	1,232	1,224	1,262	
1950 Mar. Qtr.	1,193	1,212	1,196	1,249	1,144	1,197	1,227	1,044	1,189	1,143	1,189	1,218	
" June ..	1,206	1,226	1,206	1,273	1,160	1,211	1,240	1,058	1,198	1,165	1,199	1,231	
" Sept. ..	1,240	1,257	1,250	1,291	1,201	1,244	1,272	1,095	1,245	1,233	1,224	1,265	
" Dec. ..	1,293	1,313	1,334	1,332	1,275	1,299	1,341	1,157	1,332	1,366	1,285	1,335	

(a) See footnote (a) on page 10. (b) Charters Towers. (c) Warwick. (d) See footnote (b) on page 10.



### § 8. Retail Price Index-Numbers, 200 Towns.

To supplement the information collected monthly for the 30 towns specified in the preceding pages, a special investigation into prices in 70 additional towns was undertaken in November, 1913. This investigation was repeated in November, 1914, and again in November, 1915, when the number of additional towns was increased to 120. In November, 1923, the number was further increased to 170. Information in regard to prices obtained in November of each of the years 1923 to 1942 related, therefore, to 200 towns. After 1942, collection of returns of these prices was discontinued. The results of the first investigation were published in Labour Bulletin No. 5 (pp. 26-33), and details respecting succeeding investigations were incorporated in the Labour Bulletins and Reports issued subsequently by this Bureau.

### § 9. Changes in the Regimen.

1. **General.**—Since the original compilation of retail price indexes by the Bureau in 1912, the regimens of the several Groups and Sections have undergone some modifications, with the object of improving the indexes as measures of the variations in retail prices in individual towns, as between the many towns covered, and in the weighted average of all towns or the various combinations thereof. These modifications are briefly as follows:—

(i) *Food and Groceries.*—The regimen for food and groceries, originally introduced in 1912, was based upon the relative consumption of the years 1906 to 1910, and the first revision was made in September Quarter, 1932 and was based on the relative consumption of the years 1927 to 1929. The regimen in use up to that date will be found on page 13 of Labour Report No. 23. A second revision took place in September Quarter, 1936, as part of the general revision of the regimen by the Conference of Statisticians of April, 1936. The main features of this revision are referred to in para. 2 below.

(ii) *Housing.*—The housing constituent of the regimen has also been revised. Originally the rentals of all houses from "3 rooms and under" to "8 rooms and over" were tabulated, and they were continuously used in the "A" Series Index (food and rent of all houses) from 1912 to 30th June, 1938, when this series was discontinued. They were also used in the "C" Series Index up to and including the year 1924. From the following year rentals of 4 and 5-roomed houses only were used in the "C" Series Index, and in the same year they were combined with food and groceries to form the "B" Series Index.

Following on the resolutions of the 1936 Conference of Statisticians (see para. 2 below), the rentals of 4 and 5-roomed houses in each of the six capital cities and "second" important town in each of the States (excepting Western Australia) have been determined on a somewhat different basis (for convenience designated the "Census" basis) from that previously used. For the six capital cities, this base was introduced into the indexes at the December Quarter, 1936, and for the "second" towns at the March Quarter, 1937. The basis adopted was that of the average rents, as disclosed by the 1933 Census, of 4 and 5-roomed houses occupied by fully-employed wage and salary earners in all industrial groups with the exception of "Fishing and Trapping," "Agricultural, Pastoral and Dairying" and



"Forestry," brought up to the above-mentioned quarters by applying the percentage variations in rent since the 1933 Census shown for corresponding houses at both periods in the rent rolls of the house-agents. At the same time, these rent rolls were carefully revised, after personal inspection of all houses included, to ensure a satisfactory "sample" of houses upon which to measure rent variations in future. Thus, the rent levels having been established for the towns in question, the rent rolls ceased to be used for the determination of the average rent from quarter to quarter, and were used only for the purpose of measuring the percentage variations from quarter to quarter by means of corresponding houses in the rolls for the current and the preceding quarter—the percentage variations being applied progressively to the basic averages from the 1933 Census, as explained above. The new standard, so far as the towns in question are concerned, affected the indexes only in respect of the relative levels of rents in the different towns, and in respect of their absolute height.

The "Census" basis not being generally applicable to the circumstances of small provincial towns, on account of the great diversity of average "quality" of houses, the levels, as previously determined from a sample of houses selected by the house agents in accordance with definite standards originally laid down, were continued in the indexes until such time as the rent rolls were completely revised on the basis mentioned above. The revision was completed by June Quarter, 1939, but in the meantime as each town was completed the rent level then reached on the old basis was established as the base to which the percentage variations disclosed by the rent rolls were progressively applied thereafter.

(iii) *Clothing and Miscellaneous*.—The regimen for clothing and miscellaneous household requirements was originally introduced in 1921, and the first revision was made in March Quarter, 1935. Details of the original regimen were not published, but the revised regimen of 1935 appeared in Labour Report No. 26. A second revision took place in September Quarter, 1936, as part of the general revision of the regimen by the Conference of Statisticians of April, 1936. The main features of this revision are referred to in para. 2 below. Some minor alterations have since been made in the regimen.

2. **Revision of 1936**.—The revision of the regimen by the Conference of Statisticians of April, 1936, was of a comprehensive nature. The Resolutions of the Conference are reprinted in Appendix XI. of Labour Report No. 27. This Conference not only recommended extensive revisions of the regimen from which the indexes are compiled, but also considered methods of collection and compilation. As a result of its deliberations, and subsequent discussions by correspondence, many improvements and refinements were introduced.

The changes in the regimen made by this Conference comprised chiefly the elimination or replacement of articles no longer in demand, or which experience had shown to be unsuitable media for the measurement of price variations; the alteration of units of quantity in certain cases to conform with those in most general use; the adjustment of the mass unit allotted to certain articles to bring them into accord with present-day consumption habits; and the re-adjustment of the population and household weights applicable to the several groups and sections of the regimen in accordance with the results of the 1933 Census. Definite grades or qualities were also established for each article in the regimen; to ensure that quotations should be given, as far as possible, for the same article at all times and in

all places, and expert field officers were appointed to collect, personally, prices to the standard qualities laid down. Improved methods of collecting and weighting average house rentals were also adopted (see para. 1 (ii) above).

**3. Method of Effecting Changes.**—Changes of the nature mentioned are commonly made in price indexes without seriously impairing their continuity. In accordance with established principles of procedure in changing the regimen (see Labour Report No. 9, Appendix I, Part II., paras. 14 and 18), the general level of the index is taken as determined by the old regimen for the quarter in which the change is made, and the new regimen is used to measure variations in the price level after that date. The linking up of the index-numbers on the old and the new basis is effected by the usual method of equating the respective weighted aggregate costs of the old and the new regimens in the six capital cities.

There are two methods of effecting this, as follows:—Up to June Quarter, 1942, all such changes were made by equating the new aggregate of the section embodying the changes to the former aggregate. This course was adopted when items were added to or omitted from the regimen, and when a change was made in the standard of any item. From September Quarter, 1942, however, all changes of standard were effected by an appropriate adjustment of the "mass unit" or "weight" so as to preserve the percentage weight which the item carried in the aggregate from time to time, and wherever possible the "weight" of any item dropped from the regimen was transferred to an article of a similar nature which would serve as a more appropriate medium for the measurement of the variations of the article dropped than the remaining items of the section, the "mass units" of which under the former procedure in effect were proportionately increased to carry the aggregate of the item dropped, or reduced to admit a new item added. (See also para. 3 on pages 15 and 16.)

**4. Continuity of Indexes.**—While the above involves no break of continuity in the index-numbers for the six capital cities as a whole, upon the basis of which all such changes are effected, slight alterations of the relative positions of individual towns are inevitable on account of the alteration of former standards. The effect, however, is more noticeable in the group index-numbers than in those covering a combination of groups, wherein the losses and gains tend to balance out. Thus, in comparing group index-numbers for individual towns in respect of periods including the dates of change referred to in paras. 1 to 3 above, the following considerations should be kept in mind:—

- (a) *Food and Groceries.*—These index-numbers are substantially comparable throughout the period up to June Quarter, 1936. From and including September Quarter, 1936 the index-numbers for individual towns are comparable with each other, but are not strictly so with those for previous quarters.
- (b) *Housing.*—No change was ever made in the method of calculating the rentals of "All Houses", and consequently these index-numbers were comparable throughout the whole period of their existence.\* In regard to rentals of houses of 4 and 5 rooms, however, the index-numbers for individual towns are comparable with each other up to June Quarter, 1936. In September

\* The tabulation of the "A" Series Index, for which these rents were used, was discontinued after the issue for June Quarter, 1938

Quarter, 1936, a change was made in the methods of averaging and weighting the data from house-agents, which gave rise to slight disparities not due to rental fluctuations, and rendered the rent figures for individual towns not strictly comparable with those of former periods. The change, however, thereafter made the index-numbers for any one town more comparable with those of other towns. In December Quarter, 1936, the rent tabulations in the two principal towns of each State were placed on an entirely new basis, which rendered them incomparable individually with average rents of previous periods. This change was also introduced with the object of making the index-numbers for the principal towns more comparable *inter se* in any given quarter (see para. I (ii) above).

- (c) *Clothing and Miscellaneous.*—The index-numbers for individual towns up to and including 1934 are comparable with those for previous periods. Those for 1935, and the March and June quarters of 1936, are comparable for those periods, but not with the index-numbers of former or subsequent periods. From and including September Quarter, 1936 the index-numbers for individual towns are substantially comparable with each other, both from quarter to quarter and from town to town, but for individual towns they are not strictly continuous with those of previous periods.

**5. The Regimen under War Conditions.**—Between the comprehensive revision of 1936 and the outbreak of war in 1939 changes in conditions did not require any appreciable revision of the regimen or mass units of items therein. The adjustments made in 1936 had brought the basis of the index “up-to-date” in the sense that it conformed reasonably closely to normal pre-war usage. Although the effects of the war produced some variations from normal consumption in 1940 and 1941, it was not until 1942 (as explained in § 2 (5) of this Chapter) that fundamental changes began to occur. As there explained, the years 1942, 1943 and 1944 produced temporary changes of a far-reaching character which, if permanent and stable, must have necessitated fundamental re-adjustments in the regimen and mass units of the index. But the resultant changes in the index would have been so extensive as virtually to create a new index which would not have been continuously comparable with the “C” Series Index as compiled either pre-war or post-war. Consideration of the matter led to the conclusions—

- (i) that it was desirable to continue the “C” Series Index substantially on its pre-war regimen in order to ensure continuity of comparison of price movements on a clearly defined basis;
- (ii) that it was impossible to reconstruct the “C” Series Index to take account of recurrent temporary departures from normal consumption.

**6. The Regimen since 1945.**—The “C” Series Index was reviewed at the Conferences of Commonwealth and State Statisticians in 1949 and 1950. The resolutions of the 1949 Conference are reprinted on page 157 of Labour Report No. 38. Those of the 1950 Conference are reprinted as Section V. of the Appendix to this Report (see page 161).

### § 10. Retail Price Indexes and Basic Wage Variations.

Two distinct procedures are adopted by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in fixing and varying basic or living wages as follows:—

- (i) the Court periodically *fixes* the amount of wage in the light of evidence submitted by parties appearing before it. Such evidence usually covers a wide range of facts as to economic conditions;
- (ii) having determined the amount of basic wage the Court further determines whether or not it shall be subject to automatic adjustment for changes in price level and, if so, by what method such *variation* shall be made. This again is decided in the light of evidence and of representations by the parties concerned.

The "C" Series Index is used by the Court to derive the "Court" series of retail price index-numbers upon which the basic portion\* of the wages prescribed in awards is *varied* automatically for changes in price levels quarterly, half-yearly or yearly. These are commonly referred to as "cost of living" adjustments although in fact they relate only to that part of the *change in cost of living* which is due to variations in prices. The Court itself determines from time to time at public sittings the amount of the basic wage, having regard to evidence submitted in relation to other aspects of "cost of living" and other relevant considerations. In fixing the amount of the basic wage the Court does not have regard to either the regimen used in compiling the retail price index or the cost of such regimen. The regimen of the index would not be suited to such a purpose.

The considerations upon which the basic wage is fixed are set out in successive judgments of the Court and briefly summarized in Chapter III (§ 3) of this Report. On this matter, reference should be made to the Basic Wage Judgments of the Court, particularly those of 1934, 1937, 1941 and 1950†, and to the general statement of principles set out in the judgment on the "Munition Workers' Case" of 1943.‡ Certain State industrial tribunals use the index-numbers directly for automatic or quasi-automatic adjustment of the rates of wages determined by them as tribunals, while some State tribunals have regard to the index-numbers and other factors in considering what "cost of living" variations they should make in rates of wages.

The use of indexes by industrial authorities for purposes of adjusting rates of wages for changes in price level is a practice of long standing, dating in the case of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, for example, back to the year 1913. The tribunals form their own judgment as to the relevance of the indexes to their purposes, and periodically hear the representatives of employers and employees on the issues involved, including questions as to whether the index is satisfactory for the purposes to which it is applied by the tribunal. In such proceedings the Statistician or his officers are called at times as witnesses on questions of fact and technical matters relating to the indexes.

\* The "needs" portion only was adjustable from July, 1937 to December, 1950.  
 † 33 C.A.R., p. 144, 37 C.A.R., p. 583; 44 C.A.R., p. 41; 68 C.A.R., p. 698.  
 ‡ 50 C.A.R., p. 101.

The automatic adjustments in wages prescribed in awards of the Court on the basis of retail price index-numbers are sometimes referred to as "cost of living" adjustments and the index is popularly referred to as a "cost of living index". This at times creates misconceptions as to the nature of the retail price index since the term "cost of living" connotes not only change in cost of living due to changes in prices, but also changes in cost of living due to changes in standard of living. Beyond that, use of the term "cost of living" index sometimes creates the erroneous impression that the retail price index purports to embrace all that should be included in a desirable standard of living. As pointed out in para. 4, page 3 of this chapter, the "C" Series Index is a retail price index of specific meaning. As there indicated the regimen or list of items, on which the index is based, is representative of a high proportion of the expenditure of wage-earner households. While this statement remains broadly true, it relates (in the circumstances of 1951) more specifically to what may be termed the basic wage portion of wage-earner expenditures. The index has hitherto been used by industrial tribunals to provide automatic adjustments in the basic wage itself and, until December, 1950, to a basic wage which did not vary very much in real terms of purchasing power in relation to "C" Series units. In 1950 and especially in 1951 various factors produced both a steep rise in prices and an increasingly wide dispersion of price movements as affecting consumer expenditures on items within and without the index. There has been arising concurrently a tendency to assume, without inquiry, that the index (constructed primarily to measure the incidence of price changes on expenditures from incomes at or about basic wage level) is equally applicable to such diverse matters as measuring the changing incidence of price variations on secondary or marginal portions of wages, on total wages or on total incomes in groups considerably higher than the basic wage, and even on money settlements in some business transactions. While such assumptions may be reasonably reliable during periods in which all prices tend to move together, they should not be made at any time without due inquiry and particularly not in periods (such as the present) when price movements are very marked and are subject to wide dispersion.

The following is a brief statement of the indexes considered or used by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration from time to time:—

(i) "*A*" Series Index.—The "A" Series Index covers food and groceries and the rent of all houses, with the year 1911 as the base (1,000). This Index was first compiled in 1912, and is available yearly for the six capital cities from 1901 to 1911, and quarterly for 30 important towns of Australia from 1912 to June Quarter, 1938, after which it was discontinued.

The Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration adopted this Index in 1913 to determine the *relative* basic wage for towns throughout Australia, and to vary what is popularly known as the "Harvester" Basic Wage of 1907—the wage (42s. per week for Melbourne) declared by Mr. Justice Higgins to be sufficient to meet the "normal needs of the average employee, regarded as a human being, living in a civilized community." For this purpose the base index-number (1,000) of the series was selected by the Court as equivalent to a basic wage of 48s. per week. This Index

had very little application after May, 1933, because of the adoption by the Court successively of the "D" Series Index at that date, the "C" Series Index in May, 1934, and the "Court" Series Index in July, 1937.

(ii) "*B*" Series Index.—The "B" Series Index covers food and groceries and rent of 4 and 5-roomed houses, with the prices ruling in the years 1923-1927 as the base (1,000), and is actually the food and rent constituent of the "C" Series Index described in (iii) below. This index was first compiled in 1925, and is available for the six capital cities for the years 1907 and 1911, and for the month of November of the years 1914 to 1920, and quarterly thereafter for the 30 important towns of Australia. It was designed to replace the "A" Series Index but was never used in connexion with the adjustment of wages by Industrial Tribunals. This series appears on pages 28 to 31 of this Report.

(iii) "*C*" Series Index.—The "C" Series Index covers food and groceries; rent of 4 and 5-roomed houses; clothing (man, wife and three children); household drapery, household utensils, fuel, lighting and other miscellaneous items, with the prices ruling in the years 1923-1927 as the base (1,000). The regimen is published in full on pages 11 to 13 of this Report.

This Index was constructed as the result of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Basic Wage of 1920, and the regimen adopted was substantially that of the "Indicator" Lists of the Commission with periodical adjustments as explained in this chapter. It was first compiled in 1921 and is available for the month of November for the six capital cities for the years 1914 to 1921, quarterly for these cities from June Quarter, 1922, and quarterly for the 30 important towns from March Quarter, 1925 to date.

The Index was not used in connexion with the variation of wages until its partial adoption by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in May, 1933, when the Court introduced the "D" Series Index explained below. In its judgment of 17th April, 1934, the Court adopted as from 1st May, 1934, the "C" Series Index as the sole basis for the adjustment of the wages declared in the judgment, for which purpose the Court equated a "needs" basic wage of 81s. per week to the base index-number (1923-27 = 1,000) of the series. In its judgment of 23rd June, 1937, the Court adopted this index as the basis of the "Court" Index (First Series) for the adjustment of the "needs" portion of the Court's new basic wage (*see* (vii) below).

(iv) "*D*" Series Index.—The "D" Series Index is a combination of the "A" and "C" Series Indexes, and was introduced by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration for the adjustment of wages of those employees who were subject to the full 10 per cent. reduction in real wages determined by the Court in January, 1931. It came into operation from 1st May, 1933.

The Index has for its base the "A" Series Index for each town for December Quarter, 1929, which is varied according to the ratio of change indicated by the "C" Series index-number for the whole of 1929 and the

corresponding "C" Series index-number of the town for the quarter for which the adjustment is to be made. It will thus be seen that, whereas the "D" Series Index for each town from December Quarter, 1929 fluctuated in the same way as the "C" Series Index for the same town, the relationship of different towns was that of the "A" Series Index for December Quarter, 1929, slightly modified by the difference in movement between the "A" Series and the "C" Series Indexes for each town since that quarter.

This Index was superseded as from 1st May, 1934, by the judgment of the Court referred to under "C" Series Index. The index-numbers of this series were published in Appendix VIII. of Labour Reports Nos. 24 to 27.

(v) *Food and Groceries.*—The regimen of food and groceries is a component part of each of the series of retail price index-numbers mentioned above. Details of the regimen will be found on page 11. This index was first compiled in 1912 and is available yearly for the six capital cities from 1901 to 1911 and monthly for the 30 important towns of Australia from 1912 to date. An index computed from the prices of food and groceries only was for a time used for the adjustment of old-age and invalid pensions, and also for the adjustment of the wages of members of the North Australian Workers' Union above the 20th parallel. Both these adjustments were later effected by means of the "C" Series Index, but the provisions for the adjustment of pensions were repealed as from 6th April, 1944.

(vi) *The "200 Towns" Series.*—This series was tabulated for the month of November each year in respect of 200 of the more important towns of the Commonwealth. Up to November, 1936, it covered the cost of food and groceries combined with the rent of 4 and of 5-roomed houses respectively, but thereafter the tabulation was limited to food and groceries only. This table has been used mostly in discussions of suitable relative rates for country towns, but the index-numbers have not been directly employed by industrial tribunals in this connexion. The base of this table is the weighted average cost of food and groceries in the six capital cities in 1923-27 = 1,000. This series has been compiled for the month of November since 1913. It was originally confined to 100 towns, but was increased to 150 in 1915, and 200 in 1923. The tabulation of this index was discontinued after November, 1942. A reference to these index-numbers will be found on page 32.

(vii) *The "Court" Index.*—The "Court" Index was created by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in its basic wage judgment of 23rd June, 1937, and operated from 1st July, 1937. Its purpose was to provide a set of index-numbers which would be published by, and under the direct control of, the Court. It was created primarily for the purpose of removing conditions which tended to engender the impression that the Commonwealth Statistician was in some way responsible for the fixation and adjustment of wage-rates. Its introduction has the added advantage of enabling the index-numbers to be specially numbered in the manner most convenient for adjustment purposes, and of enabling the Statistician to change the base of his index-numbers without upsetting the wage and adjustment provisions of the Court's awards. There have been three Series of the "Court" Index and the base of each Series has been

related to the "C" Series Index (Base 1923-27 = 1,000). For each Series this relationship has been so determined that the weekly amount in shillings of basic wage ("needs" basic wage in the case of the First and Second Series) as subsequently adjusted for changes in price level, shall equal the "Court" Series index-number according to which it is adjusted. (A "Court" Series index-number ending in .5 or more is regarded as the next higher number for this purpose).

Particulars of the three "Court" Index Series are as follows :—

- (a) The "Court" Index (First Series) (Base 1923-27 = 81.0). This index operated from 1st July, 1937; and a description of its construction is given on page 36 of Labour Report No. 34.
- (b) The "Court" Index (Second Series) (Base 1923-27 = 87.0). This index operated from 1st December, 1946, and a description of its construction is given on page 38 of Labour Report No. 38. For a table of index-numbers under this Series for 1950 see Section IV. of Appendix to this Report.
- (c) The "Court" Index (Third Series) (Base 1923-27 = 103.0). On 23rd November, 1950, the Court announced that the new basic wage (i.e., the "needs" portion plus a standardized "prosperity" loading plus an additional 20s.), to operate from the beginning of the first pay-period in December, 1950, would be adjustable, as from February, 1951, in accordance with the "Court" Index (Third Series). This "Court" Series is constructed (see (vii), page 81) by multiplying the "C" Series index-number (on 1923-27 base) by the factor 0.103. The result to the first decimal place (as it stands) is the corresponding "Court" (Third Series) index-number, which, as explained above, expresses in shillings the amount of basic wage as fixed by the Court for that index-number—with the proviso that any decimal point of .5 or more shall be regarded as the next higher number of shillings in the automatic adjustment scale. Third Series "Court" index-numbers are shown in Section (IV) of the Appendix, and a "Ready Reckoner" for the weekly basic wage equivalents of "Court" (Third Series) and "C" Series index-numbers is shown at the end of the following section (see next page).

### § 11. Scales Used for Automatic Wage Adjustment.

The following table shows the automatic scales of quarterly, half-yearly or yearly adjustment adopted by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in accordance with its announcement of 23rd November, 1950. As indicated in the preceding section, this automatic adjustment scale is applied to an amount of basic wage fixed by the Court after hearing evidence and argument by representatives of employers and employes covering a wide range of relevant factors (primarily relating to "capacity of industry" to pay and general economic conditions). The amount of wage shown constitutes the basic wage payable.



**Automatic Scales for Quarterly, Half-yearly or Yearly Adjustment of Basic Wage.\***

(As adopted by Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, 23rd November, 1950 and operative as from February, 1951.)

† Basis—

(a) "C" Series Index.—Index-number 1,000 (Base 1923-27) = 103s. per week (1s. = 9.708738), or £269 per annum (£1 = 3.717472).‡

(b) "Court" Index (Third Series).—"C" Series index-number 1,000 (Base 1923-27) = "Court" Index (Third Series) index-number 103.0. (One "C" Series "point" = 0.103.)

Index-number Divisions.		Wage per Week.	Index-number Divisions.		Wage per Week.
"C" Series Index.	"Court" Index (Third Series).		"C" Series Index.	"Court" Index (Third Series).	
1500-1509 ..	154.5-155.4	£ s. d.	1850-1859 ..	190.5-191.4	£ s. d.
1510-1519 ..	155.5-156.4	7 15 0	1860-1868 ..	191.5-192.4	9 11 0
1520-1529 ..	156.5-157.4	7 16 0	1869-1878 ..	192.5-193.4	9 12 0
1530-1538 ..	157.5-158.4	7 17 0	1879-1888 ..	193.5-194.4	9 13 0
1539-1548 ..	158.5-159.4	7 18 0	1889-1898 ..	194.5-195.4	9 14 0
1549-1558 ..	159.5-160.4	7 19 0	1899-1907 ..	195.5-196.4	9 15 0
1559-1567 ..	160.5-161.4	8 0 0	1908-1917 ..	196.5-197.4	9 16 0
1568-1577 ..	161.5-162.4	8 1 0	1918-1927 ..	197.5-198.4	9 17 0
1578-1587 ..	162.5-163.4	8 2 0	1928-1936 ..	198.5-199.4	9 18 0
1588-1597 ..	163.5-164.4	8 3 0	1937-1946 ..	199.5-200.4	9 19 0
1598-1606 ..	164.5-165.4	8 4 0	1947-1956 ..	200.5-201.4	10 0 0
1607-1616 ..	165.5-166.4	8 5 0	1957-1966 ..	201.5-202.4	10 1 0
1617-1626 ..	166.5-167.4	8 6 0	1967-1975 ..	202.6-203.4	10 2 0
1627-1635 ..	167.5-168.4	8 7 0	1976-1985 ..	203.5-204.4	10 3 0
1636-1645 ..	168.5-169.4	8 8 0	1986-1995 ..	204.5-205.4	10 4 0
1646-1655 ..	169.5-170.4	8 9 0	1996-2004 ..	205.5-206.4	10 5 0
1656-1665 ..	170.5-171.4	8 10 0	2005-2014 ..	206.5-207.4	10 6 0
1666-1674 ..	171.5-172.4	8 11 0	2015-2024 ..	207.5-208.4	10 7 0
1675-1684 ..	172.5-173.4	8 12 0	2025-2033 ..	208.5-209.3	10 8 0
1685-1694 ..	173.5-174.4	8 13 0	2034-2043 ..	209.5-210.4	10 9 0
1695-1703 ..	174.5-175.4	8 14 0	2044-2053 ..	210.5-211.4	10 10 0
1704-1713 ..	175.5-176.4	8 15 0	2054-2063 ..	211.5-212.4	10 11 0
1714-1723 ..	176.5-177.4	8 16 0	2064-2072 ..	212.5-213.4	10 12 0
1724-1733 ..	177.5-178.4	8 17 0	2073-2082 ..	213.5-214.4	10 13 0
1734-1742 ..	178.6-179.4	8 18 0	2083-2092 ..	214.5-215.4	10 14 0
1743-1752 ..	179.5-180.4	8 19 0	2093-2101 ..	215.5-216.4	10 15 0
1753-1762 ..	180.5-181.4	9 0 0	2102-2111 ..	216.5-217.4	10 16 0
1763-1772 ..	181.5-182.4	9 1 0	2112-2121 ..	217.5-218.4	10 17 0
1772-1781 ..	182.5-183.4	9 2 0	2122-2131 ..	218.5-219.4	10 18 0
1782-1791 ..	183.5-184.4	9 3 0	2132-2140 ..	219.5-220.4	10 19 0
1792-1801 ..	184.5-185.4	9 4 0	2141-2150 ..	220.5-221.4	11 0 0
1801-1810 ..	185.5-186.4	9 5 0	2151-2160 ..	221.5-222.4	11 1 0
1811-1820 ..	186.5-187.4	9 6 0	2161-2169 ..	222.5-223.4	11 2 0
1821-1830 ..	187.5-188.4	9 7 0	2170-2179 ..	223.5-224.4	11 3 0
1831-1839 ..	188.5-189.4	9 8 0	2180-2189 ..	224.5-225.4	11 4 0
1840-1849 ..	189.5-190.4	9 9 0	2190-2199 ..	225.5-226.4	11 5 0

\* For "Court" (First Series) Equivalents (Base = 81.0) see Labour Report No. 34. p. 38. For "Court" (Second Series) Equivalents (Base = 87.0) see Labour Report. No. 38. p. 40.

† Formulae for Construction of Tables—

(a) "C" Series.—Let N = number of shillings in wage per week. Then  $9.708738 \times (N - .5) + 1$  gives the first, and  $9.708738 \times (N + .5)$  gives the second of the pair of numbers in the index-number division for N shillings. Decimal fractions in result are to be disregarded.

(b) "Court" Series.—Each "C" Series Index point = 0.103, and each of the first of the pair of index-number divisions for the "C" Series Index in above table when multiplied by this factor gives to the first decimal place (as it stands) the first of the pair of index-number divisions for the "Court" Index (Third Series)—from which the second of the pair becomes obvious. (NOTE.—All "Court" Series index-numbers must be derived through their corresponding "C" Series index-numbers.)

‡ For general purposes, the Annual Rate (in £'s) is obtainable by multiplying the Weekly Rate (in Shillings) by 2.6083333 (i.e. 52 (weeks) divided by 20 (shillings)),—a decimal point of .5 or more being taken to the next higher.

Both the amount of wage and the adjustment scale operate only until the Court otherwise determines, and representatives of employers and employees have the right to approach the Court for variation of the wage or for variation of the adjustment scale. As from February, 1951, the whole basic wage is adjustable for wages varied according to the "Court" Index (Third Series). Under the First and Second Series only the "Needs" portion was varied.

### § 12. International Comparisons : Retail Price Index-Numbers.

The following tables give index-numbers of retail prices for various countries. Except where otherwise noted, the average prices for the year 1937 are taken as base (= 100). The figures, which have been taken from the *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics* of the Statistical Office of the United Nations, show fluctuations in prices in each country, and do not measure relative price levels as between the various countries included.

#### Index-Numbers of Retail Prices in various Countries.\*

(Source : *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics* of the Statistical Office of the United Nations.)

(Base : 1937 = 100.)

	AUSTRALIA.	BELGIUM.	BRAZIL.(a)	CANADA.	CHILE.	DENMARK.	EGYPT.(b)	FINLAND.	INDIA.	IRELAND.
Town or Number of Localities.	30	62	Sao Paulo.	69	Santiago.	Whole.	Cairo.	36	Bombay.	120
1937 .. ..	100	100	..	100	100	100	..	100	100	100
1938 .. ..	103	104	..	101	104	102	..	103	100	102
1939 .. ..	105	104	100	100	106	104	..	105	100	105
1940 .. ..	110	117	105	104	119	130	113	125	106	121
1941 .. ..	115	..	117	110	137	150	138	148	117	133
1942 .. ..	125	..	130	116	173	156	184	174	143	146
1943 .. ..	129	..	150	117	201	158	242	197	218	166
1944 .. ..	129	..	191	117	224	160	279	209	224	174
1945 .. ..	129	..	232	118	244	162	293	292	222	173
1946 .. ..	131	324c	276	122	283	161	287	467	244	171
1947 .. ..	136	340	328	134	378	166	279	606	263	181d
1948 .. ..	148	390	361	153	446	170	281	815	286	186
1949 .. ..	162	378	359	159	529	171	278	830	290	187
1950 .. ..	179	374	380	165	609	181	293	945	295	190
1950—										
March Qtr.	171	369	370	160	567	174	284	872	288	188
June .. ..	176	366	379	162	586	178	289	921	293	191
Sept. .. ..	180	376	384	167	613	179	295	968	303	188
Dec. .. ..	188	386	385	169	670	185	306	1,019	296	191

\* The index-numbers in the above table are based on the prices of food, housing, clothing and miscellaneous items.

(a) Base : 1949 = 100. (b) Base : June-August, 1939 = 100. (c) October-December

(d) New interim index linked to the old.

## Index-Numbers of Retail Prices in Various Countries\*—continued.

(Base: 1937 = 100.)

Town or Number of Localities.	NETHERLANDS.	NEW ZEALAND	NORWAY.	PERU.	SOUTHERN RHODESIA <sup>(a)</sup>	SWEDEN.	SWITZERLAND.	UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.	UNITED KINGDOM.	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.	URUGUAY.
	6	4-25	31	Lima.	6	60	34	9	24-509	32-51	Montevideo.
1937 .. .. .	100	100	100	100	102	100	100	100	100	100	100
1938 .. .. .	101	103	103	101	103	102	100	104	101	98	99
1939 .. .. .	102	107	105	100	102	105	101	104	103	97	105
1940 .. .. .	117	112	122	107	103	118	110	107	119	98	110
1941 .. .. .	134	116	143	116	107	134	127	112	129	101	109
1942 .. .. .	143	120	152	131	113	144	141	122	130	114	112
1943 .. .. .	149	123 <sup>b</sup>	155	142	119	146	149	129	129	120	118
1944 .. .. .	153 <sup>c</sup>	125	157	163	124	145	152	133	130	122	121
1945 .. .. .	176 <sup>c</sup>	127	160	182	127	145	153	137	132	125	130
1946 .. .. .	192 <sup>c</sup>	128	164	199	131	145	152	139	132	136	153
1947 .. .. .	199	132	165	258	135	150	159	145	102 <sup>d</sup>	155	177
1948 .. .. .	206	142	164	338	145	157	164	153	108	167	180
1949 .. .. .	210	145 <sup>e</sup>	164	388	153	160	162	159	111	166	189
1950 .. .. .	239 <sup>f</sup>	153	173 <sup>g</sup>	435	165	162	160 <sup>h</sup>	165	114	167	181
1950—											
March Qtr. . .	233	146	165	426	162	161	159	161	113	164	180
June   "   . .	238	151	171	430	163	161	159	165	114	165	181
Sept.  "   . .	240	156	174	429	166	162	160	165	114	169	179
Dec.   "   . .	247	159	181	453	167	164	161	169	116	172	184

\* The index-numbers in the above table are based on the prices of food, housing, clothing and miscellaneous items.

(a) Base: August, 1939 = 100. Index-numbers for years 1937-40 include only food, fuel, light and rent. (b) War-time index linked to former series. (c) Average of less than twelve months. (d) July-December, Interim Index. Base: 17th June, 1947 = 100. (e) Consumers' (Retail) Price Index linked to former series. (f) New interim index. (g) New index linked to former index. (h) New index, beginning March, 1950; linked to former series.

## INDEX-NUMBERS OF RETAIL PRICES OF FOODS.

Town or Number of Localities.	AUSTRALIA.	BRAZIL (g)	CANADA.	CHILE.	DENMARK.	EGYPT. (h)	FINLAND.	FRANCE.	INDIA.	IRELAND.
	30	Sao Paulo.	69	Santiago.	Whole	Cairo.	36	Paris	Bombay.	120
1937 .. .. .	100	..	100	100	100	..	100	100	100	100
1938 .. .. .	104	..	101	105	104	..	101	116	99	102
1939 .. .. .	109	100	97	103	106	..	105	125	100	104
1940 .. .. .	110	107	102	120	129	112	128	149	110	117
1941 .. .. .	111	121	112	137	157	141	151	172	123	129
1942 .. .. .	121	134	123	179	162	194	177	201	158	143
1943 .. .. .	122	153	127	212	161	269	197	259	221	159
1944 .. .. .	120	207	127	227	162	312	200	319	231	168
1945 .. .. .	121	245	129	242	163	325	312	436	238	169
1946 .. .. .	122	312	136	281	163	310	491	746	278	169
1947 .. .. .	129	373	155	377	170	268	719	1,207	302	(c) 183
1948 .. .. .	148	425	189	439	173	290	950	1,923	305	188
1949 .. .. .	164	409	107	504	175	303	979	100 <sup>d</sup>	321	188
1950 .. .. .	184	438	204	589	204	332	1,124	111	334	188
1950—										
March Qtr. . .	173	425	195	538	186	318	1,043	109	324	188
June   "   . .	179	438	200	547	193	326	1,111	108	330	192
Sept.  "   . .	185	446	210	589	206	333	1,170	109	348	185
Dec.   "   . .	198	443	212	681	215	342	1,174	117	334	188

(a) Base: 1939 = 100. (b) Base: June-August, 1929 = 100. (c) New interim index linked to the old. (d) New index, base: 1949 = 100.

## Index-Numbers of Retail Prices in Various Countries—continued.

(Base: 1937 = 100.)

## INDEX—NUMBERS OF RETAIL PRICES OF FOOD—continued.

	MEXICO.	NETHER- LANDS.	NEW ZEALAND.	NORWAY.	PERU.	SOUTHERN RHODESIA. (c)	SWITZER- LAND.	UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.	UNITED KINGDOM.	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.	URUGUAY.
Town or Number of Localities.	Mexi- co City.	6	25	31	Lima.	6	34	9	24-509	32-51	Monte- video.
1937 .. ..	100	100	100	100	100	..	100	100	100	100	100
1938 .. ..	115	103	104	101	98	..	100	105	101	93	96
1939 .. ..	115	104	110	106	92	..	102	101	101	90	102
1940 .. ..	112	122	113	127	101	..	113	107	118	92	107
1941 .. ..	115	147	115	152	115	110	135	115	121	100	107
1942 .. ..	131	160	118	158	129	116	155	127	116	118	111
1943 .. ..	168	162	119	160	143	121	163	138	119	131	118
1944 .. ..	217	167 <sup>b</sup>	121	161	163	124	160	144	121	129	122
1945 .. ..	234	171 <sup>b</sup>	120	163	182	127	166	147	122	132	146
1946 .. ..	303	197 <sup>b</sup>	121	163	196	132	162	151	122	152	163
1947 .. ..	348	215	128	162	271	144	171	159	101 <sup>d</sup>	184	202
1948 .. ..	367	233	145	158	364	163	177	164	108	200	197
1949 .. ..	383	254	149 <sup>c</sup>	156	423	173	176	169	114	192	197
1950 .. ..	398	282 <sup>e</sup>	163	169 <sup>f</sup>	488	198.	178 <sup>g</sup>	179	123	194	180
1950—											
March Qtr. ..	387	277	150	155	476	191	172	173	121	186	181
June .. ..	394	284	159	169	481	197	176	181	123	190	180
Sept. .. ..	401	279	169	173	477	201	180	180	122	199	177
Dec. .. ..	409	286	174	181	516	204	182	182	125	202	180

(a) Base: August, 1939 = 100. (b) Average of less than twelve months. (c) Consumers' (Retail) Price Index linked to former series. (d) July-December Interim index. (e) Base: 17th June, 1947 = 100. (f) New interim index. (g) New index linked to former index. (h) New index, beginning March, 1950, linked to former series.