

SECTION IV.—RETAIL PRICES, HOUSE RENT, AND PURCHASING-POWER OF MONEY.

1. **General.**—In normal circumstances properly computed index-numbers of food and groceries, and house-rent combined, form one of the best possible measures of those variations in the "purchasing-power of money" which affect the cost of living: in short, the variations of the cost of a "composite unit," consisting of appropriate quantities of suitably chosen commodities, and including also house rent, reflect the variations in the cost of living. The main investigations carried out as to retail prices and purchasing-power of money are of a threefold nature and consist of:—

- (i.) Quarterly variations in the purchasing-power of money in thirty towns.
- (ii.) Annual variations in the purchasing-power of money in 150 towns.
- (iii.) Householders' Budget Inquiries.

It is principally with the first of these that this Section deals. In Report No. 2, issued in April 1913; Report No. 5, issued in December 1914; Report No. 6, issued in May 1916; Report No. 7, issued in June 1917, and Report No. 8, issued in July 1918, the results of comprehensive investigations into the subjects of Prices and Price-Indexes for past years were published, and an account was given of the methods used in the collection of the data and the computation of the results. A discussion of the theory upon which the calculation of the index-numbers is based was furnished in Appendixes to Report No 1, issued in December, 1912. In appendix I. hereof, an endeavour is made to set forth the essentials of the problem and of its solution, with sufficient illustration to enable anyone who, being qualified to form a competent opinion, will give the matter serious attention.

For the computations of the index-numbers the "aggregate expenditure" method is adopted, i.e., the average price for each commodity included is multiplied by its respective "mass unit." The "mass-unit" represents the relative extent to which each commodity is used or consumed, and is regarded as constant over the period under review. By taking the aggregate expenditure for any one year as base, the index-number for the relative aggregate expenditure for any other year is readily calculated. Certain aspects of this method, not dealt with in previous Reports, are discussed on pages 19 and 20 of Labour Report No. 6.

In order to illustrate clearly the method adopted it will be well to take a simple numerical example. Suppose that in 1901 the average price of butter was 1s. 3d. per lb., of bread was 3d. per 2 lb. loaf, of mutton was 3d. per lb., and of milk was 4d. per quart; and suppose that in 1911 the prices of these four commodities were 1s. 6d. for butter, 4d. for bread, 5d. for mutton, and 5d. for milk. Now the total quantities of each of these commodities consumed in Australia per annum are approximately 90 million lb. of butter, 470 million 2-lb. loaves of bread, 330 million lb. of mutton, and 300 million quarts of milk. Therefore, the actual expenditure of the people of Australia on these commodities in 1901 and 1911 respectively would be as follows:—

Computation of Index-Numbers: Illustrative Example of Aggregate Expenditure Method.

Particulars.	Unit.	Quantities consumed (0,000,000 omitted.)	Prices.		Total Expenditure.	
			1901.	1911.	1901.	1911.
			d.	d.	d. (0,000,000 omitted.)	d. (0,000,000 omitted.)
Butter	lb.	9	15	18	135	162
Bread	216 loaf	47	3	4	141	188
Mutton	lb.	33	3	5	99	165
Milk	quart	30	4	5	120	150
					495	665

The relative aggregate expenditure was 495 in 1901, and rose to 665 in 1911; in other words, the index-number in 1901, taking the expenditure in 1911 as the base ($= 1000$) was $\frac{495}{665} \times 1000 = 744$, and the index-number in 1911, taking the expenditure in 1901 as the base ($= 1000$) was $\frac{665}{495} \times 1000 = 1343$, which might, of course, have been obtained directly by taking the reciprocal of the result previously obtained. If now, instead of only four commodities, a representative group of fifty or more were treated in this way for a series of years; the numbers thus obtained would furnish a satisfactory index of the variations in price from year to year.

2. Changes in Cost of Commodities, Standard of Living, and Expenditure on Living.—A change in the "Cost of Living" may occur either in the *standard of living* or in the *purchasing-power of money*, or in both; both affect the expenditure on living, which expenditure itself depends on three things, viz. :—

- (i.) The *particular commodities* consumed;
- (ii.) The *relative quantities* of the commodities consumed; and
- (iii.) The *price* of these commodities.

To avoid confusion as to the significance of the results given in this section, the conception of what is meant by "cost of living" ought to be clearly apprehended, for evidently a change in any *one* of the above may produce a change in the *expenditure* on living. In order to obtain index-numbers which are independent of (arbitrary) variations of (i) and (ii.) above, and which unequivocally reflect the variations caused by *price* alone, it is necessary that the particular series of commodities selected, and the relative quantities of these, remain constant. This phase of the subject is dealt with more fully in Labour Report No. 1, Appendix VIII.; in Labour Report No. 5, pp. 17-18; in Labour Bulletin No. 9, pp. 27 to 46; in Labour Bulletin No. 14, pp. 127 to 130, and in Appendix I. Part II. hereof. In the places indicated it has been shewn that in order to avoid all confusion between "changes in the regimen" (i.e., change in the standard of living) which is at the disposal of the individual, and "changes in prices," which are not at his disposal, it is necessary to adopt the "aggregate expenditure" method; that is, to ascertain the cost of a definite regimen or what may be called the cost of a definite "composite unit." To be of the highest *general* value, the "composite unit" must be one applicable to the *whole* community. It has also been shewn that what has been called the method of "aggregate expenditures," i.e., the estimation of the cost of this composite unit, as the basis of the

method, is, as said, the only unequivocal method, and technically is perfectly satisfactory, while any other method is technically less satisfactory, or introduces some change of regimen. Variations in quantity or in the items of the composite unit introduce ambiguity, for the resulting change in the price of the composite unit is partly due to change of the unit and partly due to change of the prices of its constituent items.

Notwithstanding the very explicit statement of the purpose and scope of these investigations given in the various Labour Reports, evidence is continually coming to hand that misunderstanding in regard thereto is still prevalent. Many persons, having noticed the obvious fact that a different regimen gives a very different aggregate cost, have imagined that deductions as to the "purchasing-power of money" vary enormously with change of regimen. This phase of the matter has been dealt with fully in previous publications of the Labour and Industrial Branch, and in particular in Labour Bulletin No. 14, pp. 127 to 130, published in October, 1916. It is there demonstrated, by basing the deductions upon various widely differing regimens, that the mode of investigating the purchasing-power of money adopted is not vitiated by employing a fixed regimen; on the contrary, it has reached a high degree of precision as compared with any alternative which has been suggested. Again, it should be observed that any proposed change of regimen must be freed from the effect of a change in the standard of living, otherwise the results are confused, that is, they embody two things, viz.: (a) change in price, and (b) change in standard of living. The conclusion therein arrived at may be repeated here, viz.: That once a standard of living, or living wage, has been fixed, the tables published by the Commonwealth Statistician can be legitimately used as shewing the variations in the cost of living. The only appropriate criticism which could be applicable would be that the regimen used as a basis for estimation has ceased to be representative of the usage of the community to such an extent that the calculations founded on it are misleading. If then, under these circumstances a change is made, certain safeguards are necessary which have been indicated in Labour Report No. 1, Appendixes VIII and IX., and which have further been dealt with in Appendix I. of this Report.

3. Commodities and Requirements Included.—The 47 items of expenditure included are divided into four groups, viz., (i.) groceries and bread, (ii.) dairy produce, (iii.) meat, and (iv.) house-rent. These items cover about 60 per cent. of the total expenditure of a normal family. There are very cogent reasons for the restriction of the inquiry to the items mentioned. If the comparisons are to be satisfactory, confusion must not arise between changes in standard of living and changes arising from a variation of the purchasing-power of money. In order to avoid such confusion the items selected are such as are sensibly identical and identifiable in the various localities. The most important group of expenditure which is not included is clothing, the cost of which amounts to about 13 per cent. of the total expenditure. Owing to influences of individual taste, fashion, and the great variety of production, articles included in this group are practically not readily comparable nor identifiable. As regards fuel and light, the cost of which amounts to about 4 per cent. of total expenditure, while these commodities are comparable and identifiable, the usage or relative consumption in the towns included in the inquiries varies

to such an extent that their inclusion on an assumed constant regimen would tend to produce a fictitious result in so far as relative cost of living is concerned. Thus the prices of clothing and of fuel and light cannot be unequivocally compared.

While it is true that insurance premiums and contributions to benefit societies have probably not increased, it must be borne in mind that the purchasing-power of money-benefits to be derived is reduced in accordance with the general depreciation in the purchasing-power of money, and in order to obtain benefits of the same net value as before, the premiums and contributions would have to be increased *pro rata*.

It will be seen, therefore, that notwithstanding the exclusion of various items of expenditure, the results obtained based on the four groups referred to, can be vitiated only in an abnormal state of affairs, and ordinarily only to a very slight extent. It is to be remembered also that prices of commodities which cannot be included because they do not lend themselves to exact specification, tend, on the whole, to move in the same direction as those included, and approximately to the same extent. Thus, as a matter of fact, a more reliable result is obtained than would be the case if the investigation endeavoured to cover the whole of the items of expenditure. In short, this method of measuring the variations in the purchasing-power of money, though *theoretically* subject to obvious limitations, is *practically* the best-general measure.

The question of procedure in abnormal circumstances was sufficiently referred to in Report No. 6, pp. 20 to 22.

The following tabular statement gives particulars of the commodities and items included, the units of measurement for which prices are collected, and the mass-units shewing the relative extent to which each item is used or consumed.

Retail Prices.—Table shewing Commodities, etc., included in Investigation, Units of Measurement, and "Mass-Units."

Commodity.	Unit.	"Mass Unit."	Commodity.	Unit.	"Mass Unit."
GROUP I.—GROCERIES (INCLUDING BREAD).			GROUP III.—MEAT.		
1. Bread	2 lb. loaf	468	26. Beef, sirloin	lb.	67
2. Flour, ordinary .. .	25 lb. bags	11	27. " rib	"	82
3. Tea	lb.	30	28. " flank	"	12
4. Coffee	"	2	29. " shin	"	14
5. Sugar	"	460	30. " steak, rump .. .	"	24
6. Rice	"	50	31. " shoulder	"	68
7. Sago	"	8	32. " " stewing	"	53
8. Jam	"	73	33. " corned round .. .	"	39
9. Oatmeal	"	35	34. " brisket, with bone	"	11
10. Raisins	"	14	35. " " without bone	"	32
11. Currants	"	14	36. Mutton, leg	"	92
12. Starch	"	1	37. " shoulder	"	62
13. Blue	doz. eqs.	1	38. " loin	"	30
14. Candles	lb.	16	39. " neck	"	40
15. Soap	"	64	40. " chops, loin	"	62
16. Potatoes	14 lbs.	64	41. " " leg	"	15
17. Onions	lb.	68	42. " " neck	"	31
18. Kerosene	gallon	17	43. Pork, leg	"	91
GROUP II.—DAIRY PRODUCTS.			44. " loin	"	84
19. Milk	quart	300	45. " belly	"	104
20. Butter	lb.	95	46. " chops	"	84
21. Cheese	"	15	GROUP IV.—HOUSE RENT.		
22. Eggs	dozen	18	47. House Rent.	per week	40½
23. Bacon, middles .. .	lb.	16			
24. " shoulder	"	16			
25. Ham	"	8			

It may here be pointed out that both in the collection of the data and computation of the results great care is exercised, and that there is reason to believe that the price-indexes are based upon more extensive data than any which have been obtained in similar investigations in other parts of the world.

In order to give some idea of the thorough manner in which the work has been performed, it may be mentioned that with regard to the 46 commodities and house rent included in this inquiry, nearly 10,500 prices and quotations are received and tabulated for the 30 towns dealt with each month. This amounts to 126,000 per annum. The complete scheme in regard to the determination of the price-indexes shewing the purchasing-power of money provides for the collection and analysis of over 140,000 separate prices and quotations each year, but owing to the difficulty in getting in all the returns regularly it was necessary to provide for a larger number of returns than was actually required.

When it is understood that this inquiry goes back for the capital towns as far as 1901, and the wholesale price inquiry (80 commodities) as far as 1871, some idea may be gathered as to the magnitude of the work involved. All the returns received are carefully examined, and in cases where the accuracy of any price or quotation is open to doubt, special inquiries are made from the person furnishing the quotation. Each return as received is compared with the previous return from the same dealer and with all other returns received for the same period. It is believed, therefore, that a high degree of accuracy is obtained in the investigations, and it is evident that personal impressions or results, not based upon an equally systematic and equally extensive inquiry, cannot be allowed weight.

4. Other Investigations as to Price-Indexes and Cost of Living.—

While this report is concerned principally with variations in price-indexes on the lines indicated in the preceding paragraphs, it will not be out of place to refer briefly to other cognate investigations which have been carried out. These consist, as already indicated, of (i.) Annual Variations in the price index-numbers for 150 Towns, and (ii.) the cost of living according to Householders' Budget Inquiries.

(i.) *Price-Indexes in 150 Towns.*—The investigation as to variation in price-indexes in 100 towns was carried out for the months of November 1913 and November 1914. For subsequent years the number of towns from which returns are collected annually has been increased from 100 to 150. The results of the November 1913 investigation were published in Labour Bulletin No. 5, pp. 26 to 33; of the November 1914 investigation in Labour Bulletin No. 8, pp. 231 to 240; of the November 1915 investigation in Labour Bulletin No. 12, pp. 352 to 361; of the November 1916 investigation in Labour Report No. 7, pp. 393 to 402, of the November 1917 investigation in Labour Report No. 8, pp. 47 to 57, and of November 1918 in the present issue, pp. 52 to 61. Prior to 1912 investigations were made concerning the price-indexes in the capital towns only, but during 1912 and subsequent years these investigations have been extended to 30 towns. On page 61 hereinafter comparisons are made to test the accuracy with which the results obtained from these inquiries reflect the conditions obtaining throughout the States and Commonwealth.

It will be seen on examination that the table reveals the fact that there is but little variation in the results obtained from the different sources indicated. This approximation between the various results indicates that the index-numbers published for the capital towns only, for the years prior to 1912 and for the 30 towns for 1912 and subsequent years, probably reflect, with a substantial degree of accuracy, the variations in the purchasing-power of money, not only in each State separately, but also throughout the Commonwealth as a whole.

(ii.) *Householders' Budget Inquiries.*—The first of these was held in 1910-11, and covered a period of twelve months. The results of that investigation were published in December, 1911.* A second was held during 1913 for the month of November only. The results of this second investigation are given in a special report, entitled "Labour Report, No. 4, Expenditure on Living in the Commonwealth, November, 1913."

5. Purchasing-Power of Money, General Results of Investigation in each Metropolitan Town, 1901 to 1918.—Index-numbers, computed separately for each group of commodities (and for house-rent) included in the investigation, as well as the weighted average for all groups together, are shown for the capital town of each State in the tables given hereinafter. In these tables the weighted aggregate expenditure for the whole of the capital towns in 1911 is taken as base (= 1,000), and the figures for that year (as well as other years) for the individual towns show the relative purchasing-power of money as between the respective towns. The result is that the index-numbers given herein are comparable in all respects, that is to say, they show not only the variations from year to year in each town, but they also furnish comparisons as to the relative cost in the different towns, either in any given year or as between one year and another and one town and another.

Retail Price Index-Numbers in Metropolitan Towns, 1901 to 1918.†

It is, of course, obvious that the index-numbers given in the separate parts of the table cannot be compared with each other in order to show the relative cost of (say) house-rent, groceries and food, since the weighted average cost for the six towns taken together in 1911 in each case is made equal to 1000, although the cost is of course not the same.

Towns.	1901.	1907.	1908.	1909.	1910.	1911.	1912.	1913.	1914.	1915.	1916.	1917.	1918.
GROUP I.—GROCERIES.													
Sydney ..	878	904	1,009	1,015	1,028	1,018	1,151	1,106	1,112	1,231	1,329	1,320	1,393
Melbourne ..	897	877	923	895	920	924	1,081	953	996	1,222	1,270	1,198	1,263
Brisbane ..	1,011	969	1,045	1,039	1,054	1,087	1,195	1,110	1,076	1,331	1,315	1,321	1,306
Adelaide ..	949	903	944	991	972	958	1,138	1,039	1,061	1,310	1,274	1,210	1,343
Perth ..	1,006	1,013	1,038	1,033	1,095	1,276	1,186	1,073	1,113	1,351	1,345	1,323	1,394
Hobart ..	935	888	960	1,018	1,011	1,003	1,169	1,061	1,070	1,250	1,236	1,263	1,341
Weighted Average*	912	885	975	974	997	1,000	1,124	1,043	1,062	1,272	1,270	1,261	1,342

† See footnote on next page.

* See Report on an "Inquiry into the Cost of Living in Australia, 1910-11," by G. H. Knibbs, G.M.G., etc., December, 1911. Owing to the small number of budgets returned, the deductions and tabulations based thereon are necessarily restricted.

Retail Price Index-Numbers in Metropolitan Towns, 1901 to 1918†—continued.

TOWN.	1901.	1907.	1908.	1909.	1910.	1911.	1912.	1913.	1914.	1915.	1916.	1917.	1918.
GROUP II.—DAIRY PRODUCE.													
Sydney ..	881	932	1,093	1,088	976	971	1,098	1,095	1,110	1,221	1,291	1,319	1,358
Melbourne ..	969	967	1,066	989	976	959	1,077	1,019	1,075	1,350	1,338	1,271	1,325
Brisbane ..	833	837	953	906	973	933	1,055	1,008	995	1,277	1,287	1,294	1,334
Adelaide ..	975	928	1,068	1,028	1,017	1,103	1,203	1,187	1,194	1,360	1,289	1,228	1,315
Perth ..	1,290	1,200	1,269	1,251	1,238	1,241	1,320	1,262	1,244	1,475	1,434	1,406	1,427
Hobart ..	931	955	1,015	1,017	982	994	1,102	1,109	1,177	1,439	1,334	1,313	1,365
Weighted Average*	945	955	1,082	1,023	998	1,000	1,115	1,080	1,108	1,307	1,316	1,295	1,345

GROUP III.—MEAT.													
Sydney ..	1,025	994	1,000	982	977	959	1,107	1,213	1,280	1,778	2,091	2,154	2,020
Melbourne ..	1,077	1,067	1,043	998	978	929	1,123	1,149	1,270	1,300	2,027	1,949	1,963
Brisbane ..	1,026	1,024	1,062	967	936	935	991	965	1,169	1,549	1,746	1,667	1,819
Adelaide ..	1,221	1,059	1,060	1,081	1,032	1,037	1,130	1,206	1,502	1,930	2,240	2,079	2,160
Perth ..	1,378	1,511	1,482	1,479	1,535	1,577	1,643	1,607	1,688	1,722	1,997	1,913	1,708
Hobart ..	1,225	1,279	1,262	1,308	1,276	1,221	1,321	1,400	1,493	1,789	2,217	2,274	2,427
Weighted Average*	1,101	1,074	1,069	1,040	1,024	1,000	1,144	1,198	1,323	1,781	2,056	2,022	1,992

GROUPS I., II., AND III. COMBINED.—GROCERIES AND FOOD.													
Sydney ..	917	936	1,030	1,012	1,000	989	1,124	1,131	1,156	1,396	1,520	1,540	1,549
Melbourne ..	965	925	995	949	960	935	1,032	1,024	1,091	1,411	1,462	1,412	1,466
Brisbane ..	965	947	1,023	983	1,000	1,018	1,102	1,042	1,078	1,373	1,426	1,406	1,495
Adelaide ..	1,023	951	1,010	1,025	1,001	1,020	1,154	1,119	1,215	1,487	1,532	1,445	1,554
Perth ..	1,184	1,197	1,226	1,212	1,251	1,346	1,345	1,287	1,302	1,483	1,542	1,505	1,496
Hobart ..	1,011	1,010	1,055	1,093	1,073	1,068	1,190	1,164	1,212	1,445	1,523	1,544	1,635
Weighted Average*	972	955	1,031	1,006	1,005	1,000	1,129	1,095	1,144	1,416	1,495	1,472	1,514

GROUP IV.—HOUSE RENT.													
Sydney ..	858	911	922	955	988	1,090	1,189	1,246	1,279	1,220	1,212	1,215	1,252
Melbourne ..	732	804	823	842	916	970	1,018	1,089	1,126	1,065	1,089	1,124	1,190
Brisbane ..	488	575	616	662	700	767	804	863	882	859	847	859	905
Adelaide ..	629	812	872	940	1,018	1,112	1,180	1,125	1,040	932	930	956	1,022
Perth ..	801	884	878	867	896	810	850	923	914	848	869	874	885
Hobart ..	667	708	727	749	776	805	829	887	914	928	928	951	956
Weighted Average*	751	816	839	867	919	1,000	1,063	1,118	1,135	1,081	1,081	1,098	1,143

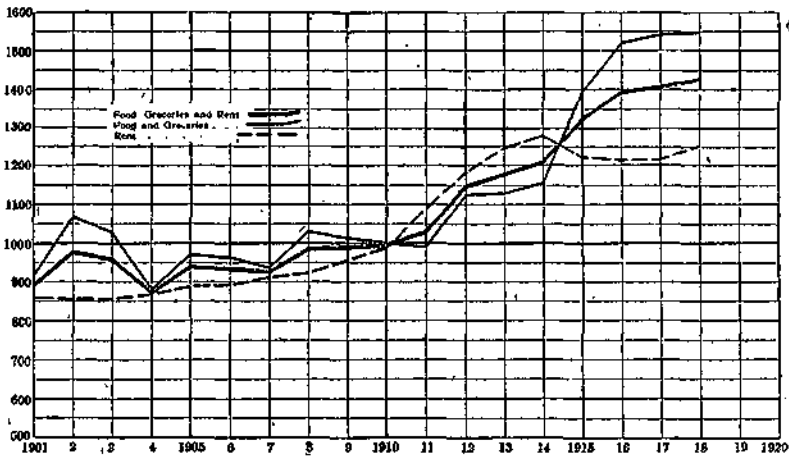
ALL GROUPS COMBINED.—GROCERIES, FOOD, AND HOUSE RENT.													
Sydney ..	893	926	986	989	995	1,031	1,148	1,178	1,206	1,328	1,394	1,406	1,427
Melbourne ..	870	875	926	905	942	950	1,055	1,051	1,105	1,277	1,309	1,294	1,349
Brisbane ..	769	794	856	851	877	915	979	989	997	1,162	1,188	1,181	1,252
Adelaide ..	864	894	953	990	1,008	1,058	1,157	1,121	1,143	1,259	1,236	1,245	1,335
Perth ..	1,027	986	1,001	988	1,023	1,126	1,154	1,123	1,143	1,222	1,266	1,246	1,239
Hobart ..	869	886	920	952	951	984	1,042	1,053	1,090	1,233	1,278	1,301	1,356
Weighted Average*	830	897	951	948	970	1,000	1,101	1,104	1,140	1,278	1,324	1,318	1,362

Note.—As to basis of index-numbers, see remarks on previous page.
* For all capital towns.

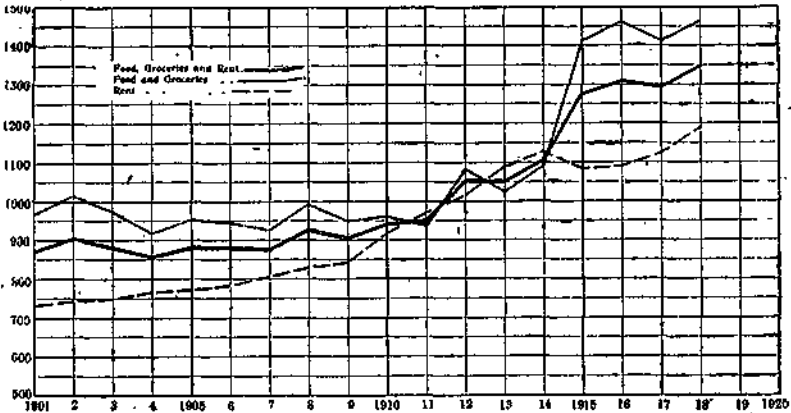
† Index-numbers for years 1902-6 are given in Labour Report No 6, p. 26.

The index-numbers for the last three groups (groceries and food, house rent, and groceries, food, and house rent combined) are shewn for each capital town, together with the weighted average for all six towns combined in the graphs on pages 29 to 31. The paragraphs on pages 31 and 32 briefly indicate the general nature of the variations in each group.

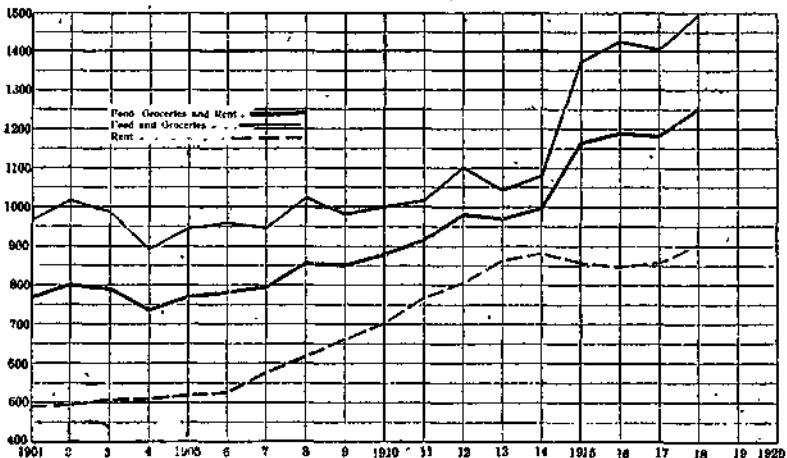
RETAIL PRICES, HOUSE RENT, AND PURCHASING-POWER OF MONEY. 29
 GRAPHS SHEWING THE PURCHASING-POWER OF MONEY,* METROPOLITAN
 TOWNS, 1901 to 1918.
 SYDNEY.



MELBOURNE.

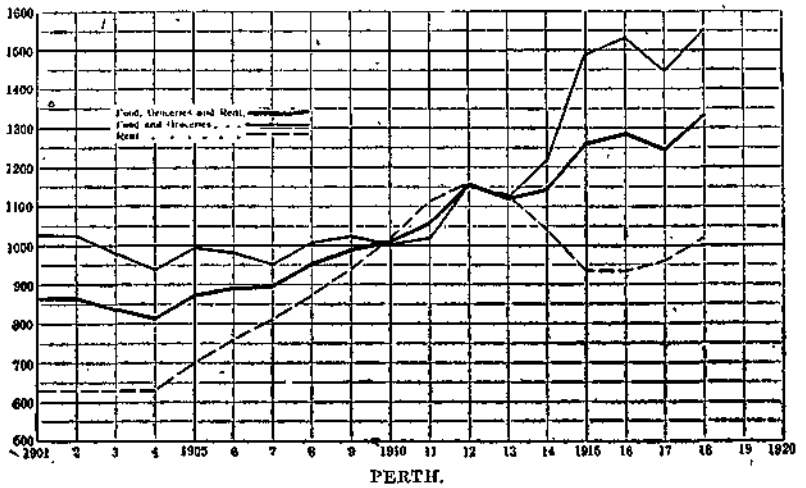


BRISBANE.

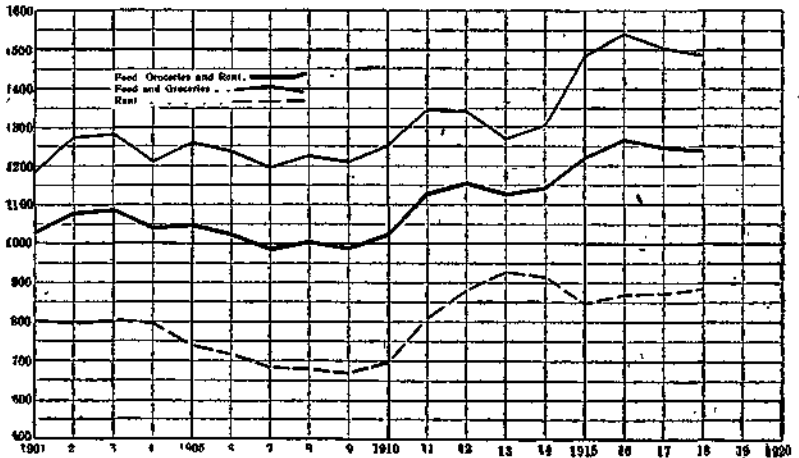


* Based upon a constant "composite unit."

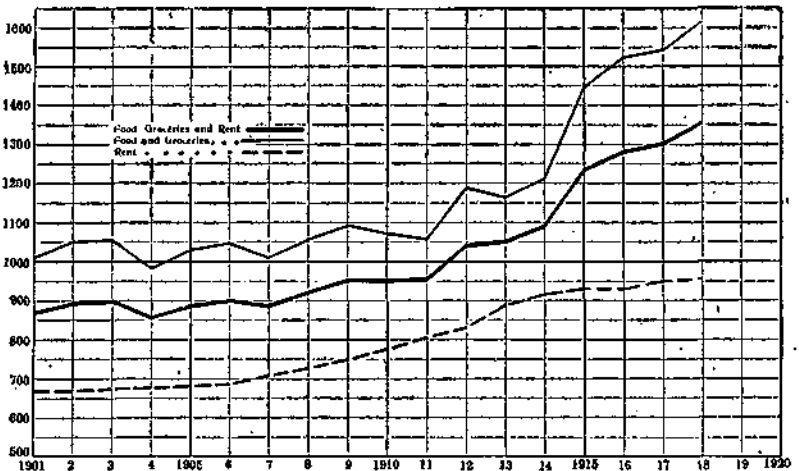
30 RETAIL PRICES, HOUSE RENT, AND PURCHASING-POWER OF MONEY.
 GRAPHS SHOWING PURCHASING-POWER OF MONEY, METROPOLITAN TOWNS,
 1901 TO 1918.
 ADELAIDE.



PERTH.

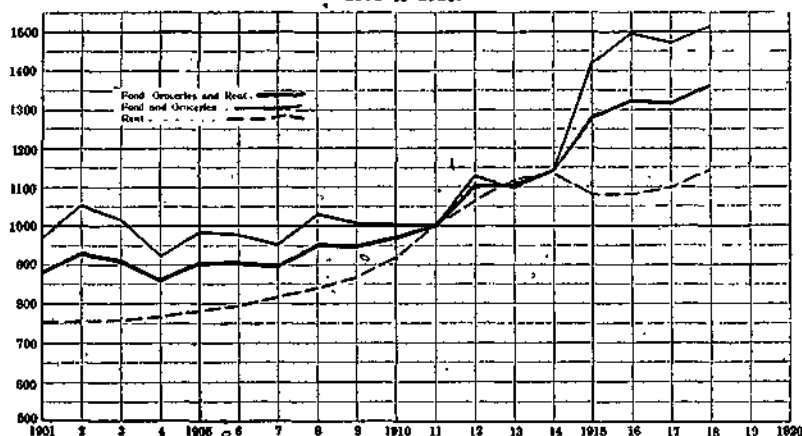


HOBART.



See footnote previous page.

PURCHASING-POWER OF MONEY.—WEIGHTED AVERAGE SIX CAPITAL TOWNS, 1901 to 1918.



See footnote p. 29.

(i.) *Groceries (18 Commodities)*.—It may be seen that the index-number for this Group was higher in 1918 than in 1917 in all the capital towns, the aggregate effect upon the weighted average index-number showing an increase. The increase in the weighted average index-number for all towns in 1918 compared with 1917 amounts to 6.4 per cent., compared with 1911 to 34.2 per cent., and compared with 1901 to 47.2 per cent. The average cost in 1918 of the commodities included in this group was greatest in Brisbane and least in Melbourne.

(ii.) *Dairy Produce (7 Commodities)*.—The index-numbers for this group were higher for 1918 than for 1917 in all the towns. The weighted average index-number for all towns in 1918 was 3.9 per cent. higher than in 1917, 34.5 per cent. higher than in 1911, and 42.3 per cent. higher than in 1901. The average cost in 1918 of the commodities in this group was highest in Perth and lowest in Adelaide.

(iii.) *Meat (21 Cuts or Joints of Butcher's Meat)*.—The index-numbers for this group were lower in 1918 than in 1917 in all the capital towns except Sydney and Perth. The weighted average index-number for all towns taken together in 1918 was 1.5 per cent. lower than in 1917; 99.2 per cent. higher than in 1911, and 80.9 per cent. higher than in 1901. The average cost of the commodities included in this group for 1918 was greatest in Hobart and least in Perth.

(iv.) *Groceries and Food (Groups I., II., and III. combined)*.—The index-numbers for this combined group show the aggregate effect upon the purchasing-power-of-money index-numbers of movements in prices of commodities, apart from variations in house rent. There was an increase in 1918 compared with the immediately preceding year in all the towns except Perth. During the whole of the period covered by the table on page 28 the index-numbers were higher in Perth than in any other capital town up to and including 1914. The disparity between that town and the remaining towns was greater in the earlier years of the period, and less in the later years, and for 1915 the index-number for Perth, while still higher than for all the towns except Adelaide, shows less divergence from the weighted average than for any other year. In 1916 the index-number

* That is the "composite unit" upon which these index-numbers are computed.

for Perth was again higher than for any other town, but in 1917 it was lower in that town than in Sydney or Hobart. In 1918 the index-number for Perth was lower than in all the towns except Melbourne. Taking the weighted average for all the towns the prices of the 46 items of food and groceries specified on page 25 were 2.9 per cent. higher in 1918 than in 1917, 51.4 per cent. higher than in 1911, and 55.9 per cent. higher than in 1901. The average cost of these items for 1918 was greatest in Hobart and least in Melbourne.

(v.) *House Rent.*—Except in Adelaide, where rents remained stationary from 1901 to 1904, and declined in 1913, and in Perth, where they decreased from 1903 to 1907, and again in 1908-9 and 1914, there was a uniform increase in each of the metropolitan towns from 1901 to 1914. The abnormal conditions arising out of the war has resulted in entirely changed conditions for the years 1915, 1916, 1917 and 1918. It will be seen that for 1915 there was a decrease in the cost of housing accommodation in all the towns except Hobart, where there was a small increase. In 1916 Melbourne and Perth shew slight increases, Sydney, Brisbane and Adelaide slight decreases, while the index-number for Hobart was the same for 1916 as for 1915. In 1917 there was an increase in the average rentals in all the towns, and in 1918 there was a further increase. The weighted average index-number for 1918 is 4.1 per cent. higher than for 1917, 14.3 per cent. higher than in 1911, and 32.2 per cent. higher than in 1901. The greatest increase since 1901 has occurred in Brisbane (85.5 per cent.), followed in the order named by Adelaide (62.5 per cent.), Melbourne (61.0 per cent.), Sydney (45.9 per cent.), Hobart (43.3 per cent.), and Perth (10.5 per cent.).

(vi.) *Price Index-numbers for Food, Groceries and House Rent combined.*—The weighted average index-numbers for the combined expenditure upon the 46 items of food and groceries and housing accommodation shew an increase of 3.3 per cent. in 1918 compared with 1917, and 54.8 compared with 1901. Reference to the graph on page 31 will shew that the weighted average price index-number was lower in 1904 than in any other year during the period covered by the investigations. The index-number rose in 1905 and 1906, and fell in 1907. There was a substantial rise in 1908, followed by a slight decline in 1909. Further rises occurred in 1910 and 1911, and again in 1912, when the increase was very considerable (10.1 per cent.). The index-number for 1913 was practically the same as for 1912, but in 1914 there was a rise of 3.2 per cent., in 1915 of 12.1 per cent., and a further rise in 1916 of 3.6 per cent. The index-number for 1917 was 0.5 per cent. lower than for 1916. The index-number for 1918 shews a rise of 3.3 per cent., and is the highest recorded.

Compared with 1911, the base year of the period, the weighted average purchasing-power-of-money index-number shews an increase of 36.2 per cent. for 1918. It may further be seen that, except for the year 1909, from 1901 to 1912 inclusive, the index-number for Perth was higher than for any other capital town. In 1913, 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917, and 1918 the index-number for Sydney was the highest, and for 1918 the index-number for Perth was lower than for any other town. Attention has already been drawn in the quarterly Labour Bulletins to the fact that the increase in prices of food and groceries during 1915 was considerably less in Perth than in the remaining towns. The result of this is to alter the relative cost of food, groceries, and house-rent combined in the several towns.

6. Index-numbers Shewing Variations in Cost of Food, Groceries and House-rent, 1912 to 1918.—In the following tables, index-numbers are given shewing variations in the cost of food and groceries (46 commodities), in thirty of the more important towns throughout the Commonwealth at yearly and quarterly periods from 1912 to 1918. Index-numbers for food and groceries are also given for each month of 1918. In addition, index-numbers shewing for these years the quarterly and yearly variations in house rents and in the combined cost of food, groceries and house-rent, are given. As explained on pp. 31 and 32 of Labour Report No. 6, these are now computed to the same base as the index-numbers relating to the six capital cities, which go back to the year 1901 :—

Food and Groceries (46 Commodities), Index-Numbers for Each of Thirty Towns, with Weighted Average of Six Capital Towns in 1911 as Base (= 1000).

	N.S.W.—INDEX-NUMBERS.						VICTORIA—INDEX-NUMBERS.					
	Sydney.	Newcastle.	Broken Hill.	Goulburn.	Bathurst.	Weighted Average, N.S.W.	Melbourne.	Ballarat.	Bendigo.	Geelong.	Warrnambool.	Weighted Average, Victoria.
1912	1,124	1,134	1,352	1,128	1,083	1,134	1,082	1,110	1,112	1,086	1,057	1,086
1913	1,131	1,127	1,343	1,151	1,053	1,139	1,024	1,028	1,057	1,049	1,043	1,028
1914	1,156	1,142	1,363	1,174	1,094	1,164	1,091	1,086	1,083	1,099	1,074	1,091
1915	1,396	1,389	1,643	1,338	1,336	1,404	1,411	1,443	1,429	1,393	1,425	1,414
1916	1,520	1,508	1,810	1,532	1,466	1,630	1,462	1,406	1,453	1,464	1,466	1,462
1917	1,540	1,537	1,778	1,490	1,483	1,643	1,412	1,401	1,407	1,419	1,423	1,412
1918	1,549	1,564	1,762	1,526	1,504	1,657	1,466	1,441	1,443	1,446	1,483	1,463
1912 1st Qtr.	1,036	1,062	1,295	1,033	995	1,048	988	1,001	998	1,002	976	990
2nd "	1,090	1,099	1,328	1,070	1,056	1,100	1,069	1,056	1,102	1,056	1,042	1,069
3rd "	1,195	1,195	1,376	1,154	1,136	1,201	1,156	1,170	1,179	1,132	1,115	1,157
4th "	1,176	1,180	1,410	1,258	1,144	1,187	1,113	1,211	1,176	1,154	1,097	1,126
1913 1st Qtr.	1,136	1,124	1,329	1,189	1,060	1,143	1,036	1,055	1,101	1,085	1,051	1,043
2nd "	1,158	1,147	1,381	1,159	1,063	1,166	1,040	1,049	1,093	1,072	1,067	1,046
3rd "	1,128	1,124	1,321	1,118	1,036	1,134	1,021	1,013	1,037	1,030	1,037	1,022
4th "	1,104	1,112	1,343	1,109	1,034	1,114	999	996	999	1,009	1,018	999
1914 1st Qtr.	1,150	1,110	1,340	1,134	1,065	1,153	1,023	1,029	1,043	1,038	1,034	1,030
2nd "	1,163	1,153	1,423	1,201	1,121	1,178	1,118	1,090	1,115	1,133	1,073	1,116
3rd "	1,154	1,148	1,398	1,177	1,095	1,163	1,101	1,113	1,109	1,099	1,089	1,102
4th "	1,156	1,154	1,375	1,184	1,092	1,164	1,115	1,113	1,126	1,126	1,100	1,116
1915 1st Qtr.	1,231	1,233	1,488	1,222	1,182	1,241	1,186	1,209	1,201	1,178	1,162	1,187
2nd "	1,286	1,293	1,605	1,299	1,254	1,306	1,382	1,411	1,380	1,348	1,377	1,383
3rd "	1,530	1,506	1,721	1,513	1,453	1,549	1,584	1,627	1,634	1,557	1,629	1,590
4th "	1,530	1,522	1,763	1,512	1,455	1,537	1,491	1,531	1,493	1,489	1,533	1,494
1916 1st Qtr.	1,566	1,532	1,784	1,533	1,454	1,570	1,510	1,503	1,504	1,499	1,502	1,509
2nd "	1,517	1,496	1,827	1,545	1,470	1,528	1,483	1,501	1,479	1,506	1,484	1,485
3rd "	1,510	1,509	1,816	1,532	1,468	1,523	1,448	1,449	1,417	1,449	1,408	1,447
4th "	1,485	1,494	1,817	1,511	1,462	1,500	1,407	1,412	1,411	1,400	1,408	1,407
1917 1st Qtr.	1,499	1,518	1,804	1,522	1,467	1,513	1,395	1,400	1,395	1,405	1,415	1,396
2nd "	1,500	1,528	1,809	1,481	1,471	1,520	1,412	1,403	1,425	1,438	1,435	1,414
3rd "	1,583	1,548	1,743	1,460	1,487	1,687	1,419	1,392	1,415	1,418	1,435	1,417
4th "	1,566	1,565	1,754	1,496	1,506	1,571	1,422	1,408	1,395	1,416	1,430	1,410
1918 1st Qtr.	1,553	1,562	1,783	1,481	1,502	1,561	1,447	1,433	1,434	1,453	1,448	1,446
2nd "	1,549	1,574	1,828	1,526	1,521	1,561	1,478	1,450	1,483	1,475	1,506	1,477
3rd "	1,514	1,522	1,705	1,509	1,487	1,522	1,449	1,422	1,427	1,426	1,501	1,445
4th "	1,579	1,599	1,692	1,589	1,508	1,585	1,490	1,459	1,429	1,426	1,515	1,482
1918												
January	1,545	1,552	1,798	1,471	1,505	1,554	1,435	1,438	1,415	1,448	1,449	1,435
February	1,553	1,566	1,773	1,489	1,497	1,566	1,449	1,430	1,422	1,452	1,443	1,446
March	1,555	1,566	1,780	1,493	1,500	1,564	1,458	1,431	1,465	1,460	1,452	1,456
April	1,562	1,566	1,787	1,518	1,512	1,562	1,462	1,436	1,480	1,473	1,492	1,462
May	1,546	1,576	1,848	1,523	1,521	1,560	1,486	1,469	1,487	1,481	1,514	1,484
June	1,548	1,581	1,850	1,537	1,529	1,562	1,486	1,456	1,482	1,464	1,473	1,484
July	1,539	1,565	1,788	1,527	1,516	1,551	1,467	1,452	1,464	1,469	1,514	1,466
August	1,501	1,504	1,859	1,498	1,470	1,508	1,443	1,405	1,409	1,421	1,503	1,438
September	1,501	1,498	1,868	1,501	1,475	1,507	1,437	1,409	1,409	1,390	1,485	1,431
October	1,562	1,560	1,654	1,561	1,467	1,564	1,477	1,452	1,441	1,394	1,500	1,467
November	1,569	1,589	1,671	1,581	1,504	1,574	1,507	1,474	1,447	1,438	1,511	1,498
December	1,606	1,648	1,751	1,636	1,553	1,616	1,487	1,453	1,428	1,446	1,534	1,480

Index-numbers for each of the months of 1912, 1913, 1914, and 1915 are given on pp. 33-35 of Labour Report No. 6; for 1916 on pp. 371-3 of Labour Report, No. 7, and for 1917 on pp. 32-4, Labour Report No. 8.

Food and Groceries (46 Commodities), Index-Numbers for Each of Thirty Towns, with Weighted Average of Six Capital Towns in 1911 as Base (= 1000)—cont.

	QUEENSLAND—INDEX-NUMBERS.						SOUTH AUSTRALIA—INDEX-NUMBERS.					
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba.	Rock-hampton.	Charlter Towers.	Warwick.	Weighted Average, Queensland.	Adelaide.	Kadina.	Port Pirie.	Mt. Gambier.	Petersburg.	Weighted Average, S.A.
1912	1,102	1,100	1,142	1,292	1,144	1,123	1,154	1,154	1,105	1,031	1,160	1,152
1913	1,042	1,045	1,067	1,212	1,073	1,060	1,119	1,139	1,161	1,021	1,108	1,119
1914	1,078	1,088	1,145	1,266	1,058	1,202	1,215	1,210	1,247	1,062	1,268	1,212
1915	1,373	1,405	1,429	1,546	1,372	1,396	1,487	1,506	1,500	1,382	1,504	1,489
1916	1,426	1,432	1,530	1,599	1,422	1,432	1,532	1,533	1,604	1,467	1,593	1,537
1917	1,405	1,390	1,327	1,571	1,413	1,420	1,445	1,545	1,579	1,422	1,552	1,457
1918	1,495	1,496	1,523	1,700	1,563	1,517	1,553	1,569	1,628	1,487	1,590	1,556
1912 1st Qtr.	1,095	1,115	1,166	1,295	1,132	1,122	1,100	1,108	1,162	976	1,125	1,100
2nd "	1,095	1,100	1,148	1,294	1,156	1,119	1,147	1,147	1,202	1,017	1,134	1,145
3rd "	1,105	1,088	1,125	1,283	1,159	1,122	1,192	1,178	1,201	1,063	1,190	1,188
4th "	1,111	1,095	1,132	1,299	1,128	1,123	1,177	1,193	1,213	1,069	1,103	1,176
1913 1st Qtr.	1,036	1,018	1,064	1,233	1,079	1,055	1,123	1,140	1,155	1,018	1,109	1,122
2nd "	1,080	1,047	1,074	1,231	1,116	1,076	1,145	1,161	1,183	1,037	1,118	1,144
3rd "	1,040	1,054	1,052	1,192	1,058	1,066	1,117	1,137	1,162	1,039	1,117	1,118
4th "	1,035	1,053	1,078	1,191	1,041	1,055	1,090	1,119	1,142	989	1,083	1,091
1914 1st Qtr.	1,044	1,078	1,110	1,218	1,090	1,070	1,147	1,146	1,161	1,030	1,166	1,144
2nd "	1,058	1,056	1,125	1,255	1,073	1,082	1,250	1,252	1,255	1,066	1,291	1,246
3rd "	1,085	1,069	1,161	1,252	1,076	1,105	1,229	1,231	1,233	1,067	1,319	1,228
4th "	1,124	1,151	1,186	1,338	1,114	1,151	1,233	1,200	1,289	1,084	1,294	1,231
1915 1st Qtr.	1,103	1,228	1,261	1,423	1,221	1,223	1,315	1,328	1,402	1,189	1,353	1,317
2nd "	1,318	1,360	1,361	1,553	1,300	1,347	1,506	1,522	1,553	1,395	1,515	1,506
3rd "	1,450	1,483	1,466	1,540	1,422	1,463	1,602	1,624	1,673	1,408	1,607	1,603
4th "	1,531	1,549	1,630	1,660	1,484	1,552	1,526	1,552	1,612	1,445	1,540	1,520
1916 1st Qtr.	1,551	1,554	1,663	1,678	1,523	1,572	1,550	1,591	1,648	1,481	1,508	1,556
2nd "	1,456	1,453	1,580	1,645	1,440	1,484	1,574	1,610	1,643	1,512	1,630	1,578
3rd "	1,356	1,383	1,447	1,530	1,378	1,383	1,621	1,579	1,565	1,461	1,584	1,525
4th "	1,341	1,338	1,431	1,539	1,353	1,367	1,469	1,548	1,561	1,320	1,568	1,477
1917 1st Qtr.	1,340	1,308	1,364	1,542	1,335	1,364	1,476	1,564	1,583	1,419	1,580	1,485
2nd "	1,373	1,352	1,409	1,570	1,374	1,391	1,469	1,572	1,605	1,441	1,586	1,482
3rd "	1,419	1,404	1,440	1,575	1,440	1,433	1,462	1,494	1,552	1,408	1,521	1,416
4th "	1,480	1,498	1,473	1,610	1,503	1,492	1,432	1,511	1,575	1,419	1,539	1,444
1918 1st Qtr.	1,447	1,406	1,483	1,662	1,493	1,466	1,514	1,571	1,630	1,463	1,506	1,522
2nd "	1,482	1,448	1,503	1,631	1,529	1,499	1,607	1,581	1,647	1,513	1,603	1,605
3rd "	1,488	1,515	1,506	1,609	1,588	1,513	1,538	1,582	1,602	1,488	1,566	1,541
4th "	1,582	1,614	1,599	1,753	1,642	1,589	1,551	1,567	1,633	1,485	1,594	1,557
1918												
January	1,437	1,407	1,461	1,633	1,485	1,450	1,504	1,582	1,637	1,460	1,612	1,515
February	1,449	1,396	1,509	1,660	1,495	1,469	1,499	1,568	1,630	1,457	1,597	1,510
March	1,456	1,416	1,480	1,671	1,500	1,473	1,539	1,562	1,622	1,471	1,579	1,542
April	1,472	1,434	1,505	1,685	1,511	1,490	1,587	1,568	1,630	1,477	1,597	1,585
May	1,480	1,440	1,501	1,681	1,520	1,496	1,620	1,595	1,657	1,523	1,611	1,618
June	1,494	1,470	1,502	1,675	1,556	1,509	1,614	1,590	1,654	1,538	1,602	1,612
July	1,486	1,496	1,485	1,670	1,568	1,504	1,559	1,572	1,627	1,511	1,586	1,562
August	1,483	1,505	1,514	1,702	1,563	1,510	1,530	1,546	1,583	1,484	1,590	1,533
September	1,495	1,546	1,519	1,727	1,614	1,525	1,525	1,538	1,597	1,469	1,554	1,528
October	1,491	1,540	1,521	1,729	1,595	1,522	1,510	1,531	1,604	1,466	1,557	1,510
November	1,577	1,631	1,619	1,778	1,615	1,605	1,541	1,582	1,613	1,492	1,555	1,544
December	1,617	1,671	1,657	1,768	1,716	1,642	1,610	1,600	1,680	1,497	1,670	1,611

Index-numbers for each of the months of 1912, 1913, 1914 and 1915 are given on pp. 33-5 of Labour Report No. 6; for 1916 on pp. 271-3, Labour Report No. 7; and for 1917 on pp. 32-4, Labour Report No. 8.

Food and Groceries (46 Commodities), Index-Numbers for Each of Thirty Towns, with Weighted Average of Six Capital Towns in 1911 as Base (= 1000)—cont.

	WESTERN AUSTRALIA—INDEX-NUMBERS.						TASMANIA—INDEX-NUMBERS.						Weighted Average of 6 Capital Towns.	Weighted Average of 30 Towns, C'wealth.
	Perth.	Kalgoorlie.	Midland Junction and Guildford.	Bunbury.	Geraldton.	Weighted Average, W.A.	Hobart.	Launceston.	Zeehan.	Tasconsfield.	Queensdown.	Weighted Average, Tasmania.		
1912	1,345	1,677	1,370	1,402	1,410	1,418	1,190	1,125	1,302	1,201	1,289	1,182	1,129	1,140
1913	1,207	1,607	1,301	1,352	1,320	1,344	1,164	1,073	1,268	1,181	1,291	1,149	1,085	1,106
1914	1,302	1,654	1,323	1,393	1,453	1,382	1,212	1,130	1,290	1,205	1,305	1,196	1,144	1,155
1915	1,483	1,809	1,516	1,580	1,659	1,559	1,445	1,406	1,571	1,512	1,581	1,450	1,416	1,428
1916	1,542	1,823	1,570	1,606	1,632	1,608	1,523	1,504	1,652	1,611	1,661	1,533	1,495	1,506
1917	1,645	1,790	1,520	1,632	1,626	1,571	1,544	1,516	1,618	1,615	1,647	1,548	1,472	1,481
1918	1,486	1,784	1,479	1,592	1,588	1,553	1,635	1,575	1,732	1,625	1,729	1,626	1,514	1,523
1912 1st Qtr.	1,301	1,650	1,310	1,365	1,338	1,378	1,093	1,021	1,225	1,082	1,192	1,083	1,049	1,065
2nd "	1,408	1,730	1,435	1,441	1,439	1,477	1,145	1,110	1,276	1,159	1,272	1,149	1,111	1,123
3rd "	1,368	1,671	1,406	1,433	1,435	1,435	1,235	1,171	1,329	1,237	1,341	1,226	1,186	1,194
4th "	1,303	1,650	1,364	1,373	1,429	1,382	1,288	1,189	1,378	1,327	1,352	1,267	1,160	1,176
1913 1st Qtr.	1,275	1,595	1,298	1,349	1,384	1,340	1,158	1,062	1,259	1,182	1,280	1,142	1,100	1,113
2nd "	1,299	1,621	1,334	1,370	1,407	1,372	1,188	1,090	1,287	1,205	1,331	1,171	1,117	1,129
3rd "	1,248	1,622	1,298	1,359	1,387	1,334	1,170	1,086	1,266	1,194	1,289	1,157	1,091	1,101
4th "	1,245	1,590	1,274	1,323	1,368	1,323	1,139	1,051	1,259	1,143	1,262	1,125	1,070	1,082
1914 1st Qtr.	1,245	1,580	1,260	1,330	1,399	1,320	1,162	1,075	1,245	1,149	1,285	1,146	1,104	1,115
2nd "	1,296	1,617	1,315	1,373	1,429	1,308	1,231	1,133	1,290	1,193	1,312	1,206	1,158	1,168
3rd "	1,336	1,693	1,350	1,431	1,482	1,417	1,212	1,143	1,384	1,232	1,311	1,201	1,151	1,163
4th "	1,330	1,727	1,362	1,440	1,503	1,420	1,243	1,170	1,342	1,245	1,311	1,230	1,161	1,174
1915 1st Qtr.	1,420	1,747	1,473	1,483	1,590	1,496	1,293	1,225	1,377	1,302	1,404	1,283	1,235	1,246
2nd "	1,508	1,796	1,531	1,596	1,688	1,576	1,413	1,348	1,510	1,431	1,523	1,405	1,364	1,378
3rd "	1,546	1,882	1,571	1,654	1,711	1,623	1,541	1,523	1,713	1,647	1,679	1,559	1,554	1,563
4th "	1,400	1,812	1,488	1,586	1,641	1,542	1,534	1,523	1,684	1,608	1,717	1,555	1,512	1,524
1916 1st Qtr.	1,501	1,823	1,532	1,610	1,678	1,578	1,593	1,544	1,692	1,628	1,687	1,590	1,540	1,549
2nd "	1,564	1,825	1,557	1,654	1,676	1,623	1,555	1,539	1,699	1,653	1,701	1,569	1,510	1,523
3rd "	1,580	1,851	1,622	1,737	1,656	1,642	1,489	1,475	1,635	1,605	1,654	1,507	1,479	1,484
4th "	1,520	1,794	1,568	1,656	1,598	1,584	1,452	1,456	1,593	1,559	1,600	1,474	1,446	1,459
1917 1st Qtr.	1,500	1,755	1,526	1,648	1,609	1,560	1,493	1,401	1,599	1,567	1,596	1,507	1,448	1,459
2nd "	1,555	1,780	1,572	1,725	1,651	1,609	1,481	1,487	1,610	1,594	1,622	1,508	1,461	1,473
3rd "	1,485	1,790	1,496	1,671	1,620	1,557	1,533	1,503	1,632	1,629	1,662	1,540	1,487	1,493
4th "	1,480	1,834	1,485	1,562	1,643	1,559	1,670	1,500	1,709	1,670	1,708	1,640	1,491	1,500
1918 1st Qtr.	1,450	1,825	1,482	1,572	1,628	1,537	1,659	1,582	1,707	1,663	1,712	1,640	1,501	1,511
2nd "	1,585	1,792	1,524	1,637	1,634	1,593	1,645	1,584	1,748	1,636	1,720	1,635	1,527	1,536
3rd "	1,472	1,750	1,463	1,599	1,571	1,535	1,594	1,554	1,729	1,679	1,726	1,596	1,491	1,501
4th "	1,457	1,769	1,443	1,540	1,560	1,525	1,641	1,580	1,744	1,624	1,758	1,631	1,538	1,545
1918 January	1,483	1,859	1,491	1,557	1,619	1,571	1,680	1,577	1,713	1,660	1,727	1,651	1,493	1,505
February	1,446	1,812	1,458	1,560	1,608	1,529	1,658	1,584	1,712	1,676	1,711	1,641	1,500	1,510
March	1,506	1,803	1,498	1,598	1,630	1,573	1,639	1,584	1,696	1,654	1,700	1,628	1,510	1,519
April	1,529	1,814	1,514	1,633	1,639	1,589	1,641	1,583	1,717	1,665	1,704	1,632	1,519	1,528
May	1,524	1,791	1,524	1,659	1,633	1,585	1,648	1,588	1,758	1,617	1,722	1,638	1,529	1,539
June	1,532	1,788	1,539	1,682	1,630	1,600	1,645	1,580	1,769	1,625	1,753	1,636	1,532	1,541
July	1,491	1,779	1,493	1,687	1,639	1,558	1,627	1,583	1,746	1,620	1,731	1,625	1,511	1,522
August	1,470	1,732	1,457	1,552	1,561	1,528	1,575	1,542	1,725	1,562	1,724	1,581	1,483	1,491
September	1,456	1,759	1,439	1,556	1,563	1,518	1,582	1,538	1,716	1,556	1,721	1,533	1,480	1,489
October	1,462	1,771	1,443	1,544	1,560	1,530	1,616	1,574	1,715	1,640	1,732	1,616	1,510	1,521
November	1,431	1,783	1,442	1,541	1,564	1,529	1,642	1,575	1,745	1,620	1,764	1,632	1,540	1,547
December	1,449	1,752	1,444	1,535	1,556	1,516	1,665	1,593	1,771	1,613	1,777	1,633	1,558	1,565

Index-numbers for each of the months of 1912, 1913, 1914 and 1915 are given on pp. 33-5 of Labour Report, No. 6; for 1916 on pp. 371-3 of Labour Report No. 7, and for 1917 on pp. 32-4, Labour Report No. 8.

House Rents. Index-Numbers for Each of Thirty Towns, with Weighted Average of Six Capital Towns in 1911 as Base (= 1000).

	N.S.W.—INDEX-NUMBERS.						VICTORIA—INDEX-NUMBERS.					
	Sydney.	Newcastle.	Broken Hill*	Goulburn.	Bathurst.	Weighted Average, N.S.W.	Melbourne.	Ballarat.	Bendigo.	Geelong.	Warrnambool.	Weighted Average, Victoria.
1912	1,183	699	689	918	683	1,112	1,016	634	659	868	759	957
1913	1,246	785	775	995	802	1,179	1,089	630	674	860	778	1,017
1914	1,279	783	617	1,067	835	1,201	1,126	644	670	887	795	1,048
1915	1,230	800	292	1,110	771	1,140	1,085	638	653	878	772	1,013
1916	1,212	775	524	1,090	765	1,140	1,089	637	639	901	794	1,017
1917	1,216	771	651	1,120	777	1,145	1,124	628	642	937	794	1,046
1918	1,252	846	793	1,125	788	1,187	1,160	628	703	929	783	1,095
1912 1st Qtr.	1,115	670	631	927	659	1,050	985	669	645	844	766	932
2nd "	1,169	670	648	927	659	1,097	1,002	677	664	873	766	949
3rd "	1,230	714	714	889	706	1,153	1,031	607	657	888	736	968
4th "	1,218	743	752	931	708	1,148	1,047	582	670	867	769	978
1913 1st Qtr.	1,222	773	755	939	755	1,156	1,069	626	669	859	780	999
2nd "	1,241	792	770	1,020	774	1,175	1,086	632	671	859	776	1,014
3rd "	1,246	792	790	1,010	836	1,180	1,099	632	675	865	776	1,025
4th "	1,275	783	780	1,010	843	1,204	1,105	630	679	859	779	1,030
1914 1st Qtr.	1,273	783	779	1,057	857	1,203	1,120	644	673	829	804	1,041
2nd "	1,286	783	780	1,058	845	1,214	1,144	644	678	906	810	1,064
3rd "	1,285	783	741	1,060	834	1,212	1,147	644	678	908	784	1,067
4th "	1,271	783	169	1,093	806	1,176	1,093	643	650	905	781	1,021
1915 1st Qtr.	1,228	811	222	1,093	772	1,144	1,092	638	654	879	786	1,019
2nd "	1,219	811	293	1,098	772	1,140	1,087	638	657	880	789	1,015
3rd "	1,219	793	293	1,098	772	1,138	1,079	634	649	879	758	1,008
4th "	1,213	785	360	1,151	767	1,136	1,081	634	651	878	757	1,009
1916 1st Qtr.	1,208	779	393	1,048	767	1,131	1,088	640	644	902	774	1,016
2nd "	1,214	779	454	1,100	763	1,139	1,085	638	644	901	784	1,013
3rd "	1,214	784	621	1,115	766	1,146	1,088	638	639	901	788	1,015
4th "	1,214	770	626	1,098	763	1,145	1,097	634	635	901	788	1,022
1917 1st Qtr.	1,213	771	630	1,107	763	1,144	1,115	628	621	937	794	1,037
2nd "	1,213	770	645	1,124	781	1,147	1,111	628	635	937	793	1,035
3rd "	1,213	771	660	1,124	782	1,146	1,129	628	639	937	794	1,049
4th "	1,223	771	660	1,125	782	1,156	1,143	628	673	937	794	1,064
1918 1st Qtr.	1,238	778	676	1,125	782	1,169	1,152	628	686	926	784	1,071
2nd "	1,255	805	698	1,125	782	1,186	1,157	628	699	926	781	1,075
3rd "	1,251	888	714	1,125	782	1,190	1,181	628	713	929	790	1,096
4th "	1,262	914	724	1,125	804	1,203	1,230	628	713	936	799	1,136

* See remarks re House Rent on page 45.

House Rents Index-Numbers for Each of Thirty Towns, with Weighted Average of Six Capital Towns in 1911 as Base (= 1000).—cont.

	QUEENSLAND—INDEX-NUMBERS.						SOUTH AUSTRALIA—INDEX-NUMBERS.					
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba.	Rock-hampton.	Charter Towers.	Warwick.	Weighted Average Queensland.	Adelaide.	Kadina, Moonta and Wallaroo.	Port Pirie.*	Mt. Gambier.	Petersburg.	Weighted Average, S.A.
1912	804	800	705	601	803	777	1,160	576	731	650	803	1,087
1913	863	751	758	592	719	814	1,125	558	785	678	903	1,063
1914	882	753	762	589	659	826	1,040	602	780	724	922	992
1915	859	744	759	586	629	808	932	612	615	718	848	891
1916	847	705	766	584	642	796	930	660	769	731	760	890
1917	859	724	786	632	711	815	959	701	824	716	760	928
1918	905	795	796	670	777	869	1,022	746	878	729	771	987
1912 1st Qtr.	802	829	690	611	802	777	1,165	589	724	641	805	1,091
2nd "	804	829	690	600	765	777	1,172	589	724	641	805	1,097
3rd "	809	761	710	597	912	780	1,160	587	733	652	805	1,056
4th "	802	780	730	697	732	773	1,145	585	737	667	796	1,075
1913 1st Qtr.	840	779	748	687	762	801	1,148	573	758	667	844	1,078
2nd "	860	763	760	684	752	815	1,147	562	772	676	895	1,050
3rd "	860	737	760	595	715	812	1,113	589	800	672	936	1,056
4th "	891	726	763	593	647	830	1,093	596	808	695	936	1,038
1914 1st Qtr.	862	740	757	588	647	824	1,075	579	823	708	936	1,023
2nd "	891	745	756	592	647	831	1,069	613	844	722	940	1,021
3rd "	890	763	766	585	676	833	1,052	624	844	737	943	1,008
4th "	865	763	767	585	667	816	962	594	607	735	869	917
1915 1st Qtr.	853	739	767	587	627	804	942	588	607	713	865	899
2nd "	866	756	766	585	630	814	924	584	607	718	865	883
3rd "	860	753	752	585	629	809	929	640	607	717	869	890
4th "	859	729	752	585	630	805	931	634	638	722	794	892
1916 1st Qtr.	841	730	752	580	630	793	928	651	686	727	760	893
2nd "	844	700	770	585	630	795	929	661	764	733	760	898
3rd "	848	670	770	585	624	794	931	661	813	734	760	902
4th "	853	719	770	585	683	804	934	669	813	732	760	905
1917 1st Qtr.	855	717	786	620	684	810	953	677	818	713	760	921
2nd "	861	728	786	623	698	815	953	706	826	713	760	923
3rd "	861	728	786	636	716	817	960	708	826	711	760	930.
4th "	859	723	786	649	744	817	969	714	826	726	760	938
1918 1st Qtr.	885	742	786	646	752	837	982	743	832	726	760	951
2nd "	887	766	799	646	777	843	1,016	743	838	730	766	979
3rd "	920	831	799	694	783	876	1,037	744	874	730	766	1,000
4th "	927	843	799	694	795	882	1,054	762	967	731	792	1,020

* See Remarks re House Rents on p. 45.

House Rents. Index-Numbers for Each of Thirty Towns, with Weighted Average of Six Capital Towns in 1911 as Base (= 1000)—cont.

	WESTERN AUSTRALIA—INDEX-NUMBERS.						TASMANIA—INDEX-NUMBERS.						Weighted Average of Capital Towns.	Weighted Average 30 Towns, C.wealth.
	Perth.	Kalgoorlie.	Midland Junction and Guildford.	Bunbury.	Geraldton.	Weighted Average, W.A.	Hobart.	Launceston.	Zeehan.	Beaconsfield.	Queenstown.	Weighted Average, Tasmania.		
1912	830	842	757	674	1,033	866	829	810	450	291	567	769	1,063	894
1913	923	786	814	696	1,077	892	887	826	442	564	557	804	1,118	1,042
1914	914	770	790	707	1,117	870	914	847	435	571	614	820	1,135	1,054
1915	848	869	757	641	955	834	926	879	399	244	673	836	1,031	1,006
1916	869	808	732	567	970	851	928	893	396	298	686	843	1,080	1,006
1917	874	836	708	537	954	852	951	895	388	290	627	852	1,098	1,026
1918	885	833	706	592	929	857	956	830	303	202	617	865	1,143	1,068
1912 1st Qtr	850	865	721	675	1,009	847	812	821	450	301	562	761	1,025	862
2nd "	850	865	727	675	1,009	854	817	821	450	301	562	764	1,056	858
3rd "	900	830	785	679	1,083	879	841	810	450	287	553	772	1,089	1,013
4th "	913	814	796	677	1,029	884	847	824	451	273	549	779	1,088	1,014
1913 1st Qtr	914	820	811	682	1,063	891	902	823	461	264	556	809	1,102	1,028
2nd "	924	773	815	691	1,082	880	888	825	461	264	556	802	1,117	1,041
3rd "	930	774	815	697	1,080	891	884	827	461	264	552	800	1,130	1,045
4th "	947	760	814	715	1,084	900	901	828	383	264	563	806	1,135	1,055
1914 1st Qtr	921	764	795	712	1,130	883	904	834	375	264	560	809	1,135	1,056
2nd "	923	770	795	724	1,151	886	911	843	348	248	622	817	1,148	1,068
3rd "	917	770	795	702	1,177	882	919	856	312	248	638	825	1,147	1,067
4th "	896	770	775	690	1,011	862	924	856	305	244	636	827	1,110	1,027
1915 1st Qtr	869	806	756	693	1,019	851	923	856	300	244	636	827	1,088	1,010
2nd "	843	817	753	658	992	833	929	887	300	244	680	843	1,081	1,006
3rd "	839	804	750	641	987	826	929	887	300	244	680	843	1,078	1,003
4th "	842	807	759	572	981	827	931	887	297	244	686	844	1,077	1,003
1916 1st Qtr	870	838	738	569	978	852	920	892	290	210	686	838	1,077	1,004
2nd "	869	837	731	569	969	851	924	893	291	210	680	841	1,078	1,006
3rd "	868	839	736	570	972	851	928	893	301	210	680	843	1,080	1,010
4th "	868	839	719	559	957	849	940	891	301	210	680	843	1,084	1,014
1917 1st Qtr	872	835	711	542	959	851	945	892	301	198	628	848	1,092	1,021
2nd "	872	837	707	542	940	851	951	893	290	199	628	851	1,092	1,021
3rd "	875	837	707	536	950	852	933	895	280	199	626	852	1,099	1,027
4th "	875	837	708	526	952	853	956	899	290	205	626	855	1,109	1,038
1918 1st Qtr	884	827	708	495	928	854	941	906	292	198	621	849	1,121	1,047
2nd "	884	814	704	495	928	856	941	917	293	198	616	852	1,133	1,058
3rd "	884	814	705	494	928	856	968	940	313	205	616	875	1,148	1,073
4th "	889	816	705	524	932	861	972	958	313	207	616	883	1,170	1,094

* See remarks re House Rent on page 45.

**Purchasing-Power of Money. (Food, Groceries and House Rent Combined).
Index-Numbers for each of Thirty Towns, with Weighted Average for Six
Capital Towns in 1911 as Base (= 1000).**

	N.S.W.—INDEX-NUMBERS.						VICTORIA—INDEX-NUMBERS.					
	Sydney.	Newcastle.	Broken Hill.*	Goulburn.	Bathurst.	Weighted Average, N.S.W.	Melbourne.	Ballaarat.	Bendigo.	Geelong.	Warrnambool.	Weighted Average, Victoria.
1912	1,148	955	1,080	1,042	919	1,125	1,055	914	926	996	935	1,033
1913	1,178	986	1,110	1,087	950	1,165	1,051	865	900	972	934	1,023
1914	1,206	994	1,068	1,130	987	1,179	1,105	904	922	1,012	959	1,073
1915	1,323	1,147	1,087	1,274	1,104	1,295	1,277	1,111	1,110	1,182	1,157	1,249
1916	1,394	1,208	1,282	1,350	1,178	1,370	1,309	1,126	1,118	1,233	1,185	1,279
1917	1,407	1,222	1,315	1,338	1,193	1,383	1,294	1,083	1,093	1,221	1,168	1,262
1918	1,427	1,269	1,321	1,362	1,210	1,406	1,349	1,107	1,139	1,233	1,203	1,311
1912 1st Qtr.	1,060	901	1,022	989	857	1,040	987	865	853	937	890	968
2nd "	1,123	923	1,049	1,011	893	1,099	1,041	901	922	981	929	1,020
3rd "	1,209	997	1,103	1,045	939	1,181	1,105	930	962	1,031	959	1,083
4th "	1,194	1,000	1,140	1,123	965	1,171	1,086	952	968	1,030	963	1,065
1913 1st Qtr.	1,171	980	1,063	1,086	935	1,148	1,040	878	923	992	940	1,025
2nd "	1,192	1,001	1,130	1,120	950	1,170	1,059	878	920	984	947	1,033
3rd "	1,176	988	1,105	1,074	964	1,153	1,053	857	886	962	930	1,023
4th "	1,174	977	1,111	1,069	956	1,151	1,043	846	867	947	920	1,012
1914 1st Qtr.	1,201	976	1,109	1,102	979	1,174	1,066	870	891	952	940	1,034
2nd "	1,214	1,001	1,158	1,142	1,008	1,190	1,138	907	936	1,040	965	1,095
3rd "	1,208	998	1,125	1,129	988	1,183	1,120	920	932	1,020	964	1,068
4th "	1,203	1,001	1,146	1,146	975	1,169	1,106	920	930	1,035	969	1,077
1915 1st Qtr.	1,229	1,060	968	1,169	1,013	1,201	1,147	970	976	1,055	1,008	1,118
2nd "	1,259	1,095	1,066	1,217	1,056	1,234	1,261	1,094	1,088	1,155	1,135	1,232
3rd "	1,406	1,213	1,134	1,346	1,173	1,375	1,377	1,210	1,230	1,278	1,271	1,351
4th "	1,400	1,219	1,181	1,364	1,172	1,372	1,322	1,162	1,147	1,237	1,214	1,295
1916 1st Qtr.	1,419	1,233	1,212	1,336	1,172	1,389	1,337	1,148	1,151	1,254	1,208	1,306
2nd "	1,368	1,202	1,263	1,362	1,185	1,368	1,319	1,146	1,136	1,258	1,190	1,291
3rd "	1,388	1,312	1,325	1,361	1,180	1,368	1,300	1,116	1,095	1,224	1,189	1,260
4th "	1,374	1,197	1,327	1,341	1,175	1,354	1,280	1,092	1,092	1,195	1,153	1,249
1917 1st Qtr.	1,381	1,211	1,322	1,352	1,178	1,361	1,280	1,083	1,077	1,213	1,159	1,249
2nd "	1,366	1,217	1,331	1,334	1,188	1,366	1,288	1,084	1,100	1,232	1,171	1,256
3rd "	1,434	1,229	1,298	1,322	1,197	1,406	1,300	1,078	1,096	1,221	1,172	1,266
4th "	1,425	1,233	1,308	1,344	1,208	1,400	1,308	1,087	1,098	1,219	1,169	1,273
1918 1st Qtr.	1,424	1,239	1,328	1,335	1,206	1,400	1,326	1,102	1,126	1,237	1,175	1,292
2nd "	1,428	1,258	1,361	1,361	1,217	1,407	1,346	1,112	1,161	1,250	1,208	1,312
3rd "	1,406	1,261	1,298	1,351	1,198	1,366	1,339	1,096	1,134	1,222	1,209	1,302
4th "	1,440	1,317	1,294	1,399	1,219	1,428	1,383	1,118	1,135	1,225	1,221	1,340

* See remarks re House Rent on page 15

40 RETAIL PRICES, HOUSE RENT, AND PURCHASING-POWER OF MONEY.

Purchasing-Power of Money. (Food, Groceries and House Rent Combined)
 Index-Numbers for each of Thirty Towns, with Weighted Average for Six Capital
 Towns in 1911 as Base (= 1000).—cont.

	QUEENSLAND—INDEX-NUMBERS.										SOUTH AUSTRALIA—INDEX-NUMBERS.									
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba.	Rock- hampton.	Charters Towers.	Warwick.	Weighted Average, Queensland.	Adelaide.	Kadina, Moonta and Wallaroo.	Port Pirie.*	Mt. Gambier.	Petersburg.	Weighted Average, S.A.								
1912	979	977	962	1,009	1,004	991	1,157	917	1,004	874	1,014	1,126								
1913	969	989	940	985	992	988	1,171	913	1,000	880	1,028	1,096								
1914	907	960	988	988	972	988	1,183	960	1,025	823	1,126	1,112								
1915	1,189	1,133	1,154	1,155	1,047	1,152	1,282	1,210	1,162	1,209	1,234	1,283								
1916	1,188	1,133	1,216	1,182	1,092	1,152	1,285	1,204	1,261	1,169	1,276	1,276								
1917	1,181	1,116	1,163	1,187	1,124	1,152	1,285	1,208	1,260	1,176	1,228	1,289								
1918	1,352	1,208	1,284	1,277	1,240	1,247	1,368	1,281	1,289	1,176	1,268	1,382								
1912 1st Qtr.	975	998	970	1,014	995	980	1,127	905	992	874	993	1,096								
2nd "	976	989	960*	1,009	995	979	1,157	918	1,006	882	1,000	1,104								
3rd "	984	954	965	1,001	1,058	981	1,183	935	1,019	886	1,032	1,118								
4th "	984	966	967	1,010	968	982	1,164	943	1,017	904	1,080	1,165								
1913 1st Qtr.	956	920	934	966	949	951	1,133	907	992	874	1,000	1,104								
2nd "	978	930	945	949	966	969	1,146	927	1,015	885	1,028	1,118								
3rd "	976	933	932	947	917	955	1,116	912	1,014	896	1,043	1,092								
4th "	976	932	948	945	879	962	1,092	904	1,005	898	1,025	1,099								
1914 1st Qtr.	977	939	965	959	908	969	1,118	913	1,022	896	1,072	1,084								
2nd "	977	928	973	983	898	973	1,176	969	1,086	892	1,147	1,084								
3rd "	1,005	943	999	973	912	993	1,166	981	1,103	932	1,164	1,187								
4th "	1,018	992	1,014	1,029	989	1,018	1,182	957	1,009	940	1,159	1,192								
1915 1st Qtr.	1,058	1,026	1,058	1,079	977	1,051	1,192	1,024	1,075	993	1,162	1,145								
2nd "	1,132	1,111	1,116	1,155	1,060	1,158	1,267	1,186	1,184	1,117	1,248	1,280								
3rd "	1,208	1,183	1,173	1,153	1,096	1,194	1,326	1,220	1,235	1,177	1,304	1,310								
4th "	1,255	1,212	1,269	1,219	1,133	1,245	1,382	1,174	1,212	1,148	1,284	1,288								
1916 1st Qtr.	1,259	1,216	1,289	1,227	1,156	1,252	1,295	1,205	1,075	1,171	1,258	1,283								
2nd "	1,205	1,144	1,247	1,209	1,107	1,201	1,308	1,220	1,283	1,192	1,272	1,299								
3rd "	1,147	1,090	1,169	1,142	1,066	1,141	1,276	1,202	1,256	1,162	1,245	1,269								
4th "	1,140	1,083	1,160	1,147	1,077	1,185	1,257	1,188	1,251	1,134	1,281	1,249								
1917 1st Qtr.	1,146	1,065	1,188*	1,163	1,068	1,137	1,261	1,200	1,269	1,128	1,231	1,253								
2nd "	1,168	1,095	1,153	1,181	1,096	1,154	1,257	1,216	1,285	1,144	1,246	1,282								
3rd "	1,159	1,126	1,171	1,189	1,142	1,180	1,251	1,171	1,254	1,122	1,208	1,246								
4th "	1,225	1,179	1,190	1,215	1,101	1,215	1,242	1,183	1,267	1,134	1,219	1,266								
1918 1st Qtr.	1,216	1,183	1,197	1,244	1,188	1,208	1,295	1,231	1,302	1,160	1,252	1,287								
2nd "	1,237	1,198	1,214	1,256	1,220	1,220	1,364	1,259	1,315	1,191	1,250	1,348								
3rd "	1,254	1,214	1,215	1,286	1,257	1,251	1,382	1,282	1,303	1,177	1,270	1,378								
4th "	1,301	1,297	1,270	1,321	1,294	1,299	1,349	1,282	1,359	1,176	1,265	1,386								

* See remarks re House Rent, on page 45.

Purchasing-Power of Money. (Food, Groceries and House Rent Combined.)
Index-Numbers for each of Thirty Towns, with Weighted Average for Six Capital
Towns in 1911 as Base (=1000)—cont.

	WESTERN AUSTRALIA—INDEX-NUMBERS.						TASMANIA—INDEX-NUMBERS.					Weighted Average 6 Capital Towns.	Weighted Average 30 Towns, Cwealth.	
	Perth.	Kalgoorlie.	Midland junction and Gulford.	Bunbury.	Geraldton.	Weighted Average W.A.	Hobart.	Launceston.	Zeehan.	Beaconsfield.	Queenstown.			Weighted Average Tasmania.
1912	1,154	1,334	1,123	1,104	1,255	1,191	1,042	999	952	827	988	1,012	1,101	1,080
1913	1,128	1,270	1,101	1,082	1,259	1,158	1,053	971	928	804	969	1,007	1,104	1,080
1914	1,143	1,291	1,104	1,111	1,315	1,175	1,090	1,014	898	813	1,021	1,041	1,140	1,113
1915	1,122	1,308	1,204	1,194	1,368	1,261	1,233	1,190	1,048	991	1,208	1,199	1,278	1,255
1916	1,206	1,418	1,228	1,214	1,372	1,297	1,278	1,253	1,095	1,034	1,260	1,251	1,324	1,301
1917	1,246	1,398	1,186	1,193	1,340	1,275	1,301	1,258	1,083	1,034	1,228	1,261	1,318	1,294
1918	1,239	1,393	1,161	1,144	1,323	1,267	1,366	1,310	1,145	1,040	1,272	1,313	1,362	1,336
1912 1st Qtr.	1,116	1,333	1,068	1,082	1,203	1,160	978	939	907	761	933	951	1,086	1,023
2nd "	1,184	1,373	1,146	1,126	1,266	1,222	1,010	991	937	806	980	991	1,087	1,068
3rd "	1,176	1,326	1,150	1,120	1,291	1,210	1,073	1,023	963	846	1,017	1,040	1,146	1,120
4th "	1,143	1,306	1,130	1,087	1,265	1,177	1,107	1,039	997	894	1,022	1,066	1,130	1,116
1913 1st Qtr.	1,126	1,284	1,098	1,075	1,252	1,159	1,053	964	931	805	933	1,005	1,101	1,078
2nd "	1,145	1,272	1,121	1,091	1,273	1,172	1,064	981	947	819	1,012	1,019	1,117	1,093
3rd "	1,118	1,274	1,100	1,087	1,261	1,152	1,053	979	935	812	986	1,010	1,102	1,078
4th "	1,123	1,249	1,085	1,076	1,251	1,149	1,041	959	899	782	975	994	1,096	1,071
1914 1st Qtr.	1,112	1,245	1,069	1,076	1,283	1,141	1,056	976	887	785	987	1,008	1,117	1,090
2nd "	1,143	1,260	1,101	1,106	1,314	1,170	1,099	1,014	897	804	1,029	1,046	1,154	1,127
3rd "	1,164	1,314	1,125	1,131	1,357	1,197	1,091	1,025	891	823	1,034	1,046	1,150	1,124
4th "	1,152	1,334	1,121	1,131	1,301	1,191	1,112	1,041	916	834	1,034	1,064	1,140	1,113
1915 1st Qtr.	1,193	1,361	1,178	1,158	1,359	1,231	1,141	1,073	934	867	1,088	1,095	1,174	1,151
2nd "	1,235	1,394	1,211	1,211	1,402	1,270	1,214	1,159	1,012	938	1,179	1,174	1,247	1,226
3rd "	1,256	1,439	1,237	1,238	1,413	1,296	1,290	1,265	1,132	1,071	1,271	1,264	1,358	1,333
4th "	1,206	1,399	1,188	1,170	1,370	1,248	1,286	1,262	1,114	1,083	1,293	1,262	1,333	1,310
1916 1st Qtr.	1,243	1,418	1,206	1,189	1,390	1,280	1,317	1,276	1,116	1,045	1,276	1,281	1,350	1,325
2nd "	1,278	1,419	1,219	1,208	1,396	1,305	1,296	1,274	1,115	1,059	1,284	1,270	1,333	1,310
3rd "	1,287	1,435	1,258	1,257	1,375	1,318	1,250	1,236	1,087	1,032	1,256	1,234	1,316	1,294
4th "	1,252	1,402	1,219	1,206	1,336	1,282	1,242	1,224	1,062	1,005	1,234	1,217	1,300	1,276
1917 1st Qtr.	1,242	1,377	1,191	1,194	1,342	1,269	1,268	1,245	1,066	1,004	1,198	1,236	1,302	1,279
2nd "	1,274	1,393	1,217	1,239	1,351	1,297	1,263	1,243	1,068	1,021	1,213	1,235	1,309	1,287
3rd "	1,234	1,399	1,171	1,204	1,345	1,267	1,295	1,253	1,076	1,041	1,236	1,257	1,328	1,301
4th "	1,232	1,424	1,166	1,196	1,359	1,269	1,377	1,289	1,122	1,068	1,264	1,317	1,334	1,310
1918 1st Qtr.	1,235	1,415	1,164	1,129	1,341	1,268	1,364	1,304	1,125	1,061	1,264	1,315	1,345	1,320
2nd "	1,268	1,398	1,188	1,179	1,344	1,290	1,356	1,310	1,150	1,045	1,266	1,313	1,365	1,339
3rd "	1,230	1,373	1,152	1,145	1,307	1,256	1,337	1,302	1,147	1,014	1,270	1,300	1,349	1,325
4th "	1,223	1,366	1,140	1,123	1,302	1,252	1,366	1,324	1,156	1,041	1,289	1,325	1,367	1,359

* See remarks re House Rent on page 45.

(i.) *Food and Groceries (46 commodities).*—Information as to variations in prices of Group I. (Groceries), Group II. (Dairy Produce), and Group III. (Meat) are collected monthly, and in the tables on pp. 33 to 35 the index-numbers for the combined expenditure on the three groups are given at yearly, quarterly, and monthly intervals.

(ii.) *House Rent.*—Information as to variations in housing accommodation is collected quarterly, and index-numbers at yearly and quarterly periods are given in the tables on pp. 36 to 38.

(iii.) *Food, Groceries, and House Rent combined.*—The tables on pp. 39 to 41 furnish comparisons in the form of index-numbers of the variations in the combined expenditure on the 46 items of food and groceries and housing accommodation at yearly and quarterly periods for 1912 to 1918 inclusive. It should be observed that the index-numbers in these tables are comparable in every respect in so far as they relate to the capital towns with those given on page 28 for the respective groups, and where they relate to the same period are of course identical in both tables. Thus for the years 1912 to 1918 inclusive, the index-numbers for the six capital towns are (as they should be) the same in both sets of tables.

The last columns in each of the above tables refer to the weighted average for the thirty towns. The method of computing these weighted average index-numbers is explained in Report No. 1, page 35. The population weights used in the computations are as follows —

Population Weights used in Computation of Index-Numbers in different towns in order to arrive at the Weighted Average for each State and for the Commonwealth, with Weighted Average for all Towns as Base.

Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.
Sydney	433	Melbourne	500	Brisbane	140	Adelaide	190	Perth, etc.	105	Hobart	42
Newcastle	62	Ballarat	53	T'woomba	20	Kadina, etc.	12	Kalg'lie, etc.	31	Lanncaston	25
Br'kon Hill	31	Bendigo	44	R'k'h'mton	21	Pt. Pirie	11	Mld. Jn., etc.	7	Q'ns'town	5
Goulburn	13	Geelong	34	Ch'trs Twrs	17	Mt. Gamb'r	7	Bunbury	4	Zeoban	4
Bathurst	9	W'nambo'l	9	Warwick	6	Petersburg	3	Geraldton	4	Beac'nsfield	3

(iv.) *Care to Avoid Erroneous Comparisons.*—It is, of course, obvious that the index-numbers given in the separate parts of the table cannot be directly compared with each other, in order to shew the relative cost of (say) house rent and groceries and food, since the weighted average cost in 1911 is in each case made equal to 1000, although the cost is, of course, not the same.

7. Relative Cost of Food and Groceries and Housing Accommodation in Different Towns, 1918.—The figures given in the following table shew the relative index-numbers for 1918 in the thirty towns for which particulars are regularly collected. The index-numbers are comparable in all respects, and further, it will be observed that the index-numbers in the last column of the table are identical for each town with

those given in the table on pages 39 to 41 for the year 1918. The first column gives the relative expenditure on groceries and food. The second, third, fourth, and fifth columns give comparative information with regard to expenditure on house rent for houses of four, five, and six rooms, and for all houses respectively, while the remaining columns give similar information for food and groceries, combined with house rent of each class of house indicated.

1918.—Index-Numbers, shewing Relative Cost in each of Thirty Towns, of Food and Groceries and House Rent (including 4, 5, and 6-roomed Houses, and all Houses), compared with Weighted Average Expenditure on Groceries, Food and Rent (all Houses) in the Six Capital Towns in 1911 as Base (= 1000)..

TOWN.	Groceries and Food.	HOUSE RENT:				GROCERIES, FOOD AND RENT, INCLUDING HOUSES HAVING—			
		Four-roomed Houses only.	Five-roomed Houses only.	Six-roomed Houses only.	All Houses Weighted Average.	Four Rooms.	Five Rooms.	Six Rooms.	All Houses Weighted Average.
NEW SOUTH WALES—									
Sydney	912	403	487	572	515	1,315	1,390	1,484	1,427
Newcastle	922	271	357	438	347	1,103	1,279	1,360	1,369
Broken Hill*	1,032	265	345	413	289	1,297	1,377	1,445	1,331
Goulburn	899	307	405	548	463	1,206	1,304	1,447	1,362
Bathurst	886	217	201	350	324	1,103	1,177	1,266	1,210
Weighted Average ..	918	382	467	552	488	1,300	1,385	1,470	1,406
VICTORIA—									
Melbourne	864	348	442	537	485	1,212	1,308	1,401	1,340
Ballarat	849	143	216	290	253	992	1,065	1,139	1,107
Bendigo	850	189	267	350	289	1,039	1,117	1,200	1,139
Geelong	851	238	332	423	382	1,084	1,183	1,279	1,233
Warrnambool	879	239	310	369	324	1,118	1,189	1,248	1,203
Weighted Average ..	862	317	408	501	449	1,179	1,270	1,363	1,311
QUEENSLAND—									
Brisbane	881	236	306	410	371	1,117	1,187	1,291	1,232
Toowoomba	881	192	259	313	327	1,073	1,140	1,194	1,208
Rockhampton	897	208	282	348	327	1,105	1,159	1,245	1,224
Charters Towers	1,002	217	290	338	275	1,249	1,292	1,340	1,277
Warrick	921	152	245	376	319	1,073	1,166	1,207	1,240
Weighted Average ..	894	225	294	387	353	1,119	1,183	1,281	1,247
SOUTH AUSTRALIA—									
Adelaide	915	313	411	526	420	1,228	1,326	1,441	1,335
Moonta, etc.	924	259	365	388	307	1,153	1,219	1,312	1,231
Port Pirie*	959	325	384	415	361	1,284	1,343	1,374	1,320
Mt. Gambier	876	218	272	305	300	1,094	1,148	1,241	1,176
Petersburg	937	240	323	373	316	1,177	1,260	1,312	1,253
Weighted Average ..	917	305	398	506	406	1,222	1,315	1,423	1,323
WESTERN AUSTRALIA—									
Perth, etc.	876	306	381	468	363	1,132	1,257	1,344	1,239
Kalgoorlie, etc.	1,051	357	434	520	342	1,408	1,485	1,571	1,398
Mt. Junction, etc.	871	230	307	365	290	1,101	1,178	1,236	1,161
Bunbury	988	211	269	299	206	1,140	1,200	1,237	1,144
Geraldton	942	358	451	537	381	1,300	1,393	1,479	1,323
Weighted Average ..	915	312	387	471	352	1,227	1,302	1,386	1,267
TASMANIA—									
Hobart	963	308	377	437	393	1,271	1,340	1,400	1,356
Launceston	928	379	344	430	382	1,109	1,292	1,367	1,310
Zeehan	1,020	134	170	207	125	1,154	1,190	1,227	1,145
Benoisfield	958	62	90	109	82	1,020	1,048	1,066	1,040
Queenstown	1,019	373	327	375	253	1,202	1,346	1,394	1,373
Weighted Average ..	958	276	348	410	355	1,234	1,306	1,368	1,313
Commonwealth Weighted Average ..	897	328	413	503	439	1,225	1,310	1,400	1,336

* See Remarks on page 45 with reference to house rents.

The weighted average for all houses is obtained separately for each of the thirty towns by "weighting" the rent paid for each class of house by the number of houses in each respective class in each town. If houses of only one particular size are included, different results may be obtained. This is evident when it is remembered that the distribution of houses according to number of rooms is substantially different in some of the towns; that is to say, there are a greater number of large, and therefore of relatively more expensive, houses in some towns than in others, and *vice versa*, and consequently the weighted average rents in the former class of town refer to a larger size of house than in the latter class. Separate results are accordingly given for the several classes of houses specified in the table.

The figures in the last four columns furnish results for expenditure on groceries and food, combined with expenditure on rent, for each of the three classes of houses indicated, and also for the weighted average for all houses.

Some few words as to the proper interpretation of the preceding table may not be out of place. The total expenditure in each town for food and groceries, as well as the average rental paid, is multiplied by a number representing the population of the town, and a weighted average expenditure for all towns is thus computed. The weights used are given on page 42. The relative expenditure in each town for (a) food and groceries, (b) house rents, and (c) food, groceries, and house rent combined, is shewn, the base of the table being the weighted average expenditure in the six capital towns for 1911 = 1000. Thus in each horizontal line the sum of the index-number for food and groceries and that for rent of houses of each specified size is equal to the index-number for food, groceries, and house rent combined, taking the corresponding house-rent group. The table is comparable in all respects, and in addition shews the proportionate cost of food and groceries and of rent. For example, taking the last line in the table on the preceding page, it may be seen that taking the weighted average expenditure for all the towns on food, groceries, and average rents to be £1336, the expenditure on food and groceries alone is £897 (1st column), and the average rental £439 (5th column), the sum of the two latter amounts being £1336. Again, if it be desired to ascertain the relative expenditure for food and groceries and rent of four-roomed houses, it will be found the figures are £897 and £328, which, together amount to £1225 (6th column). In addition to shewing the relative cost of food and groceries and house rent (for different classes of houses) in each town individually, the table also furnishes comparisons as to the relative cost of these items as between the several towns. Thus taking food and groceries only (1st column), it may be seen that commodities which would cost £912 in Sydney can be purchased for £864 in Melbourne, or £915 in Adelaide. Again, taking the combined expenditure on food, groceries, and house rent for houses of five rooms (7th column), it will be seen that an expenditure of £1306 in Melbourne is equivalent to an expenditure of £1399 in Sydney, £1326 in Adelaide, £1485 in Kalgoorlie, or £1393 in Geraldton.

The index-numbers are reversible, and may be used for comparisons as to purchasing-power of money as between any of the towns included. Thus if it be ascertained that the average rental of five-roomed houses in Melbourne is, say, 16s. 10d. weekly, and the average rental of the same class of house in Sydney is required, all that is necessary is to multiply the rental in Melbourne by the index-number for five-roomed houses in Sydney and divide by the index-number for Melbourne (3rd column), 16s. 10d. $\times \frac{487}{447} = 18s. 6d.$, which will be found to be the average rental of five-roomed houses in Sydney (see Appendix V.).

(i.) *Food and Groceries.*—As regards food and groceries it may be seen that the weighted average of the five towns was above the weighted average for all towns for 1918 in New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania, and lower in the remaining States. The most expensive towns are Kalgoorlie in Western Australia, and Broken Hill in New South Wales, Kalgoorlie being 17.2 per cent., and Broken Hill 15.1 per cent. above the weighted average for all towns.

(ii.) *House Rent.*—It will be seen that taking house-rents of any size of house given, or of the weighted average of all houses, Sydney, Melbourne, Goulburn and Adelaide are the most expensive towns, while Beaconsfield and Zeehan, in Tasmania, are the cheapest.

With reference to house-rents in Broken Hill and Port Pirie, it is necessary to observe that for some time after the outbreak of war a number of houses were occupied at purely nominal or reduced rentals by families of which the wage-earner was out of employment. It was not until the latter half of 1916 that enquiries elicited the fact that normal conditions again obtained. It must be borne in mind, therefore, that for the years 1914, 1915 and 1916 the average rents in these towns have been computed in accordance with special investigations which have been made each quarter.

(iii.) *Food and Groceries and House Rent combined.*—The last column in the foregoing table shews the relative cost according to average prices of the commodities and housing accommodation in each town during 1918. It may be seen that the average cost was greatest in Sydney, followed by Kalgoorlie, Goulburn and Hobart. The index-number for Sydney was 6.8 per cent., Kalgoorlie 4.3 per cent., Goulburn, 1.9 per cent., and Hobart, 1.5 per cent. above the weighted average cost for all towns. The cost was least in Zeehan and Beaconsfield, 22.2 and 17.1 per cent. respectively below the weighted average cost for all towns.

8. *Purchasing-Power of Money.*—In the following table the average cost for the six capital towns in the year 1911 has again been taken as base. This base has been taken as equal to 20s. instead of 1000 as in the former tables. The figures shew the variations in purchasing-power of money from year to year in each town separately (in the vertical lines), and the relative cost in the several towns in each year (in the horizontal lines). It may be seen, for instance, that 20s. 7d. in Sydney in 1911 was equivalent to 18s. 4d. in Brisbane, or 19s. 1d. in Hobart; or that 25s. 9d. in Melbourne for the second quarter of 1917 was equivalent to 15s. 5d. in Brisbane in 1901, or 22s. 6d. in Perth in 1913.

Purchasing-Power of Money.—Amounts necessary on the Average in each Year from 1901 to 1919 (1st Quarter) to purchase in each Capital Town what would have cost on the Average £1 in 1911 in the Australian Capitals regarded as a whole.*

Year.	Sydney.		Melb'rne		Brisbane		Adelaide		Perth.		Hobart		Weighted Average of 6 Capital Towns	
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.		
1901	17	10	17	5	15	5	17	3	20	6	17	5	17	7
1902	19	7	18	1	16	0	17	3	21	7	17	10	18	7
1903	19	2	17	7	15	9	16	9	21	8	17	11	18	2
1904	17	5	17	1	14	8	16	3	20	10	17	1	17	2
1905	18	9	17	7	15	5	17	6	20	11	17	9	18	0
1906	18	8	17	7	15	7	17	10	20	5	18	0	18	0
1907	18	6	17	6	15	11	17	11	19	9	17	9	17	11
1908	19	9	18	6	17	1	19	1	20	0	18	5	19	0
1909	19	9	18	1	17	0	19	10	19	9	19	0	19	0
1910	19	11	18	10	17	6	20	2	20	6	19	0	19	5
1911	20	7	19	0	18	4	21	2	22	6	19	1	20	0†
1912	22	11	21	1	19	7	23	2	23	1	20	10	22	0
1913	23	7	21	0	19	5	22	5	22	6	21	1	22	1
1914	24	1	22	1	19	11	22	10	22	10	21	10	22	10
1915	26	6	25	6	23	3	25	2	24	5	24	8	25	7
1916	27	10	26	2	23	9	25	8	25	4	25	7	26	6
1917	28	1	25	11	23	7	24	11	24	11	26	0	26	4
1918	28	6	27	0	25	1	26	8	24	9	27	1	27	3
1919	21	4	19	9	19	6	22	6	22	4	19	7	20	9
1912 { 1st Quarter	22	5	20	10	19	6	23	2	23	8	20	2	21	9
1912 { 2nd " "	24	1	22	1	19	8	23	8	23	6	21	5	22	11
1912 { 3rd " "	23	10	21	8	19	8	23	3	22	10	22	2	22	7
1912 { 4th " "	23	5	21	0	19	1	22	8	22	6	21	1	22	0
1913 { 1st " "	23	10	21	2	19	7	22	11	22	11	21	3	22	4
1913 { 2nd " "	23	6	21	1	19	4	22	4	22	4	21	1	22	1
1913 { 3rd " "	23	6	20	10	19	6	21	10	22	5	20	10	21	11
1913 { 4th " "	24	0	21	4	19	7	22	4	22	3	21	1	22	4
1914 { 1st " "	24	3	22	7	19	9	23	6	22	10	22	0	23	1
1914 { 2nd " "	24	2	22	5	20	1	23	2	23	3	21	10	23	0
1914 { 3rd " "	24	1	22	1	20	4	22	5	23	0	22	3	22	10
1914 { 4th " "	24	7	22	11	21	1	23	3	23	10	22	10	23	6
1915 { 1st " "	25	2	25	3	22	8	25	4	24	8	24	3	24	11
1915 { 2nd " "	28	1	27	6	24	2	26	6	25	1	25	10	27	2
1915 { 3rd " "	28	0	26	5	25	1	25	8	24	1	25	9	26	8
1915 { 4th " "	28	4	26	9	25	2	25	11	24	10	26	4	27	0
1916 { 1st " "	27	10	26	5	24	1	26	2	25	7	25	11	26	8
1916 { 2nd " "	27	9	26	0	22	11	25	7	25	9	25	2	26	4
1916 { 3rd " "	27	6	25	7	22	10	25	2	25	1	24	10	26	0
1916 { 4th " "	27	7	25	7	22	11	25	3	24	10	25	4	26	0
1917 { 1st " "	27	9	25	9	23	3	25	2	25	6	25	3	26	2
1917 { 2nd " "	28	8	26	0	23	9	24	5	24	8	25	11	26	7
1917 { 3rd " "	28	6	26	2	24	6	24	10	24	8	27	6	26	8
1917 { 4th " "	28	6	26	6	24	4	25	1†	24	8	27	3	26	11
1918 { 1st " "	28	7	26	11	24	9	27	3	25	4	27	1	27	4
1918 { 2nd " "	28	1	26	9	25	1	26	8	24	7	26	9	27	0
1918 { 3rd " "	29	0	27	8	26	0	27	0	24	6	27	4	27	9
1918 { 4th " "	30	6	28	9	27	11	28	4	25	8	28	8	29	1

* These results are based upon the regimen referred to on pp. 20-2 Labour Report No. 6, which includes food, groceries, and housing accommodation.

† Basis of Table

(i.) *Groceries and Food only.*—The following table has been computed in the same manner as that indicated above, but relates to *groceries and food* (46 items) only. The average expenditure for the six capital towns in 1911 has again been taken as the basis of the table (=20s.), and the figures are, of course, comparable throughout.

Purchasing-Power of Money.—Groceries and Food only.—Amount necessary on the Average in each Year from 1901 to 1919 (1st Quarter) to purchase in each Capital Town what would have cost on the Average £1 in 1911 in the Australian Capitals regarded as a whole.*

Year	Sydney.	Melb'ne.	Brisbane.	Adelaide.	Perth.	Hobart.	Weighted Average of 6 Capital Towns
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
1901	18 4	19 4	19 4	20 7	23 8	20 3	19 4
1902	21 4	20 4	26 4	20 6	25 6	21 0	21 1
1903	20 7	19 6	19 9	19 8	25 8	21 1	20 4
1904	17 6	18 4	17 10	18 10	24 3	19 8	18 5
1905	19 5	19 1	18 11	19 10	25 2	20 7	19 8
1906	19 3	18 11	19 2	19 3	24 9	20 11	19 7
1907	18 9	18 6	18 11	19 0	23 11	20 2	19 1
1908	20 7	19 11	20 6	20 2	24 6	21 1	20 7
1909	20 3	19 0	19 8	20 6	24 3	21 10	20 1
1910	20 0	19 2	20 0	20 0	25 0	21 6	20 1
1911	19 9	18 8	20 4	20 5	26 11	21 2	20 0†
1912	22 6	21 8	22 0	23 1	26 11	23 10	22 6
1913	22 8	20 6	20 10	22 5	25 4	23 3	21 11
1914	23 1	21 10	21 7	24 4	26 0	24 3	22 11
1915	27 11	28 3	27 6	29 9	29 8	28 11	28 4
1916	30 5	29 3	28 6	30 8	30 10	30 5	29 11
1917	30 10	28 3	28 2	28 11	30 1	30 11	29 5
1918	31 0	29 4	29 11	31 1	29 9	32 8	30 3
1912 { 1st Qtr ..	20 9	19 9	21 11	22 0	26 0	21 10	21 0
1912 { 2nd	21 10	21 5	21 11	22 11	28 2	22 11	22 3
1912 { 3rd	23 11	23 2	22 1	23 10	27 4	24 8	23 9
1912 { 4th	23 6	22 3	22 3	23 6	26 1	25 9	23 2
1913 { 1st	22 9	20 9	20 9	22 5	25 6	23 2	22 0
1913 { 2nd	23 2	20 10	21 2	22 11	26 0	23 9	22 4
1913 { 3rd	22 7	20 5	20 10	22 4	25 0	23 5	21 10
1913 { 4th	22 1	20 0	20 8	21 10	24 11	22 9	21 5
1914 { 1st	23 0	20 7	20 11	22 11	24 11	23 3	22 1
1914 { 2nd	23 3	22 4	21 2	25 0	25 11	24 7	23 2
1914 { 3rd	23 1	22 0	21 8	24 7	26 9	24 3	23 0
1914 { 4th	23 1	22 4	22 6	24 8	26 7	24 10	23 3
1915 { 1st	24 7	23 9	23 11	26 4	28 5	25 10	24 8
1915 { 2nd	25 9	27 8	26 4	30 2	30 2	28 3	27 3
1915 { 3rd	30 9	31 8	29 0	32 0	30 11	30 10	31 1
1915 { 4th	30 7	29 10	30 8	30 6	29 2	30 8	30 3
1916 { 1st	31 4	30 2	31 0	31 0	30 1	31 10	30 10
1916 { 2nd	30 4	29 8	29 1	31 6	31 3	31 1	30 2
1916 { 3rd	30 2	29 0	27 1	30 5	31 7	29 9	29 7
1916 { 4th	29 8	28 2	26 10	29 8	30 5	29 1	28 11
1917 { 1st	30 0	27 11	27 0	29 6	30 0	29 10	28 11
1917 { 2nd	30 1	28 3	27 6	29 4	31 1	29 8	29 3
1917 { 3rd	31 9	28 5	28 5	28 1	29 8	30 8	29 9
1917 { 4th	31 4	28 5	29 7	28 8	29 7	33 5	29 10
1918 { 1st	31 1	28 11	28 11	30 3	29 7	33 2	30 0
1918 { 2nd	31 0	29 7	29 8	32 2	30 8	32 11	30 6
1918 { 3rd	30 3	29 0	29 9	30 9	29 5	31 11	29 10
1918 { 4th	31 7	29 10	31 3	31 1	29 2	32 10	30 9
1919—1st	34 0	31 3	34 2	33 0	30 10	33 10	32 9

* These results are based upon the regimen referred to on pp. 20-2 Labour Report No. 6

† Basis of Table.

(ii.) *House Rent Only.*—The following table gives similar particulars for *house rent only*, the average for the six towns in 1911 being again taken as the basis of the table (= 20s.):—

Purchasing-Power of Money.—House Rent.—Amount payable on the Average in each Year from 1901 to 1919 (1st Quarter) for House Rent in each Capital Town, compared with a Rent of £1 in 1911 in the Australian Capitals regarded as a whole.

Year.	Sydney.		Melb'ne.		B. sbane.		Adelaide.		Perth.		Hobart.		Weighted Average of 6 Capital Towns	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
1901	17	3	14	8	9	9	12	7	16	0	13	4	15	1
1902	17	3	14	11	9	10	12	7	15	11	13	5	15	2
1903	17	4	14	11	10	1	12	7	16	0	13	6	15	3
1904	17	5	15	3	10	2	12	7	16	0	13	6	15	4
1905	17	10	15	5	10	5	14	0	14	9	13	7	15	8
1906	17	11	15	8	10	6	15	3	14	4	13	9	15	11
1907	18	4	16	1	11	6	16	3	13	8	14	2	16	4
1908	18	7	16	7	12	4	17	5	13	7	14	7	16	10
1909	19	2	16	10	13	3	18	10	13	4	15	0	17	5
1910	19	10	18	4	14	0	20	4	13	11	15	6	18	5
1911	21	10	19	5	15	4	22	3	16	3	16	1	20	0
1912	23	8	20	4	16	1	23	2	17	7	16	7	21	3
1913	24	11	21	10	17	3	22	6	18	7	17	10	22	4
1914	25	7	22	6	17	8	20	10	18	3	18	3	22	8
1915	24	5	21	8	17	2	18	8	17	0	18	7	21	7
1916	24	3	21	9	17	0	18	7	17	4	18	7	21	7
1917	24	3	22	6	17	5	19	2	17	5	19	0	22	0
1918	25	0	23	7	18	1	20	5	17	8	19	1	22	10
1918 { 1st Qtr	22	4	19	8	16	0	23	3	17	0	16	3	20	6
1918 { 2nd "	23	4	20	0	16	1	23	5	17	2	16	4	21	1
1918 { 3rd "	24	7	20	7	16	2	23	5	18	0	16	10	21	10
1918 { 4th "	24	4	20	11	16	0	22	11	18	3	16	11	21	7
1913 { 1st "	24	5	21	4	16	10	22	11	18	3	18	0	22	0
1913 { 2nd "	24	10	21	9	17	2	22	11	18	6	17	9	22	4
1913 { 3rd "	24	11	22	0	17	3	22	3	18	7	17	8	22	5
1913 { 4th "	25	6	22	1	17	10	21	10	18	11	18	0	22	8
1914 { 1st "	25	6	22	5	17	8	21	6	18	5	18	1	22	8
1914 { 2nd "	25	9	22	10	17	10	21	5	18	5	18	3	23	0
1914 { 3rd "	25	8	22	11	17	10	21	1	18	4	18	5	22	11
1914 { 4th "	25	5	21	10	17	4	19	3	17	11	18	6	22	2
1915 { 1st "	24	7	21	10	17	1	18	10	17	5	18	6	21	9
1915 { 2nd "	24	5	21	9	17	4	18	6	16	11	18	7	21	7
1915 { 3rd "	24	5	21	7	17	2	18	7	16	10	18	7	21	7
1915 { 4th "	24	3	21	7	17	2	18	7	16	10	18	7	21	6
1916 { 1st "	24	2	21	9	16	10	18	7	17	5	18	5	21	6
1916 { 2nd "	24	3	21	8	16	11	18	7	17	5	18	6	21	7
1916 { 3rd "	24	3	21	9	17	0	18	7	17	4	18	7	21	7
1916 { 4th "	24	3	21	11	17	2	18	8	17	4	18	10	21	8
1917 { 1st "	24	3	22	3	17	10	19	1	17	5	18	11	21	10
1917 { 2nd "	24	3	22	3	17	3	19	1	17	5	19	0	21	10
1917 { 3rd "	24	2	22	7	17	3	19	2	17	6	19	1	22	0
1917 { 4th "	24	6	22	10	17	2	19	5	17	6	19	1	22	2
1918 { 1st "	24	9	23	1	17	8	19	8	17	8	18	10	22	5
1918 { 2nd "	25	1	23	2	17	9	20	4	17	8	18	10	22	8
1918 { 3rd "	25	0	23	8	18	5	20	9	17	8	19	4	22	11
1918 { 4th "	25	3	24	7	18	6	21	1	17	9	19	5	23	5
1919—1st ..	25	5	25	0	19	1	21	8	18	3	21	3	23	9

* Basis of Table.

9. Monthly Fluctuations in Retail Prices of Food and Groceries, July, 1914, to May, 1919.—The following table has been prepared in order to shew the variations in retail prices of food and groceries since July, 1914, the last month prior to the outbreak of war. Particulars for each town are given in the form of index-numbers for food and groceries in each of the months specified. In the last column the percentage increase is shewn for each town in May, 1919, compared with

July, 1914. It is necessary to observe that the index-numbers given in the following table are computed to the same base as those given in the preceding tables in this section, referring to food and groceries only, viz., the weighted average expenditure in the six capital towns for 1911 of food and groceries (46 commodities) is made equal to 1000.

Retail Prices Index-Numbers (Food and Groceries), for each of Thirty Towns for the Months specified, with Weighted Average for Six Capital Towns in 1911 as Base (=1000).†

Particulars.	1914.	1915.	1916.	1917.		1918.		1919.		Per cent. increase from July, 1914 to May, 1919.
	July.	May.	May.	April.	May.	April.	May.	April.	May.	
NEW SOUTH WALES—										%
Sydney	1,153	1,268	1,509	1,513	1,499	1,552	1,546	1,766	1,768	58.3
Newcastle .. .	1,147	1,255	1,507	1,527	1,527	1,566	1,576	1,759	1,776	54.3
Broken Hill .. .	1,468	1,575	1,817	1,806	1,814	1,787	1,848	1,854	1,827	24.5
Goulburn	1,183	1,312	1,550	1,507	1,470	1,518	1,523	1,738	1,748	47.8
Bathurst	1,097	1,243	1,479	1,461	1,473	1,512	1,521	1,653	1,663	51.6
•Weighted Average ..	1,165	1,283	1,522	1,525	1,514	1,562	1,560	1,768	1,770	51.9
VICTORIA—										
Melbourne	1,106	1,386	1,485	1,410	1,409	1,462	1,486	1,586	1,564	41.4
Ballarat	1,103	1,424	1,506	1,401	1,406	1,455	1,459	1,555	1,560	38.7
Bendigo	1,107	1,390	1,482	1,403	1,432	1,469	1,487	1,528	1,522	37.5
Geelong	1,089	1,350	1,514	1,446	1,432	1,473	1,481	1,532	1,541	41.5
Warrnambool .. .	1,087	1,404	1,493	1,431	1,436	1,492	1,514	1,559	1,567	44.2
•Weighted Average ..	1,105	1,388	1,488	1,411	1,412	1,462	1,484	1,576	1,558	41.0
QUEENSLAND—										
Brisbane	1,057	1,323	1,491	1,364	1,375	1,472	1,480	1,713	1,704	61.2
Toowoomba	1,041	1,371	1,457	1,323	1,360	1,454	1,440	1,756	1,755	65.6
Rockhampton .. .	1,156	1,378	1,613	1,400	1,404	1,503	1,501	1,792	1,797	56.4
Charters Towers ..	1,246	1,538	1,644	1,573	1,582	1,635	1,684	1,940	1,911	54.4
Warwick	1,033	1,379	1,462	1,348	1,369	1,511	1,520	1,771	1,770	63.4
•Weighted Average ..	1,082	1,359	1,512	1,381	1,394	1,490	1,496	1,749	1,738	60.6
SOUTH AUSTRALIA—										
Adelaide	1,250	1,485	1,584	1,485	1,480	1,567	1,620	1,674	1,703	38.2
Kadina, Moolta, Wallaroo	1,230	1,488	1,612	1,570	1,573	1,568	1,595	1,659	1,661	35.0
Port Pirie	1,291	1,530	1,643	1,600	1,603	1,630	1,657	1,715	1,720	33.7
Mt. Gambier	1,084	1,382	1,504	1,438	1,445	1,477	1,523	1,635	1,543	45.0
Petersburg	1,340	1,546	1,622	1,573	1,584	1,597	1,611	1,687	1,699	29.8
•Weighted Average ..	1,247	1,435	1,586	1,495	1,491	1,585	1,618	1,671	1,697	36.1
WESTERN AUSTRALIA—										
Perth	1,340	1,502	1,550	1,535	1,536	1,520	1,524	1,706	1,691	41.1
Kalgoorlie and Boulder	1,664	1,806	1,814	1,740	1,799	1,797	1,791	1,930	2,188	31.5
Mtd. Juno. & Guildford	1,354	1,532	1,534	1,552	1,598	1,530	1,524	1,660	1,837	35.7
Bunbury	1,418	1,593	1,608	1,677	1,753	1,633	1,650	1,723	1,895	33.6
Geraldton	1,445	1,689	1,675	1,621	1,630	1,639	1,633	1,723	1,745	20.8
•Weighted Average ..	1,412	1,573	1,608	1,584	1,636	1,590	1,585	1,751	1,946	37.3
TASMANIA—										
Hobart	1,211	1,401	1,551	1,478	1,471	1,641	1,648	1,705	1,678	38.6
Launceston	1,144	1,315	1,538	1,485	1,478	1,583	1,588	1,637	1,645	43.8
Zeehan	1,292	1,581	1,683	1,597	1,610	1,717	1,758	1,804	1,804	39.6
Beaconsfield	1,280	1,436	1,647	1,581	1,587	1,666	1,617	1,658	1,678	36.4
Queenstown	1,315	1,519	1,697	1,598	1,625	1,704	1,722	1,843	1,842	40.1
•Weighted Average ..	1,201	1,309	1,566	1,496	1,494	1,632	1,638	1,695	1,684	49.2
†Weighted Aver. for Cwth.	1,164	1,372	1,524	1,473	1,473	1,528	1,539	1,686	1,690	45.7

* Average for the five towns. † Average for thirty towns.

‡ See remarks on page 31 of Labour Report No. 6 with reference to change of base period.

NOTE.—Corresponding index-numbers for the intervening months are given in Labour Reports Nos. 6, 7 and 8, in Labour Bulletins Nos. 17 and 18, and in the Quarterly Summaries of Statistics Nos. 70 to 75.

10. Tables of Prices and House Rents, 1918.—While the summarised results of price-movements are published quarterly, the actual data from which such results are obtained are published in full only annually. In appendixes to Report No. 1, particulars were given of prices and house rents in the metropolitan towns in each year from 1901 to 1911, and in appendixes to Report No. 2, particulars were given of average prices and house rents in 1912 for each of the thirty towns from which returns are collected. In Appendixes I. and II. of Report No. 5 similar particulars were given for the year 1913; in Appendixes I. and III. to Report No. 6 particulars were given of average prices for 1914 and 1915; in Appendixes II. and IV. of the same Report similar information was given in regard to house rents. In Appendixes Nos. I and II of Report No. 7; in Appendixes Nos. I. and II. of Report No. 8, and in Appendixes Nos. IV. and V. hercof, information is given in regard to average prices and house rents respectively for the years 1916, 1917 and 1918.

11. Increase in Cost of Food and Groceries and House Rent, 1918, compared with previous years.—The following tables have been prepared in order to shew for each capital town (i.) the total increase (or decrease) in the cost of food, groceries, and house rent combined in 1918 compared with each preceding year since 1901, and (ii.) amount of the percentage increase (or decrease) due to variations (a) in prices of food and groceries, and (b) in house rent. The sum of the percentages for any year and town in the last two parts of the table must, of course, equal the corresponding total percentage in the first part of the table. Thus the total percentage of increase in cost of food, groceries, and house rent in Sydney for 1918 compared with 1904 is 63.6 per cent., of which 45.4 per cent. is due to increased cost of food and groceries, and 18.2 per cent. to increase in house rents. In any case where there has been a decrease (*i.e.*, where the combined cost of food and groceries and house rent, or if either separately was less in 1918 than in preceding years) the fact is indicated by a negative sign.

Percentage of Increase or Decrease in Purchasing-Power-of-Money Index-Numbers in 1918 compared with previous Years 1901 to 1917.

Year	Sydney.	Melbourne	Brisbane.	Adelaide.	Perth.	Hobart.	Weighted Average for 6 Capital Towns
1901	59.8	55.1	62.7	54.5	20.7	55.9	54.9
1902	45.6	40.2	56.5	54.7	15.0	51.8	46.5
1903	48.0	53.2	58.6	59.6	14.2	51.0	49.6
1904	63.6	57.9	70.5	64.4	19.0	58.5	58.7
1905	52.2	53.6	62.7	52.7	18.6	53.0	51.1
1906	52.7	53.6	60.4	49.8	21.0	50.8	51.0
1907	54.1	54.0	57.7	49.3	25.9	53.0	51.8
1908	44.7	45.6	46.3	40.1	23.8	47.3	43.3
1909	44.3	40.0	47.2	34.8	25.4	42.4	43.7
1910	43.4	43.2	42.8	32.5	21.1	42.6	40.5
1911	38.4	42.0	36.9	26.2	10.1	42.1	36.1
1912	24.2	27.9	27.8	15.4	7.4	30.1	23.7
1913	21.1	28.3	29.3	19.0	9.8	28.7	23.3
1914	18.3	22.0	25.6	16.8	8.5	24.4	19.5
1915	7.8	5.7	7.8	6.1	1.4	10.0	6.5
1916*	2.4	3.0	5.4	4.3	-2.1	6.1	2.8
1917*	1.5	4.3	6.0	7.3	-0.5	4.2	3.3

* See footnote to next page.

Percentage of Increase or Decrease in Purchasing-Power-of-Money Index-Numbers in 1918 compared with previous years 1901 to 1917—cont.

Year.	Sydney.	Melbourne.	Brisbane.	Adelaide	Perth.	Hobart.	Weighted Average for 6 Capital Towns.
PERCENTAGE DUE TO VARIATIONS IN COST OF FOOD AND GROCERIES.							
1901	41.7	34.0	40.5	35.8	17.3	42.3	36.6
1902	29.0	29.4	35.3	36.0	11.6	38.6	29.3
1903	32.0	33.0	37.9	40.3	11.0	38.1	32.2
1904	45.4	37.9	48.3	44.5	15.6	45.0	40.7
1905	36.3	34.5	42.1	37.8	12.9	40.2	34.7
1906	36.9	35.0	40.4	37.8	14.3	38.5	35.1
1907	39.0	36.4	40.7	39.7	17.3	41.5	36.9
1908	31.0	30.0	32.4	33.6	15.3	37.1	30.2
1909	32.0	33.7	35.5	31.4	16.3	33.5	31.8
1910	32.5	31.7	33.2	32.3	13.5	34.8	31.1
1911	32.0	32.0	30.7	29.7	7.4	35.6	30.3
1912	21.8	21.5	23.6	20.3	7.2	25.1	20.8
1913	20.9	24.8	27.5	22.8	11.4	26.3	22.4
1914	19.2	20.0	24.6	17.5	9.6	22.8	19.2
1915	6.8	2.6	6.2	3.1	0.2	9.1	4.5
1916*	1.2	0.2	3.4	1.4	-2.6	5.2	0.9
1917*	0.4	2.5	4.4	5.2	-0.9	4.1	1.9

PERCENTAGE DUE TO VARIATION IN HOUSE RENTS.

1901	18.1	21.1	22.2	18.7	3.4	13.6	18.3
1902	16.6	19.8	21.2	18.7	3.4	13.2	17.2
1903	16.9	20.2	20.7	19.3	3.2	12.9	17.4
1904	18.2	20.0	22.2	19.9	3.4	13.5	18.0
1905	15.9	19.1	20.6	15.1	5.7	12.8	16.4
1906	15.8	18.6	20.0	12.0	6.8	12.3	15.9
1907	15.1	17.6	17.0	9.6	8.4	11.5	14.9
1908	13.7	15.6	13.9	6.5	8.5	10.2	13.1
1909	12.3	15.3	11.7	3.4	9.1	8.9	11.9
1910	10.9	11.5	9.6	0.2	7.6	7.8	9.4
1911*	6.4	9.1	6.2	-3.5	2.7	6.5	5.8
1912*	2.4	6.4	4.2	-4.9	0.2	5.0	2.9
1913*	0.2	3.5	1.8	-3.8	-1.6	2.4	0.9
1914*	-0.9	2.0	1.0	-0.7	-1.1	1.6	0.3
1915	1.0	3.1	1.6	3.0	1.2	0.9	2.0
1916	1.2	2.8	2.0	2.9	0.5	0.9	1.9
1917	1.1	1.8	1.6	2.1	0.4	0.1	1.4

* The negative sign indicates a decrease.