

SECTION V.—INVESTIGATIONS INTO VARIATIONS IN PURCHASING-POWER-OF-MONEY INDEX-NUMBERS IN 150 TOWNS IN THE COMMONWEALTH.

1. **Introduction.**—In order to supplement the information as to variations in the purchasing-power of money, which is collected each month for the 30 towns specified in the preceding Section, a special investigation was initiated in November, 1913, as to purchasing-power-of-money index-numbers in 70 additional towns in the Commonwealth. This investigation was repeated in November, 1914, and again in November, 1915, when the number of additional towns was increased to 120, and it is intended to carry it out in that month each year, thus making information available annually in all for 150 towns. The results of the first investigation were published in Labour Bulletin No. 5 (Section IV., pages 26 to 33), where some description was given of the methods adopted in making the investigation and in computing the index-numbers. The results of the second investigation (November, 1914) were published in Labour Bulletin No. 8 (Section IV., pages 231 to 240); of the third in Labour Bulletin No. 12 (Section IV., pages 356 to 361); of the fourth in Report No. 7 (Section V., pages 393 to 403), and of the fifth in Report No. 8 (Section V., pages 47 to 57).

2. **Index-Numbers shewing relative Purchasing-Power of Money.**—The results of the investigation made in November, 1918, are set out in the tables on pages 53 to 56. *The basis for the whole of this table is the weighted average aggregate expenditure for the 150 towns on food, groceries, and rent of five-roomed houses, in November, 1918.* (See end of last column on page 56). This weighted average aggregate expenditure is made equal to 1000, and the aggregate expenditure on these items for each individual town is shewn in the last column in the form of index-numbers relative to this average. In the preceding column similar index-numbers are shewn for food, groceries, and rent of four-roomed houses, and these index-numbers are again computed to the same base indicated above. That is to say, that while the index-number 1000 (see page 56) represents the weighted average expenditure on food, groceries, and rent of five-roomed houses, 937 represents the average weighted expenditure on food, groceries, and rent of four-roomed houses. Similarly, in the remaining three columns, if 1000 represents the weighted average expenditure on food, groceries, and rent of five-roomed houses (page 56), the index-number 695 represents the relative weighted average expenditure on food and groceries only, the index-number 242 represents the relative weighted average expenditure on rent of four-roomed houses, and 305 the expenditure on rent of five-roomed houses. It follows, therefore, that the figures given in the table are comparable throughout. Thus, taking the average weighted expenditure for all 150 towns on food, groceries, and rent of five-roomed houses as equal to 1000, the expenditure on the same items in Melbourne is 1017, while if four-roomed houses were substituted for five-roomed, the expenditure in Melbourne would be represented by 941,

of which 671 would be the expenditure on food and groceries, and the remaining 270 the expenditure on house rent. Again, the expenditure in Sydney on food, groceries, and rent of five-roomed houses is 1070, or 70 per cent. above the weighted average, and that number is made up of 699, the relative expenditure on food and groceries, and 371 the relative expenditure on rent of five-roomed houses. The expenditure on the same items in Grafton is represented by 979, of which 730 represents the expenditure on food and groceries and 249 that on rent.

In the following table, the first column shows the index-numbers for food and groceries only, while the second and third show the index-numbers for the rent of houses having four and five rooms respectively. The fourth column shows the aggregate index-numbers for food and groceries combined with the rent of four-roomed houses, and the last column the index-numbers for food and groceries combined with the rent of five-roomed houses :—

Relative Purchasing-Power-of-Money Index-Numbers in Various Towns compared with Weighted Average Cost of Food, Groceries, and Rent of 5 Rooms as Base (=1000), November, 1918.*

State and Town.	Food and Groceries, Index No.	House Rent, 4 Rooms, Index No.	House Rent, 5 Rooms, Index No.	Food, Groceries, and Rent of 4 Rooms Index No.	Food, Groceries, and Rent of 5 Rooms Index No.
New South Wales—					
Sydney	699	307	371	1,066	1,070
Newcastle	708	225	290	933	998
Broken Hill	744	210	268	954	1,012
Goulburn	704	224	300	928	1,004
Bathurst	670	147	197	817	867
Adelong	681	90	134	771	815
Albury	692	248	291	940	983
Armidale	701	224	284	925	985
Bega	686	149	211	835	897
Bourke	746	159	168	905	914
Bowral	709	229	264	938	973
Casino	725	159	189	884	914
Cobar	720	164	207	884	927
Cooma	700	183	232	883	932
Coonamble	771	199	274	970	1,045
Cootamundra	697	286	366	983	1,063
Corrimal	706	149	179	855	885
Cowra	715	229	284	944	999
Deniliquin	705	177	223	882	928
Dubbo	701	197	296	898	997
Forbes	709	174	239	833	943
Glen Innes	698	182	274	880	972
Grafton	730	199	249	929	979
Grenfell	723	239	299	962	1,022
Gunnedah	693	324	299	917	992
Hay	693	154	243	847	936
Inverell	745	232	278	977	1,023
Junee	703	244	294	947	997
Katoomba	724	282	343	1,006	1,067
Kempsey	708	141	224	849	932
Lismore	732	244	323	976	1,055
Lithgow	711	242	274	953	985

* These results are based upon the regimen referred to on pages 20-22 Labour Report No. 6

Relative Purchasing-Power-of-Money Index-Numbers in Various Towns compared with Weighted Average Cost of Food, Groceries, and Rent of 5 Rooms as Base (=1000), November, 1918—cont.

State and Town.	Food and Groceries, Index No.	House Rent, 4 Rooms, Index No.	House Rent, 5 Rooms, Index No.	Food, Groceries, and Rent of 4 Rooms, Index No.	Food, Groceries, and Rent of 5 Rooms, Index No.
New South Wales—cont.					
Maitland	679	167	244	846	923
Moree	749	299	348	1,048	1,097
Moss Vale	703	224	274	927	977
Mudgee	693	179	224	872	917
Narrabri	722	199	302	921	1,024
Nowra	715	149	199	864	914
Orange	693	183	258	876	951
Parkes	734	184	231	918	965
Queanbeyan	713	177	219	890	932
Tamworth	710	222	262	932	972
Temora	721	224	271	945	992
Wagga Wagga	683	241	343	924	1,026
Wellington	718	182	244	900	962
Wollongong	704	216	254	920	958
Wyalong	730	196	267	926	997
Yass	711	223	256	934	967
Young	711	179	259	890	970
Weighted Average for State	703	276	339	979	1,042
Victoria—					
Melbourne	671	270	346	941	1,017
Ballarat	657	198	164	765	821
Bendigo	645	145	206	790	851
Geelong	641	168	234	809	875
Warrnambool	673	182	241	855	914
Ararat	686	149	219	835	905
Bairnsdale	683	151	202	834	885
Beechworth	684	112	129	776	793
Benalla	667	178	224	845	891
Bright	677	129	177	806	854
Camperdown	675	168	221	843	896
Castlemaine	674	152	214	826	888
Colac	685	194	261	879	946
Creswick	669	111	154	780	823
Daylesford	665	100	162	765	827
Dunolly	661	80	114	741	775
Echuca	672	122	162	794	834
Euroa	636	144	174	780	810
Hamilton	671	171	234	842	905
Horsham	694	187	234	861	928
Korumburra	652	184	209	836	861
Kyneton	662	124	194	786	856
Maldon	665	90	109	755	774
Maryborough	667	107	144	774	811
Mildura	699	304	359	1,003	1,058
Nhill	694	186	219	880	913
Omoo	717	109	129	826	846
Orbost	696	168	241	864	937
Portland	680	158	232	838	912
St. Arnaud	680	164	226	864	906
Sale	652	134	194	786	846
Shepparton	679	159	234	838	913
Stawell	685	157	202	842	887

Relative Purchasing-Power-of-Money Index-Numbers in Various Towns compared with Weighted Average Cost of Food, Groceries, and Rent of 5 Rooms as Base (=1000), November, 1918—cont.

State and Town.	Food and Groceries, Index No.	House Rent, 4 Rooms, Index No.	House Rent, 5 Rooms, Index No.	Food, Groceries, and Rent of 4 Rooms, Index No.	Food, Groceries, and Rent of 5 Rooms, Index No.
Victoria—cont.					
Swan Hill ..	669	256	336	925	1,005
Walhalla ..	686	50	80	736	766
Wandiligong ..	733	60	80	793	813
Wangaratta ..	657	199	251	856	908
Warracknabeal ..	628	175	216	803	844
Wonthaggi ..	711	239	299	950	1,010
Yackandandah ..	666	139	172	805	838
Weighted Average for State ..	668	234	304	902	972
Queensland—					
Brisbane ..	703	185	237	888	940
Toowoomba ..	727	149	203	876	930
Rockhampton ..	721	158	198	879	910
Charters Towers ..	792	169	223	961	1,015
Warwick ..	719	124	198	843	917
Bundaberg ..	752	160	219	921	971
Cairns ..	814	244	294	1,058	1,108
Charleville ..	804	246	310	1,050	1,114
Chillagoe ..	830	40	79	870	909
Cloncurry ..	919	287	365	1,206	1,284
Cooktown ..	794	71	103	865	897
Cunnamulla ..	748	179	219	927	967
Goondiwindi ..	716	174	219	890	935
Gympie ..	760	143	186	903	946
Hamilton ..	741	298	398	1,039	1,139
Hughenden ..	810	348	373	1,158	1,183
Ipawich ..	756	169	214	925	970
Longreach ..	799	189	261	988	1,050
Mackay ..	757	244	284	1,001	1,041
Maryborough ..	718	134	164	852	882
Mt. Morgan ..	725	199	229	924	954
Roma ..	792	249	299	1,041	1,091
Townsville ..	768	305	379	1,073	1,147
Winton ..	848	249	348	1,097	1,196
Weighted Average for State ..	729	185	237	914	966
South Australia—					
Adelaide ..	686	243	317	929	1,003
Moonta & Kadina ..	696	175	225	871	921
Port Pirie ..	719	269	318	988	1,037
Mt. Gambier ..	664	165	206	829	870
Petersburg ..	693	187	250	880	943
Gawler ..	674	153	202	827	876
Kapunda ..	680	109	144	789	824
Murray Bridge ..	676	224	270	900	946
Pt. Augusta ..	737	253	340	990	1,077
Pt. Lincoln ..	736	159	199	895	935
Pt. Victor ..	677	209	309	886	986
Renmark ..	722	284	358	1,006	1,080
Weighted Average for State ..	688	235	304	923	992

Relative Purchasing-Power-of-Money Index-Numbers in Various Towns compared with Weighted Average Cost of Food, Groceries, and Rent of 5 Rooms as Base (=1000), November, 1918—cont.

State and Town.	Food and Groceries, Index No.	House Rent, 4 Rooms, Index No.	House Rent, 5 Rooms, Index No.	Food, Groceries, and Rent of 4 Rooms, Index No.	Food, Groceries, and Rent of 5 Rooms, Index No.
Western Australia—					
Perth & Fremantle	650	233	288	883	938
Kalgoorlie & Boulder	794	273	328	1,067	1,122
Midland-Junction & Guildford	642	174	232	816	874
Bunbury	687	163	207	850	894
Geraldton	697	273	344	970	1,041
Albany	720	236	286	956	1,006
Broome	872	†	†	†	†
Carnarvon	812	252	325	1,064	1,137
Cue	768	144	174	912	942
Katanning	698	249	297	947	995
Leonora	861	149	199	1,010	1,060
Menzies	904	100	119	1,004	1,023
Northam	703	211	259	914	962
Ravensthorpe	845	101	164	946	1,009
Weighted Average for State	688	234	289	922	977
Tasmania—					
Hobart	731	238	289	969	1,220
Launceston	701	210	282	911	983
Zeehan	777	103	129	880	906
Beaconsfield	721	48	70	769	791
Queenstown	786	205	247	991	1,033
Burnie	687	216	259	903	946
Campbelltown	715	83	105	803	820
Devonport	723	215	276	938	999
Franklin	718	179	239	897	957
Oatlands	690	80	100	770	790
Scottsdale	707	127	177	834	884
Weighted Average for State	724	208	262	932	986
Weighted Average Commonwealth	695	242	305	937	1,000 *

* Basis of Tables. † Not available.

3. Food and Groceries.—Comparing the index-numbers for food and groceries alone (column I), it will be observed that, taking the weighted average for all the towns in each State, New South Wales, Queensland, and Tasmania are above the average for the Commonwealth, while Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia are below. Queensland is the most expensive State (4.9 per cent. above the average), and Victoria the cheapest (3.9 per cent. below). Of the other States New South Wales is 1.2 per cent., and Tasmania 4.2 per cent. above the average, while the index-numbers for South Australia and Western Australia are 1.0 per cent., below the average. In all the States some of the towns are above and some below the average for the Commonwealth. In

New South Wales the most expensive town is Coonamble, 10.9 per cent. above the weighted average for the 150 towns, while the cheapest town is Bathurst, which is 3.6 per cent. below the average. In Victoria, Wandiligong is the most expensive town, 5.5 per cent. above, and Warracknabeal the cheapest, 9.6 per cent. below the average. In Queensland the most expensive town is Cloncurry, 32.2 per cent. above, and the cheapest Brisbane, 1.2 per cent. above the average. In South Australia the most expensive town is Port Augusta, 6.0 per cent. above, and the cheapest Mt. Gambier, 4.5 per cent. below the average. In Western Australia, Menzies is the most expensive town, 30.1 per cent. above, and Midland Junction and Guildford the cheapest, 7.6 per cent. below the weighted average for all towns. Queenstown is the most expensive town in Tasmania, being 13.1 per cent. above, while Burnie is the cheapest, being 1.2 per cent. below the average for the 150 towns.

4. **House Rents**—There is a far greater divergence between the relative expenditure on house rents in the various towns than on food and groceries. As might naturally be expected, the general tendency appears to be that the cost of housing accommodation is greater in places where there is great centralisation of people than in sparsely-populated districts. That this is not always the case, however, is at once apparent on comparing the index-numbers for Sydney with its 770,000 inhabitants and such towns as Hughenden and Townsville in Queensland and Geraldton and Kalgoorlie in Western Australia.

Comparing the weighted average of the towns in each State, it will be seen that, in the case of four-roomed houses, New South Wales is 14.1 per cent. above the average for the whole of the towns, while the other States are below the average; Queensland 23.6 per cent.; Tasmania 4.1 per cent.; Victoria 3.3 per cent.; Western Australia 3.3 per cent.; and South Australia 2.9 per cent. Turning now to houses having 5 rooms, it will be seen that again New South Wales is above the average for the whole of the towns, by 11.1 per cent. Of the remaining States, Queensland is 22.3 per cent., Western Australia 21.6 per cent., Tasmania 14.1 per cent., South Australia 0.3 per cent., and Victoria 0.3 per cent. below the average for the 150 towns.

Comparing individual towns it may be seen that in New South Wales, Sydney has the highest index-number for houses of four and five rooms, 26.9 per cent. for the former and 21.6 per cent. for the latter, above the average for the 150 towns considered as a whole. Adelong has the lowest index-number for both kinds of houses, being 62.8 per cent. for 4 rooms, and 56.1 per cent. for 5 rooms, below the average. In Victoria, Mildura is the highest for houses of 4 rooms and 5 rooms, 25.6 per cent. for the former, and 17.7 per cent. for the latter, above the average. Walhalla has the lowest index-number in both cases, 79.3 per cent. below the average for houses having 4 rooms and 73.8 per cent. below for houses having 5 rooms. With regard to rent for houses having 5 rooms, the index-number for Wandiligong is

the same as for Walthalla. In Queensland, Hughenden has the highest index-number for 4 rooms, 43.8 per cent. above the average, and Hamilton for 5 rooms, being 30.5 per cent. above the average for all towns. Chillagoe has the lowest index-number in both cases, being 83.5 per cent. for 4 rooms, and 74.1 per cent. for 5 rooms below the average. In South Australia Renmark has the highest index-number for house rents for houses of 4 and 5 rooms, being 17.4 per cent. in both cases above the average, while Kapunda has the lowest index-number, 55.0 per cent. for houses of 4 rooms, and 52.8 per cent. for houses of 5 rooms below the average. In Western Australia, Kalgoorlie and Geraldton have the highest index-number for houses of 4 rooms, being 12.8 per cent. above the average. For houses of 5 rooms Geraldton has the highest index-number, being 12.8 per cent. above the average. For houses of 4 rooms, Menzies is 58.7 per cent., and for houses of 5 rooms 61.0 per cent. below the average for the 150 towns. Hobart has the highest index-numbers for Tasmania in both cases, being 1.7 per cent. below the average for houses of 4 rooms, and 5.2 below the average for houses of 5 rooms. Beaconsfield has the lowest index-numbers in both cases, being 80.2 per cent. for 4 rooms, and 77.0 per cent. for 5 rooms below the average for the 150 towns considered as a whole.

5. **Food, Groceries and House Rent.**—The index-numbers in the last two columns of the table on pages 53 to 56 shew the relative cost of food and groceries combined with rent of the two classes of houses indicated. The general order and arrangement, both of the separate States and of individual towns, as regards relative cost of the commodities and house rent included, is the same whether the rent included refers to four or to five-roomed houses. Taking the combined expenditure in the case of four rooms and five rooms, the weighted average index-numbers for New South Wales are above the weighted average for all towns, while the index-numbers are below in the remaining States. Taking combined expenditure on food, groceries, and rent of four-roomed houses, New South Wales is 4.5 per cent., above the weighted average for the Commonwealth, while the remaining States are below the average; Victoria 3.7 per cent., Queensland 2.5 per cent., Western Australia 1.6 per cent., South Australia 1.5 per cent., and Tasmania 0.5 per cent. For combined expenditure on food, groceries and houses having five rooms, the index-number for New South Wales is 4.2 per cent. above the weighted average for all towns, while the index-number for Queensland is 3.4 per cent., for Victoria 2.8 per cent., for Western Australia 2.3 per cent., for Tasmania 1.4 per cent., and for South Australia 0.8 per cent. below the average.

Comparing individual towns, it may be seen that in New South Wales the index number for combined expenditure on food, groceries and rent of four-roomed and five-roomed houses is greatest in Moree, being 11.8 per cent. for the former, and 9.7 per cent. for the latter above the average. The index-number is lowest in Adelong, whether the comparison be made with four or five rooms. In the former case it is 17.7 per cent., and in the latter 18.5 per

cent. below the average. In Victoria, Mildura has the highest combined index-number in both cases, 7.0 per cent. and 5.8 per cent. above the respective weighted average index-numbers. Walhalla has the lowest combined index-number for both four and five-roomed houses, being 21.6 per cent. for the former, and 23.4 per cent. for the latter, below the Commonwealth averages. In Queensland, Cloncurry has the highest index-number, whether the combined expenditure include four or five rooms. The index-number for Cloncurry is 28.7 per cent. for four rooms, and 28.4 per cent. for five rooms, above the Commonwealth averages, while Warwick has the lowest index-number for four rooms and Maryborough for five rooms. Warwick is 10.0 per cent., and Maryborough 11.8 per cent. below the average. In South Australia, Renmark has the highest, and Kapunda the lowest index-number in both cases. The index-number for Renmark is 7.4 per cent. for four rooms, and 8.0 per cent. for five rooms above, and for Kapunda 15.8 per cent. for four rooms, and 17.6 per cent. for five rooms below the weighted averages for the Commonwealth. In Western Australia Carnarvon has the highest combined index-number for houses of both four and five rooms, being 13.6 per cent. for the former, and 13.7 per cent. for the latter, above the average. Midland Junction has the lowest combined index-number for both four and five rooms. In the former case it is 12.9 per cent., and in the latter 12.6 per cent. below the Commonwealth average. Queenstown has the highest combined index-numbers in Tasmania, being 5.8 per cent. for four rooms, and 3.3 per cent. for five rooms above the average. Beaconsfield has the lowest combined index-numbers, being 17.9 per cent. below the average, when combined expenditure for four rooms is taken, and 20.9 per cent. below the average for five rooms.

6. Variation in Purchasing-Power-of-Money Index-Numbers, 1913 to 1918.—On the map facing page 60, index-numbers are given which represent the relative purchasing-power-of-money in each of the 100 towns in 1913 and 1914, and also shew the increase or decrease in 100 towns between November, 1913, and the same month in 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917, and 1918. In those index-numbers the weighted average expenditure in 1913 on food, groceries, and rent of five-roomed houses is taken as base (= 1000, see end of first column). The second column represents the proportional expenditure in each town on food and groceries only, so that the difference between the index-number in the first column and that in the second column for any town represents the relative expenditure on rent in November, 1913. In the third and fourth columns shewing purchasing-power-of-money index-numbers for November, 1914, the same base is retained, with the result that the figures shew not only relative cost in that month, but also the increase or decrease in cost during the periods indicated. Similarly, the index-numbers in the fifth and sixth, seventh and eighth, ninth and tenth, and eleventh and twelfth columns are again computed to the original base, so that they shew both the relative cost of food and groceries as between the several towns, and the variation in cost in each individual town since November, 1913. Thus it may be seen that in Sydney the purchasing-power-of-money index-number increased from 1109 to 1372, a rise of 23.7 per cent., between November, 1913, and November, 1918. The figures

show, moreover, that the purchasing-power-of-money index-number in Sydney (1109) was 10.9 per cent. above the Commonwealth average (1000) in November, 1913, while twelve months later the index-number (1124) was 8.6 per cent. above the Commonwealth average (1035); in November, 1915, it was 1321, or 7.1 per cent. above the Commonwealth average (1234); in November, 1916, it was 1305, or 8.4 per cent. above the Commonwealth average (1204); in November 1917 it was 1352, or 9.2 per cent. above the Commonwealth average (1238), and in 1918 it was 1372 or 7.0 per cent. above the Commonwealth average (1282). Again, as regards cost of food and groceries only, the index-number in Sydney in 1913 was 634, or 2.1 per cent. above the Commonwealth average 621; in November, 1914, the corresponding number was 651; in November, 1915, 861; in November, 1916, 851; in November, 1917, 895, and in November 1918, 896, shewing that the cost increased from November, 1913, to November, 1918, by 41.3 per cent., and was then 0.6 per cent. above the Commonwealth average (891). The difference between the two index-numbers for Sydney in 1913 was 475, and the corresponding difference in 1918, 476. This shews that rent of five-roomed houses was approximately the same in November 1918 as in November 1913.

It has already been explained that the list of towns from which information as to prices and house rents are collected annually has been extended, and for November, 1915, 1916, 1917 and 1918 was 150. The index-numbers for the 50 additional towns for Nov., 1915, 1916, 1917 and 1918 are shewn in columns 13 to 20 on the map. They are computed to the same base as the 100 towns, and are therefore comparable with them in all respects. Thus, it may be seen that comparing Melbourne and Bright, the index-number for food and groceries in November, 1915, was 852 for Melbourne, and 921 for Bright, shewing that the cost of food and groceries was 8.1 per cent. higher in Bright than in Melbourne. Again, taking the difference between the two index-numbers for November, 1915, in each case, it may be seen that the index-number for rent of five-roomed houses was in Melbourne 388, and in Bright 197. Thus the rent of five-roomed houses was at that period 50.8 per cent. less in Bright than in Melbourne.

7. Comparisons between Results obtained from Special Investigation and Quarterly Results.—In order to ascertain the degree of accuracy to which the investigations as to variations in the purchasing-power of money made prior to 1912 for the capital towns only, and those made since the beginning of 1912 for the thirty towns, reflect the conditions obtaining throughout the States and Commonwealth, comparisons between the three sets of results were made in connection with the inquiry of Nov., 1913, 1914, 1915, 1916 and 1917. Similar comparisons are now made in connection with the 1918 inquiry. In the following table the first line in each section shews the results obtained, as to relative purchasing-power of money, from the special inquiry covering in all 150 towns. The second line gives the results obtained from the returns received for the month of November, 1918, for the five towns in each State from which regular monthly returns are received, and the last line the results obtained from the November returns for the capital towns only. The capital towns are, of course, included in each of the other two investigations, and the five towns in each State are included in the investigation for "all towns":—

Relative Purchasing-Power-of-Money Index-Numbers. Comparisons between Results obtained from Special Investigation and from Ordinary Periodic Returns, November, 1918.

Particulars	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'land.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	W'ght Aver- age.
FOOD AND GROCERIES.							
All Towns*	1,011	962	1,050	990	991	1,043	1,000
Five Towns in each State	1,018	968	1,037	998	989	1,055	1,000
Capital Towns only ..	1,019	979	1,024	1,001	947	1,066	1,000
RENT, 5-ROOMED HOUSES.							
All Towns*	1,111	996	775	997	948	853	1,000
Five Towns in each State	1,121	919	716	967	921	842	1,000
Capital Towns only ..	1,097	1,023	703	937	852	854	1,000
FOOD AND GROCERIES AND RENT.							
All Towns*	1,042	972	966	992	977	986	1,000
Five Towns in each State	1,050	978	936	989	967	988	1,000
Capital Towns only ..	1,045	993	918	980	916	916	1,000

* For list of towns included, see Table on pages 53 to 56.

As regards variations in cost of living for November, 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917 and 1918, compared with November, 1913, the index-numbers for November, 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917 and 1918, computed from the three sets of data mentioned above, are shewn in the following table:—

Variations in Purchasing-Power-of-Money Index-Numbers. Results obtained from Annual Inquiry for extended List of Towns and from Periodic Monthly Inquiries, November, 1913, 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917 and 1918.

Particulars.	1913.	1914.	1915	1916.	1917.	1918.
FOOD AND GROCERIES.						
All Towns	1,000	1,072	1,405	1,353	1,395	1,435
Five Towns in each State	1,000	1,073	1,404	1,354	1,390	1,430
Capital Towns only ..	1,000	1,072	1,408	1,358	1,397	1,440
RENT OF 5-ROOMED HOUSES.						
All Towns	1,000	974	952	959	981	1,031
Five Towns in each State	1,000	969	961	966	987	1,039
Capital Towns only ..	1,000	975	955	961	980	1,033
FOOD, GROCERIES, AND RENT.						
All Towns	1,000	1,035	1,234	1,204	1,238	1,282
Five Towns in each State	1,000	1,033	1,232	1,203	1,234	1,278
Capital Towns only ..	1,000	1,032	1,223	1,196	1,227	1,274

NOTE.—The figures in the vertical columns do not, of course, shew relative purchasing-power-of-money index-numbers. They shew merely the increase or decrease in cost in November of each year, compared with November, 1913, for "All Towns," "Five Towns in each State," and "Capital Towns only" respectively.

The index-numbers in the first line of each part of the latter table refer to 100 towns for November, 1913 and 1914, and to 150 towns for November, 1915, 1916, 1917 and 1918. The general closeness of the results shewn in these two tables is remarkable, and is a further confirmation of the conclusions previously stated, that the index-numbers published for the capital towns only, for the years prior to 1912, and for the thirty towns for 1912 and subsequent years, reflect, with a substantial degree of accuracy, the variations in the purchasing-power-of-money index-numbers, not only in each State separately, but also throughout the Commonwealth as a whole. The second table also shews that during the period November, 1913, to November, 1918, the average cost of food and groceries throughout the Commonwealth increased over 40 per cent., house rents increased over 5 per cent., the aggregate result shewing an increase of approximately 28 per cent.