

## FOOD SUPPLY AND COST OF LIVING.

CONSIDERING the comparatively high rate of wages which prevails, food of all kinds is fairly cheap, and articles of diet which in other countries are almost within the category of luxuries, are largely used, even by the poorer classes. The average quantities of the principal articles of common diet annually consumed in the various Colonies of Australasia are given below :—

Average consumption of food in Australasia.

Consumption of Foods, 1890.

Article.	New South Wales.	Victoria.	Queensland.	South Australia.	Western Australia.	Tasmania.	New Zealand.	Australasia.
Grain—								
Wheat .....lb.	390	300	246	390	390	362	454	334
Rice & Oat-meal .....lb.	18·9	22·2	22·5	13·8	32·4	16·2	15·9	18·0
Potatoes .....lb.	182	311	242	210	102	509	472	288
Sugar .....lb.	94·8	105	102	96·9	114	96·3	88·7	95·8
Tea .....lb.	6·8	7·3	8·5	5·6	10·7	7·2	6·0	7·0
Coffee .....oz.	8·7	17·8	11·2	20·8	21·0	12·2	8·1	13·0
Cheese .....lb.	4·3	...	...	...	...	...	4·5	4·5
Butter .....lb.	16·6	...	...	...	...	...	16·0	16·0
Salt .....lb.	33·7	22·0	46·3	33·0	19·0	36·1	29·6	33·0
Meat—								
Beef .....lb.	176	155	280	...	...	60	90	...
Mutton .....lb.	85	98	90	...	...	150	110	...
Pork & Bacon.lb.	10	12	...	...	...	...	...	...

It will be seen that the consumption of wheat varies from 246 lb. in Queensland to 454 lb. in New Zealand, the average consumption being 334 lb. per head. Rice and oatmeal vary greatly in the quantity used, only 13·8 lb. being the consumption of South Australia, as against 32·4 lb. in Western Australia. The use of tea is universal in Australia, the consumption being largest in Western Australia and Queensland—with 171 oz. and 136 oz. Large consumption of Tea.

respectively. Sugar also enters largely into consumption, the average being 106 lb. per head in Victoria and 95 lb. in New South Wales. Coffee is not a favourite beverage in Australasia, the consumption being not quite one-ninth that of tea. It is used most largely in South Australia, where the annual demand amounts to 21 oz.

Consumption of Potatoes.

The consumption per head of potatoes in some of the colonies is probably less than the foregoing table shows; thus in the case of Tasmania the returns show a consumption of 509 lb., and in New Zealand 472 lb. It is probable that potatoes are in some years grown in excess of the local requirements, and the market in New South Wales and other continental Colonies not being sufficient to absorb this excess, it remains unconsumed or is given to live stock and poultry; under the circumstances it is impossible to determine the quantity actually entering into the food consumption of the population.

Consumption of Meat.

The consumption of meat has been determined with exactness for only five colonies, but these may be taken as fairly representing the whole group. The average quantity of beef consumed in the year amounts to 152 lb. per head, that of mutton to 107 lb., and of pork 11 lb.; in all, 270 lb. It would appear that each inhabitant of these colonies requires daily about three-quarters of a pound of meat, and that during the year two sheep are killed for each member of the community, and one bullock to every five persons. It is obvious, therefore, that much meat must be wasted.

Meat consumption of Australasia.

The quantity of meat used by the Australasian people, as shown by the above figures, is the most remarkable feature of their diet. The consumption per inhabitant in Germany is 64 lb., in Australia it is four times that quantity, while in the United States, a meat exporting country, the consumption is little more than half that of Australasia. The following table shows the meat consumption per head for the principal countries of the world:—

## Average Consumption of Meat per annum.

Country.	lb. per inhabitant.	Country.	lb. per inhabitant.
Great Britain .....	109	Holland .....	57
France .....	77	Sweden .....	62
Germany .....	64	Norway .....	78
Russia .....	51	Denmark .....	64
Austria .....	61	Switzerland .....	62
Italy .....	26	United States.....	150
Spain .....	71	Canada .....	90
Belgium.....	65	Australasia.....	270

Judged by the standard of the food consumed, the population of Australasia must appear remarkably prosperous, compared with those of other countries. This will most clearly appear from the following table, the particulars given in which, with the exception of those referring to Australasia, have been taken from Mulhall's Dictionary of Statistics :—

Quantity of food  
indicative of  
prosperity.

## Quantity of Food Annually Consumed in principal Countries.

Country.	lb. per Inhabitant.						Tea and Coffee— Ounces.	Daily Energy— Foot tons.
	Grain.	Meat.	Sugar.	Butter and Cheese.	Potatoes.	Salt.		
United Kingdom ...	378	109	75	19	380	40	91	3,739
France .....	540	77	20	8	570	20	66	3,993
Germany .....	550	64	18	8	1,020	17	78	4,708
Russia .....	635	51	11	5	180	19	6	3,532
Austria .....	460	61	18	7	560	14	28	3,502
Italy.....	400	26	8	4	50	18	20	2,152
Spain .....	480	71	6	3	20	17	6	2,597
Portugal .....	500	49	12	3	40	17	18	2,659
Sweden .....	560	62	22	11	500	28	112	4,012
Norway .....	440	78	13	14	500	40	144	3,627
Denmark.....	560	64	22	22	410	25	140	4,071
Holland .....	560	57	35	15	820	20	240	4,635
Belgium.....	590	65	27	15	1,050	...	142	5,034
Switzerland .....	440	62	26	11	140	...	110	2,766
Roumania .....	400	82	4	9	80	...	8	2,414
Servia .....	400	84	4	9	80	...	8	2,422
United States.....	370	150	53	20	170	39	162	3,415
Canada.....	400	90	45	22	600	40	72	4,013
Australasia .....	352	270	96	21	288	16	115	4,470

Thermo-  
dynamic power  
of foods.

Taking the articles of the foregoing list, with the exception of tea and coffee, and reducing them to a common basis of comparison, it will be found that the amount of thermo-dynamic power, capable of being generated by the food consumed in Australasia, is only exceeded by that of Germany, Holland, and Belgium. For purpose of comparison the figures of Dr. Edward Smith, F.R.S., in his well known work on Foods, have been used, and the heat developed has been reduced to the equivalent weight lifted 1 foot high. In estimating the thermo-dynamic effect of food, grain has been reduced to its equivalent in flour, and regard has been paid to the probable nature of the meat consumed. The figures for potatoes are given as they appear in the Dictionary of Statistics, but it is a probable supposition that but a small proportion of the quantity over 400lb. set down for any country is required for human consumption, and the figures relating to some of the countries—notably the three just mentioned—are therefore excessive. The substances included in this table are largely supplemented both in America and Europe by other foods, but not more so than in these colonies; and in the table just given will probably be found a just view of the comparative quantity and food-value of the articles of consumption in each of the countries mentioned. The comparison will appear much more strongly in favour of these colonies when the average amount of work which each individual in the community is called upon to perform is taken into consideration. In Australasia the proportion of women and children engaged in laborious occupations is far smaller than in Europe and America, and the hours of labour of all persons are also less, so that the amount of food-energy required is reduced in proportion.

Food consumed  
in excess of  
requirements.

In Mulhall's Dictionary of Statistics, under the heading of "Diet," is given a measure of the aggregate amount of work performed by persons doing physical and mental labour, and it would appear that the food of an average man, when burnt in the body, should be equal to at least 3,300 foot tons of work daily,

that of a woman 2,200, and of a child 1,100 foot tons. For Australasia the average of all persons would be about 2,125 foot tons, whereas, from the table just given, the amount of work which the daily food consumed by each individual in the colonies from the principal foods consumed is equivalent to, is not less than 4,470 foot tons. The quantity of food consumed in these colonies would therefore appear to be far in excess of the actual requirements of the population, and though the excess may be looked upon as waste, it is none the less evidence of the wealth of the people whose circumstances permit them to indulge in it.

The following table gives the annual consumption of tobacco in <sup>Tobacco.</sup> Australasia and the principal countries of the world. The use of tobacco appears to be more prevalent in Queensland and Western Australia than in any of the other colonies, while the least consumption is in Tasmania and South Australia. Compared with other parts of the world, the average consumption of Australasia will not appear excessive:—

Average Annual Consumption of Tobacco per Inhabitant in various Countries.

Country.	lb.	Country.	lb.
Australasia .....	2·53	Austria-Hungary .....	3·77
New South Wales .....	2·75	Italy .....	1·34
Victoria .....	2·61	Spain .....	1·70
Queensland .....	3·34	Holland .....	6·92
South Australia .....	1·93	Belgium .....	3·15
Western Australia .....	3·18	Switzerland .....	3·24
Tasmania .....	1·97	Sweden .....	1·87
New Zealand .....	2·06	Denmark .....	3·70
United Kingdom .....	1·41	Turkey .....	4·37
France .....	2·05	United States .....	4·40
Germany .....	3·00	Canada .....	2·11
Russia .....	1·23	Brazil .....	4·37

Taking Australasia as a whole it compares very favourably with most of the European countries in the quantity of intoxicants annually consumed by each inhabitant, as the following statement <sup>Consumption of Intoxicants.</sup>

## CONSUMPTION OF INTOXICANTS.

shows. The figures are reduced to gallons of proof spirit from data given in Mulhall's Dictionary of Statistics, and would look even more favourable to Australasia were the fact of the large preponderance of males over females in these colonies made a feature in the comparison :—

## Consumption of Alcohol in various countries—in Proof Gallons.

Country.	Consumption.	Country.	Consumption.
	gallons		gallons.
United Kingdom .....	3·57	Portugal.....	3·00
France .....	5·10	Holland ..	4·00
Germany .....	3·08	Belgium .....	4·00
Russia .....	2·02	Denmark .....	5·00
Austria.....	2·80	Scandinavia .....	4·36
Italy .....	3·40	United States .....	2·65
Spain.....	2·85	Australasia .....	2·90

Intoxicants  
consumed by  
each Colony.

The following table shows the consumption for all the colonies during the year 1890. In the case of South Australia and Western Australia, whence no returns relating to breweries are obtainable, the consumption of beer has been assumed to be at the same rate as that of New South Wales. :—

## Consumption of Intoxicants in the Australasian Colonies, 1890.

Colony.	Spirits.		Wine.		Beer, &c.		Equivalent in Alcohol (proof) per inhabitant.
	Total.	Per inhab- itant.	Total.	Per inhab- itant.	Total.	Per inhab- itant.	
	galls.	galls.	galls.	galls.	galls.	galls.	galls.
New South Wales .....	1,201,946	1·09	802,150	0·73	11,710,936	10·63	2·68
Victoria .....	1,110,371	0·99	1,559,603	1·39	21,490,556	19·21	3·38
Queensland .....	613,620	1·58	270,508	0·70	3,948,003	10·16	3·10
South Australia .....	169,126	0·53	554,462	1·74	3,385,442	10·63	2·43
Western Australia .....	58,025	1·23	216,860	4·60	501,534	10·63	3·98
Tasmania .....	92,209	0·64	24,073	0·17	1,329,671	9·29	1·88
New Zealand .....	432,882	0·70	115,088	0·19	4,922,577	7·92	1·77
Total and Means....	3,678,179	0·98	3,542,744	0·95	47,288,809	12·65	2·90

The largest consumption of spirits per inhabitant is in Queensland, Western Australia being second. Wine is used most freely in Western Australia, South Australia, and Victoria, and beer in the Colony of Victoria. The average consumption of alcohol in all the colonies amounts to 2.90 gallons of proof spirit per inhabitant, ranging from 3.98 gallons in Western Australia to 1.77 gallons in New Zealand. The total for Victoria is 45 per cent. larger than that of New South Wales. The figures relating to the production of beer in Victoria may, however, be over-stated, for as no excise duty is levied in that colony it is quite possible that the returns furnished by the various breweries are greatly exaggerated.

It is popularly supposed that Australian wines and beers are not heavily charged with spirit as compared with the imported articles; this belief is erroneous. Several descriptions of Australian wines have a natural strength of 30 per cent. of proof spirit, while from analyses recently made it would appear that the strength of these wines offered for sale varies from 24 to 37 per cent. of spirit. On the same authority it was stated that imported beers ranged from 13.88 to 15.42 per cent. in the case of English, and from 9.58 to 11.76 per cent. of proof spirit in Lager, while the local manufacture varied according to the make from 11.21 to 15.12, the average being 13.75 per cent. It is generally understood, however, that since the imposition of excise duties on colonial beer in 1887, the strength of the article has been somewhat reduced, and does not average more than 13 per cent. of proof spirit.

Strength of  
Australian  
Wines and Beers.

### COST OF LIVING.

Sufficient data are not available to enable a calculation to be made of the cost of living in all the Colonies, but with the materials to hand an estimate can be arrived at for New South Wales. The

Cost of living in  
the Australasian  
Colonies.

conditions of life and style of living are much the same in the Colony named as in the other Colonies of the group, and the following figures may be taken as fairly indicative of the state of things obtaining in Australasia generally.

Income and expenditure of the people.

In the year 1890 an estimate was made of the yearly expenditure of the population of New South Wales, and it was found that while the income amounted to 63 million pounds sterling the expenditure amounted to £52,131,400, the balance of £10,868,600 representing the savings of the people, and the incomes of absentees. By "savings" is meant that portion of their income, whether realised or not, which was not expended by the people of the country on their necessary maintenance. It will, of course, be understood that no increments to land values have been taken as part of the unrealised income. The expenditure of the year 1890, distributed under various heads, is herewith given, as an indication of the way in which the people of this Colony disburse their income :—

Distribution of Expenditure of the Population of New South  
Wales, 1890.

	£
Food and non-alcoholic beverages.....	15,873,400
Fermented and spirituous liquors .....	4,774,100
Tobacco .....	1,193,600
Clothing and drapery .....	8,391,600
Furniture .....	805,900
Rent or value of buildings used as dwellings .....	6,726,700
Locomotion.....	1,705,600
Fuel and light .....	1,797,300
Personal attendance and service .....	1,918,000
Medical attendance, medicine, and nursing.....	1,427,800
Religion, charities, education (not including State expenditure)	716,400
Art and amusement .....	995,900
Books, newspapers, &c. ....	765,400
State services, postage, telegrams, succession dues .....	743,100
Household expenses not included elsewhere .....	2,814,600
Miscellaneous expenses .....	1,482,000
	£52,131,400



The expenditure for the year given amounted to £47 6s. 3d. per head, or at the rate of 2s. 7d. per day. The daily expenditure may be thus distributed :—

	Pence per day.	Proportion of Expenditure.
Food .....	9·5	30·4
Clothing .....	5·0	16·1
Rent .....	4·0	12·9
Direct Taxes .....	0·3	0·9
Sundries .....	12·3	39·7
	31·1	100·0

According to Mulhall the expenditure per inhabitant in the leading countries of Europe and in the United States is :—

## Annual Expenditure per head in various countries.

Country.	Expenditure per inhabitant	Country.	Expenditure per inhabitant.
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
United Kingdom .....	29 14 9	Norway .....	19 0 0
France .....	23 19 4	Denmark .....	28 11 5
Germany .....	20 3 4	Holland .....	20 17 4
Russia .....	10 1 11	Belgium .....	25 8 2
Austria .....	14 4 9	Switzerland .....	18 0 0
Italy .....	11 11 0	United States .....	32 16 2
Spain .....	15 12 6	Canada .....	23 6 2
Portugal .....	11 5 6	New South Wales .....	47 6 3
Sweden .....	20 8 4		

The table just given affords but a partial view of the question of the cost of living ; for if the total earnings of the countries above enumerated be considered as an element of comparison, it will be found that few countries approach New South Wales in the small proportion of income absorbed in providing food for the people. The following table, given on the same authority as the preceding, shows that, while the actual cost of food and drink is £18 14s. 9d. in this Colony, as against £14 4s. 9d. in Great Britain, the earnings required to pay for this food are not

Cost of living and earnings.

Cost of food compared with earnings.

## COST OF FOOD AND BEVERAGE.

larger proportionately than in the countries which show most favourably in the table. The number of working days in the year is assumed to be 300, allowing for thirteen days' sickness and fifty-two Sundays :—

## Annual Cost of Food and Beverage.

Country.	Average annual cost of food and beverage.	Ratio of cost of food to earnings.	Day's earnings equal to annual cost of food.
	£ s. d.	per cent.	days.
United Kingdom .....	14 4 9	42·2	127
France .....	12 4 5	44·0	132
Germany .....	10 18 5	49·1	148
Russia .....	5 19 7	52·0	156
Austria.....	7 17 4	50·8	152
Italy .....	6 4 10	51·2	153
Spain .....	8 9 0	51·2	154
Portugal .....	7 3 0	59·1	177
Sweden .....	9 18 11	45·2	136
Norway .....	9 15 0	47·6	143
Denmark .....	11 14 0	36·0	108
Holland .....	10 8 0	46·0	138
Belgium .....	12 3 1	43·4	130
Switzerland .....	8 11 7	45·2	135
United States.....	9 17 7	25·3	76
Canada.....	8 9 0	32·5	98
Australasia (New South Wales) .....	18 14 9	32·8	98