

## CHAPTER I.—RETAIL PRICES AND PRICE INDEX-NUMBERS.

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

The retail prices of the extensive range of commodities and services in common demand (commonly referred to as the "regimen") used in compiling the All Items ("C" series) retail price index (see list on pages 10-12 hereof) have been ascertained at frequent and regular intervals since 1923 for each of the six capital cities and for 27 of the more important towns of Australia. Comparable information is available for the month of November in each year 1914 to 1922 for each of the six capital cities.

The prices of food and groceries in approximately 200 towns throughout Australia were collected as at November of each year from 1913 to 1942 when collection was temporarily suspended as a war-time economy.

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

The methods by which prices used in the "C" series retail price index-numbers are ascertained and the measures adopted to ensure their accuracy and comparability are briefly as follows:—

- (i) Representative and reputable retailers are selected for each city and town covered by the collection and each is required to furnish a return of prices monthly in respect of food and groceries and quarterly in respect of other items. Prices for each item are obtained where practicable from about ten retailers in each of the capital cities, and from about five retailers in each of the provincial towns.
- (ii) These returns are collected under authority of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905-1938* which requires that returns be supplied accurately and promptly and ensures that particulars supplied by individual retailers will not be divulged to competitors or to any other person or Government authority. Penalties are provided against failure to supply returns, against supplying false information, and against failure to answer truthfully any question asked by an authorized officer in respect of the contents of the return.
- (iii) The actual collection of returns is carried out by qualified Field Officers of the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics working under the supervision of the Statisticians of the respective States. These Field Officers have very wide powers of investigation, including entry of premises and inspection of goods, records, etc.
- (iv) The Field Officers not only receive and check returns but visit the retail shops concerned, whenever necessary, to verify returns. In respect of articles of clothing and the like where variation of quality may be considerable Field Officers are equipped with samples of the goods used for price comparisons. In such cases the Field Officers visit every retail informant at each quarterly collection and personally inspect the relevant goods and prices thereof.

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

## § 2. Retail Price Index-Numbers.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The "regimen" and "weights" used in the "C" series retail price index-numbers are published in full on pages 10 to 12.

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

5. **Effects of War Conditions on Index.**—Under war-time conditions scarcity of certain types of goods, erratic supply and changes of grade due to standardization created unusual difficulty in obtaining the data necessary for measuring variations in prices and this difficulty still obtains. In some instances, this has rendered it necessary to substitute new grades, qualities or types of articles for those formerly used as indicators of changes in price. This has been the case more particularly in the clothing, household drapery and household utensils sections of the index. Substitutions of similar kind were necessary at times under normal conditions in order to meet changes of fashion and usage. In themselves, such substitutions are not injurious to the index provided the transitional difficulties can be solved as they arise. No change in principle is involved. The index continues to measure, as accurately

as may be, price variations, and price variations only. Just as in the pre-war period, application of multipliers (called "grafting factors") serves to neutralize those differences in prices which are solely due to substitution of a new item for one which has ceased to be available or in common use. The net effect of this process is that the price of the old item is taken as typical of price variation in its class up to the time of substitution, and the prices of the new item as typical of such changes in price thereafter.

In normal times, popular usage of items in general consumption changes slowly and the weight of items and groups in the regimen is changed only at long intervals. In war-time scarcity of supplies of some goods, rationing and kindred factors actually produce substantial changes in usage both long term and short term. The weights of the retail price indexes have not been changed and continue as in pre-war years. (See § 9 (2) hereof.)

The "C" series retail price index, as published, measures the aggregate variation in prices of the regimen of items adopted in peace times in peace-time proportion. This ensures comparability of the index on that specific basis. Its practical significance under war conditions is limited because a single index cannot take into account all changes that occur.

If it were practicable, it would be desirable to compile an additional index to measure variations over the war period, having regard to the fact that the relative consumptions of some items of the regimen have been altered by war conditions, and that the prices of some items not included in the regimen have moved differently from the variations recorded by the "C" series index. This would provide an alternative method of comparison presenting another aspect of price movement in war-time.

### § 3. Various Series of Retail Price Index-Numbers.

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

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

The "B" series comprises only the food, groceries and housing sections of the All Items ("C" series) index. Reference is made on pages 35 to 37 of this Report to the "A" series and the "D" series (no longer compiled), the "Court" series and various other series of retail price index-numbers.

Although considerable space is given herein to the "B" series index-numbers (see page 26), reference to them should be made only in respect of the movement in prices in the three sections (food, groceries and rent) which they embrace.

Subject to consideration of special war-time influences, the "C" series in total provides a reliable measure of aggregate variations in retail prices (as well as of group indexes for component sections) of a high percentage of goods and services used in wage-earner households. This index is compiled for :—

- (a) the capital city of each of the six States,
- (b) four other principal towns in each of the six States,
- (c) weighted average of five towns (including capital city) in each of the six States,

- (d) weighted average for the Six Capital Cities combined,  
 (e) weighted average for the Thirty Towns (including capital cities),  
 (f) separate indexes for Warwick, Port Augusta and Canberra.

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

#### § 4. Retail Price Levels 1914-1945.

The aggregate indexes for 1914, 1921 and 1939 to 1944 for the Thirty Towns are published in summary form on page 21 hereof, while the following table furnishes the relevant index-numbers for the Six Capital Cities as a whole, for certain significant dates since November, 1914—the earliest date for which this index is available.

##### ALL ITEMS ("C" SERIES) RETAIL PRICE INDEX-NUMBERS. WEIGHTED AVERAGE OF SIX CAPITAL CITIES.

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

1914, November	..	..	687 (Beginning of War I.)
1918, November	..	..	905 (End of War I.)
1920, November	..	..	1,166 (Post-War peak)
1922, November	..	..	975 (Post-War trough)
1929, Year	..	..	1,033 (Pre-Depression peak)
1933, Year	..	..	804 (Depression trough)
1939, September Quarter	..	..	916 (Pre-War II.)
1943, March Quarter	..	..	1,123 (Pre-Price Stabilization)
1943, June Quarter	..	..	1,143 (War II. peak)
1944, March Quarter	..	..	1,124
1945, March Quarter	..	..	1,123
1945, December Quarter	..	..	1,129

These indexes reveal a rise of approximately 32 per cent. during the first world war, followed by a further rise of 29 per cent. in the two post-war years (November, 1918, to November, 1920). From November, 1920 to November, 1922, there was a fall of 16 per cent., and the index remained relatively stable until the onset of the depression in 1929. During the four years of the depression 1929 to 1933 the index fell by 22 per cent., rising thereafter steadily until 1939 when it was nearly 14 per cent. above the level of 1933, and approximately at the level it had occupied at the date of the Armistice of 1918. Between the outbreak of war (September, 1939) and March, 1943, the index rose by approximately 23 per cent. to a level slightly below that reached at the height of the post-war boom in 1920.

Price control was established by the Government immediately after the outbreak of the war under Regulations dated 28th September, 1939, and a national policy of price stabilization was applied as from 12th April, 1943, backed by more stringent price control and price subsidies. The retail price level, as measured by the index, remained relatively steady throughout the year 1944 and during the year 1945 at the level of March, 1943. This stabilized level is approximately 23 per cent. above that of 1939 and 63 per cent. above the level prevailing at the beginning of the first world war in 1914.

An account of price control measures and of price stabilization in Australia was published in the *Official Year Book of the Commonwealth* No. 35 page 455 and is also included in issue No. 36.

## RETAIL PRICE LEVELS 1914-1945.

The movement in the various sections of the index, and in the index as a whole for each year for which it has been compiled is shown in the following table:—

**The All Items ("C" Series) Retail Price Index and its Sectional or "Group" Index-Numbers for the Six Capital Cities combined, 1914 to 1945.**

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

Period.	Food and Groceries.	Rent (4 and 5 Rooms). (c)	Food, Groceries and Rent (4 and 5 Rooms) "B" Series).	Clothing.	Miscellaneous.	All Items ("C" Series).
1914 (b) .. ..	641	649	644	754	749	687
1915 (b) .. ..	842	659	777	792	786	782
1916 (b) .. ..	812	665	760	881	802	795
1917 (b) .. ..	836	685	782	992	882	847
1918 (b) .. ..	861	722	812	1,097	972	901
1919 (b) .. ..	1,026	768	934	1,238	1,036	1,022
1920 (b) .. ..	1,209	831	1,082	1,365	1,194	1,166
1921 (b) .. ..	950	877	924	1,246	1,010	1,013
1922 (b) .. ..	945	929	939	1,052	999	975
1923 .. ..	1,009	950	988	1,045	999	1,003
1924 .. ..	969	988	975	1,003	1,004	987
1925 .. ..	998	1,008	1,002	991	992	997
1926 .. ..	1,023	1,026	1,024	986	908	1,011
1927 .. ..	1,000	1,030	1,011	975	1,008	1,002
1928 .. ..	985	1,066	1,014	997	1,010	1,009
1929 .. ..	1,044	1,073	1,054	996	1,007	1,033
1930 .. ..	941	1,047	978	953	999	975
1931 .. ..	826	901	852	853	973	873
1932 .. ..	796	817	803	804	958	830
1933 .. ..	751	804	768	787	950	804
1934 .. ..	783	810	792	785	944	817
1935 .. ..	806	839	818	783	946	812
1936 .. ..	825	879	844	792	947	850
1937 .. ..	831	912	872	811	960	873
1938 .. ..	886	943	906	829	961	897
1939 .. ..	927	965	939	841	962	920
1940 .. ..	939	973	950	956	998	957
1941 .. ..	947	976	956	1,118	1,060	1,008
1942 .. ..	1,031	976	1,007	1,308	1,112	1,091
1943 .. ..	1,037	975	1,011	1,440	1,160	1,131
1944 .. ..	1,026	976	1,004	1,435	1,165	1,126
1945 .. ..	1,034	975	1,009	1,420	1,161	1,126
Quarter—						
1939—March ..	935	959	942	832	960	919
June ..	925	963	938	836	961	917
September ..	920	967	936	836	961	916
December ..	927	969	941	858	967	926
1941—March ..	958	976	963	1,057	1,039	995
June ..	939	976	951	1,104	1,047	1,000
September ..	936	976	949	1,128	1,073	1,009
December ..	954	976	960	1,122	1,080	1,029
1942—March ..	991	977	983	1,216	1,095	1,053
June ..	1,025	976	1,003	1,285	1,099	1,081
September ..	1,055	976	1,022	1,342	1,110	1,106
December ..	1,051	976	1,019	1,388	1,144	1,122
1943—March ..	1,040	975	1,012	1,409	1,140	1,123
June ..	1,058	975	1,023	1,466	1,158	1,143
September ..	1,036	975	1,010	1,450	1,165	1,133
December ..	1,015	975	997	1,456	1,168	1,123
1944—March ..	1,020	976	1,000	1,434	1,166	1,124
June ..	1,026	976	1,004	1,429	1,165	1,125
September ..	1,036	975	1,010	1,433	1,164	1,120
December ..	1,022	975	1,002	1,442	1,163	1,126
1945—March ..	1,028	975	1,005	1,421	1,161	1,123
June ..	1,037	975	1,011	1,416	1,161	1,125
September ..	1,040	975	1,013	1,415	1,161	1,126
December ..	1,030	975	1,007	1,448	1,161	1,129

(a) See footnote (a) on page 9.

(b) November.

(c) See footnote (b) on page 9.

### § 5. Increases in Retail Prices over War Period.

1. **Australia.**—The following statement shows for the Six Capitals separately, and as a whole, the percentage increases which have taken place in retail prices over the war period, from September quarter 1939, to the December quarter 1945, inclusive. The proportionate increase in the total index for each capital city is shown in the line marked "Total". The column headed "C" series index dissects the total percentage rise to show what part of it was due to the rise in prices in each of the four main groups of items. Thus, of the 22.9 per cent. increase for Sydney 3.8 was due to food and groceries, 0.1 to house rent, 14.6 to clothing and 4.4 to miscellaneous items. The column headed "Group Index" shows the percentage increase in prices of items in each group considered as a group. Thus, for Sydney prices in the food and groceries group increased by 10.6 per cent., house rents by 0.4 per cent., prices of clothing by 73.5 per cent. and prices of miscellaneous items by 23.9 per cent. These when weighted and combined in the proportions of the "C" series index showed a rise of 22.9 per cent. For the Six Capital Cities as a whole the increase over the war period shown was 23.3 per cent.

Group.	Sydney.		Melbourne.		Brisbane.	
	"C" Series Index.	Group Index.	"C" Series Index.	Group Index.	"C" Series Index.	Group Index.
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
Food and groceries	3.8	10.6	4.9	13.2	4.5	12.6
House rent ..	0.1	0.4	0.4	1.7	0.2	0.9
Clothing ..	14.6	73.5	14.9	73.5	15.5	73.4
Miscellaneous ..	4.4	23.9	3.7	18.9	3.8	18.6
Total ..	22.9	22.9	23.9	23.9	24.0	24.0

Group.	Adelaide.		Perth.		Hobart.		Six Capitals.(a)	
	"C" Series Index.	Group Index.	"C" Series Index.	Group Index.	"C" Series Index.	Group Index.	"C" Series Index.	Group Index.
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
Food and groceries	4.5	12.7	4.3	11.3	5.8	15.9	4.4	12.0
House rent ..	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.6	0.2	0.8	0.2	0.8
Clothing ..	13.9	66.4	14.3	70.2	14.5	69.8	14.7	73.2
Miscellaneous ..	4.0	18.9	3.8	19.5	3.3	16.9	4.0	20.8
Total ..	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	23.8	23.8	23.3	23.3

(a) Weighted average.

The foregoing comparisons refer to two points of time (i.e., the months immediately preceding the war and the closing months of 1945), at each of which special temporary factors may have influenced relative price levels. For instance, prices of certain foods (e.g., meat) fluctuate with seasonal conditions. The percentage increases shown do not, therefore, necessarily indicate the degree of increase due solely to war causes.

2. **International Comparisons.**—In the following table, comparisons are made for both the present and the last war periods of the increases which occurred in the several countries shown:—

**Retail Price Index-Numbers.**  
(FOOD, RENT, CLOTHING, MISCELLANEOUS HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE.)

Date.	Australia.	Great Britain.	Canada.	New Zealand.	Union of South Africa.	United States of America.
(A): 1914-1919.						
	(a)				(b)	
1914 July .. ..	100	100	100	100	100(c)	100
1915 Year .. ..	114	125	97	108	103	102
1916 " .. ..	116	148	102	115	106	109
1917 " .. ..	123	180	130	125	114	128
1918 " .. ..	132	203	146	135	118	156
1919 " .. ..	149	208	155	145	126	175
(a) November.	(b) Food, Fuel, Light and Rent.	(c) Average for year 1914.				
(B): 1939-1945.						
1939—					(a)	
September Quarter	100	100	100	100	100	100
1940—Year(c) ..	105	119	105	104	104	100
1941—Year(c) ..	110	104	111	108	109	105
1942—Year(c) ..	119	129	116	111	118	116
1943—						
March Quarter ..	123	128	116	115(b)	127	121
June " .. ..	125	128	117	114(b)	125	124
September " ..	124	128	118	113(b)	126	123
December " ..	123	128	118	114(b)	127	124
Year .. ..	124	128	117	114	126	123
1944—						
March Quarter ..	123	129	118	114	128	123
June " .. ..	123	129	118	114	130	124
September " ..	123	130	118	114	129	126
December " ..	123	129	118	114	132	126
Year .. ..	123	129	118	114	130	125
1945—						
March Quarter ..	123	130	118	114	132	126
June " .. ..	123	131	118	114	133	127
September " ..	123	132	119	114	133	128
December " ..	123	131	119	114	133	128
Year .. ..	123	131	119	114	133	127

(a) Food, Rent and Miscellaneous Expenditure (Base December Quarter, 1942 = 100). (b) Old Index as varied by New War-time Index (c) Quarterly indexes appear in preceding issues.

At various stages during the 1914-19 War most of these countries introduced some measures of price control. But at an early stage in the 1939-45 War these countries introduced price control measures which became more stringent as the war progressed, culminating in a policy of price stabilization.

Immediately after the outbreak of war in September, 1939, the Commonwealth Government took steps to control prices, and, by proclamations issued from day to day, pegged prices of various commodities at those ruling on 31st August, 1939. The National Security (Prices) Regulations were proclaimed on 28th September, 1939, under the authority of the National Security Act, and established the basic principles of war-time price control, provided for the appointment of a Commonwealth Prices Commissioner and conferred upon him extensive powers to control the price of goods declared for that purpose by the Minister for Trade and Customs.



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

I. The "Regimen".—The "regimen" from which the "C" series retail price indexes are compiled consists of a list of commodities and services which commonly enter into the consumption of the average household in respect of which comparative prices can be ascertained with due precision from time to time and place to place. (See Section 2 (3.) hereof.) The regimen is divided into the following Groups and Sections:—

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

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

Group. (a)	Content.	Frequency.
I.	Food and Groceries .. .. .	Monthly
II.	Housing (4 and 5 rooms)(b) .. .. .	Quarterly
I. and II.	Food, Groceries and Housing (4 and 5 rooms) ("B" Series) .. .. .	Quarterly
III.	Clothing .. .. .	Quarterly
IV.	Miscellaneous Household Requirements .. .. .	Quarterly
I., II., III. and IV.	Food, Groceries, Housing (4 and 5 rooms), Clothing and Miscellaneous ("C" Series) .. .. .	Quarterly
I.	Food and Groceries ("200 Towns" Series)(c)	Yearly

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

(a) "Group" or "Sectional" index-numbers in the various tables throughout this Report cannot be compared with each other in order to show the relative cost of Food and Groceries, Housing, Clothing or Miscellaneous requirements, since each "Group" or "Section" (or combination thereof) has its own Base = 1,000, viz., the weighted average cost for the Six Capital Cities as a whole during the five-yearly period 1923-1927 for that "Group" or "Section". (b) Rent.—The rent index-numbers shown in the tables in this Report measure the proportionate rise and fall in the average weekly rentals paid for houses of four and five rooms taking corresponding houses throughout. They are "price" indexes in the strict sense, i.e., they are designed to measure only the "price" element in rent fluctuations. Similarly, "average rents" where shown are indexes of "price" changes in rentals expressed in terms of pence. They are not the average of rents actually paid by all tenants of 4 and 5-roomed houses. It would be inappropriate to include the average of rents actually paid in an index designed to measure price changes only. The average of rents actually paid is ascertained periodically by Census methods—(see also page 2 hereof). (c) Compilation suspended as a war time economy after November, 1942.

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

## Retail Price Indexes—Regimen.

## GROUP I.—FOOD AND GROCERIES.

No.	Item.	Unit.	"Weight" or Mass Unit (per capita.)	Cost of Items in Regimen as percentage of aggregate cost—Melbourne, Dec. Quarter, 1914. (a)
<b>SECTION A.—GROCERIES.</b>				
1	Bread, white flour (cash delivered) ..	2-lb. loaf ..	100	3.08
2	Flour, ordinary .. ..	2 lb. ..	25	0.58
3	Flour, self-raising .. ..	2-lb. pkt... ..	12	0.50
4	Tea .. ..	1-lb. pkt... ..	8	1.20
5	Sugar, white granulated, 1A ..	1 lb. ..	100	2.22
6	Rice, polished (Australian) ..	1 lb. ..	8	0.16
7	Sago, seed tapioca .. ..	1 lb. ..	1	0.04
8	Jam, plum .. ..	1½-lb. tin.. ..	8	0.49
9	Golden Syrup .. ..	2-lb. tin ..	1	0.04
10	Oats, flaked, loose .. ..	1 lb. ..	8	0.17
11	Raisins, seeded .. ..	1-lb. pkt... ..	5	0.36
12	Currants, loose, 2-Crown ..	1 lb. ..	2	0.12
13	Apricots, dried, loose, 2-Crown ..	1 lb. ..	1	0.10
14	Peaches, canned .. ..	30-oz. tin ..	3	0.22
15	Pears, canned .. ..	30-oz. tin ..	1	0.08
16	Salmon, in tins .. ..	1-lb. tin ..	3	0.35
17	Potatoes, new and old .. ..	7 lb. ..	8	0.84
18	Onions, brown .. ..	1 lb. ..	14	0.19
19	Soap .. ..	1 lb. ..	16	0.63
20	Kerosene, lighting, bulk ..	quart ..	4	0.14
<b>SECTION B.—DAIRY PRODUCTS.</b>				
21	Butter, factory "choicest" ..	1 lb. ..	30	3.42
22	Cheese, ordinary, mild .. ..	1 lb. ..	4	0.36
23	Eggs, standard, new laid ..	1 doz. ..	6	0.74
24	Bacon, rashers, best middle ..	1 lb. ..	12	1.53
25	Milk, condensed, sweetened ..	1 tin ..	5	0.28
26	Milk, fresh—in sealed bottles or not bottled .. ..	quart ..	72	2.94
<b>SECTION C.—MEAT.</b>				
Beef (fresh)—				
27	Sirloin (Roast) (bone in) ..	1 lb. ..	18	1.36
28	Prime Rib (Roast) including bone ..	1 lb. ..	22	1.38
29	Steak—Rump .. ..	1 lb. ..	11	1.29
30	Steak—Chuck (stewing) ..	1 lb. ..	20	1.15
31	Sausages .. ..	1 lb. ..	7	0.30
Beef (corned)—				
32	Silverside .. ..	1 lb. ..	14	0.99
33	Brisket, rolled .. ..	1 lb. ..	15	0.77
Mutton (fresh)—				
34	Leg .. ..	1 lb. ..	20	1.23
35	Forequarter .. ..	1 lb. ..	15	0.48
36	Loin, without flap .. ..	1 lb. ..	4	0.21
37	Chops—Loin .. ..	1 lb. ..	30	1.72
38	Chops—Leg .. ..	1 lb. ..	10	0.61
Pork (fresh)—				
39	Leg .. ..	1 lb. ..	3	0.27
40	Loin, best end .. ..	1 lb. ..	3	0.28
41	Chops .. ..	1 lb. ..	3	0.29
<b>GROUP II.—HOUSING.—SECTION D.—RENT.</b>				
42	House Accommodation(b)	week ..	52(c)	19.77

(a) "C" Series continued on pages 14 and 15. (b) Four and five roomed houses. (c) Per household.

Retail Price Indexes—Regimen—continued.  
GROUP III.—CLOTHING.

No.	Item.	"Weight" or Mass Unit (per capita).	No.	Item.	"Weight" or Mass Unit (per capita).
<b>SECTION E.—CLOTHING—MAN.</b>			<b>SECTION G.—CLOTHING—BOY (10½ YEARS)—contd.</b>		
1	Suit, ready-made, Worsted (Australian)	0.67	46	Overcoat, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	0.33
2	Trousers, working, Woolen Tweed (Australian)	2.00	47	Cap, Skull, Cloth .. .. .	1.50
3	Overcoat, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	0.25	48	Shirt, Sports .. .. .	5.00
4	Hat, Fur Felt (Australian) ..	1.00	49	Singlet, Wool (short sleeves) ..	1.00
5	Shirt, Fashion, with two collars ..	1.67	50	Singlet, Cotton (athletic) ..	1.00
6	Shirt, Working, Drill .. .. .	4.00	51	Braces .. .. .	1.00
7	.. .. .	.. .. .	52	Stockings, Golf, All Wool ..	4.00
8	Singlet, Wool (short sleeves) ..	1.00	53	Pyjamas, Winceyette .. .. .	1.50
9	Singlet, Cotton (athletic) .. ..	1.00	54	Pullover, All Wool .. .. .	0.50
10	Underpants, Wool (full length) ..	1.00	55	Shoes, Box Yearling .. a (3.13)	1.00
11	Underpants, Cotton "Shorts" ..	1.00	56	.. .. .	.. .. .
12	Sox, All Wool .. a (4.65)	7.00			
13	.. .. .	.. .. .			
14	Braces .. .. .	1.33			
15	Handkerchief, Cotton .. .. .	6.00			
16	Pyjamas, Winceyette .. .. .	1.50			
17	Pullover, All Wool .. .. .	1.00			
18	Shoes (for best wear), Box Calf	0.50			
19	Boots, working, Box Hide .. ..	1.50			
<b>SECTION F.—CLOTHING—WOMAN.</b>			<b>SECTION H.—CLOTHING—GIRL (7 YEARS).</b>		
10	Costume, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	0.50	58	Tunic, Wool .. .. .	1.00
11	Skirt, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	1.25	59	.. .. .	.. .. .
12	.. .. .	.. .. .	60	Dress, Cotton .. .. .	3.00
13	Hat, Fur Felt (Australian) ..	0.75	61	Top Coat, Tweed (Australian) ..	0.33
14	Hat, Straw .. .. .	1.50	62	Hat, Wool Felt (Australian) ..	1.00
15	Frock, ready-made, Cotton .. ..	1.50	63	Hat, Straw .. .. .	2.00
16	Frock, ready-made, Art Silk ..	1.50	64	.. .. .	.. .. .
17	Blouse, Cotton Brocade .. .. .	4.50	65	Petticoat, Art Silk .. .. .	1.00
18	Undervest, Wool and Art Silk ..	1.50	66	Singlet, Silk and Wool .. .. .	0.50
19	Undervest, Art Silk .. .. .	1.50	67	Singlet, Art Silk .. .. .	0.50
20	.. .. .	.. .. .	68	Bloomers, Cotton, fleecy-lined ..	2.00
21	Bloomers, Art Silk .. .. .	4.50	69	Bloomers, Art Silk .. .. .	2.00
22	Princess Slip, Art Silk .. .. .	1.00	70	Sox, Ankle, Cotton and Art Silk ..	4.00
23	Stockings, Art Silk .. .. .	6.00	71	Pyjamas, Winceyette .. .. .	0.33
24	Stockings, Lisle .. .. .	3.00	72	Pyjamas, Art Silk .. .. .	0.33
25	Gloves, Fabric .. .. .	2.25	73	Pullover, All Wool .. .. .	0.50
26	Gloves, Nappa .. .. .	0.75	74	Shoes (for best wear), Patent Leather	0.67
27	Nightdress, Art Silk .. a (2.49)	1.50	75	Shoes (school), Box Yearling ..	1.50
28	Pyjamas, Winceyette .. .. .	1.50			
29	.. .. .	.. .. .			
30	Apron, Cotton .. .. .	6.00			
31	Cardigan, All Wool .. .. .	0.50			
32	Shoes (for best wear), Glace Kid ..	1.50			
33	Shoes (for ordinary wear), Box Calf	1.50			
<b>SECTION G.—CLOTHING—BOY (10½ YEARS).</b>			<b>SECTION I.—CLOTHING—BOY (3½ YEARS).</b>		
44	Suit, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	1.00	76	Shirt, Ranger .. .. .	3.00
45	Pants, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	3.00	77	Pants, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	3.00
			78	Overcoat, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	0.33
			79	Hat, Cloth .. .. .	1.53
			80	Singlet, Wool .. .. .	1.00
			81	Singlet, Cotton (athletic) ..	1.00
			82	Sox, Ankle, Cotton and Art Silk ..	4.00
			83	Pyjamas, Winceyette .. .. .	1.00
			84	Pullover, All Wool .. .. .	0.50
			85	Shoes (for best wear), Patent Leather	1.00
			86	Shoes (for ordinary wear), Tan Yearling	1.00

\* The Mass Units were raised by 50 per cent. throughout this Section to restore its due proportionate "weight" in the Clothing Group of the Index as from September quarter, 1936.

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

## Retail Price Indexes—Regimen—continued.

## GROUP IV.—MISCELLANEOUS.

No.	Item.	"Weight" or Mass Unit (per household)	No.	Item.	"Weight" or Mass Unit (per household).
<b>SECTION K.—HOUSEHOLD DRAPERY.</b>			<b>SECTION L.—HOUSEHOLD UTENSILS—continued.</b>		
1	Blankets, D.R. (pair) ..	0.07	26	Knife, Table (stainless) ..	0.10
2	Blankets, S.B. (pair) ..	0.14	27	Spoon, Tea ..	0.08
3	Quilt, D.B. Marcella ..	0.25	28	Spoon, Dessert ..	0.08
4	.. ..	..	29	Fork, Table ..	0.10
5	Sheets, D.B. (pair) ..	0.50	30	Globe, Electric Light (gas-filled)	2.00
6	Sheets, S.B. (pair) ..	1.00	31	Iron, Electric (full size) ..	0.10
7	Pillow Slip, Cotton ..	5.00	<b>SECTION M.—FUEL AND LIGHT.</b>		
8	Towel ..	3.00	32	Firewood (blocks) (cwt.) (b) ..	40
9	Table Cloth ..	0.20	33	Gas, cooking (units) (b) ..	1,518
10	Tea Towel (yard) ..	4.00	34	Electric lighting (units) ..	130
<b>SECTION L.—HOUSEHOLD UTENSILS.</b>			35	Electric power (units) (b) ..	130
11	Cup and Saucer (Stone China) ..	2.00	<b>SECTION N.—OTHER MISCELLANEOUS.</b>		
12	Plate, Dinner (Stone China) ..	2.00	No.	Item.	Amount per week (per household)
13	Jug, Quart (Earthenware) ..	1.00	36	Union Dues ..	d
14	Teapot, Brownware (2-pint) ..	0.25	37	Lodge Dues ..	(c)
15	Basin, Pudding (Enamel), 6½-inch	1.00	38	Medicine ..	24
16	Tumbler (8-oz.) ..	1.00	39	Newspapers ..	(c)
17	Kettle, Enamel (4-pint) a (o. 37)	0.20	40	Recreation ..	24
18	.. ..	..	41	Smoking ..	(c)
19	Saucepan, Enamel (3-pint) ..	0.20	42	Fares ..	(c)
20	Bucket, Galvanized (11-inch) ..	0.20	43	School requisites ..	4½
21	Dipper, Galvanized (2-quart) ..	0.20			
22	Broom, Millet ..	0.50			
23	Broom, Hair, complete (12-inch)	0.33			
24	Brush, Scrubbing (10-inch) ..	1.50			
25	Mop, Polishing, complete ..	0.20			

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

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

(c) A definite basic amount per week is provided for each of these items, and varied in accordance with Resolution 20 of the Conference of Statisticians, 1936.

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

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

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

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

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

(ii) The five sections into which the clothing group is divided are somewhat arbitrary, but they follow those adopted by the Royal Commission on the Basic Wage (see p. 90). The sections for men and women are now regarded as being applicable to persons aged seventeen years and upwards. The section for a boy aged ten and a half years is taken as representative of both sexes from ten to sixteen years; the section for a girl aged seven as representative of both sexes from five to nine years; and the section for the boy aged three and a half years is taken as representative of children aged four years and under.

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

(iv) Foods of some importance, such as fresh fish, and fruit and vegetables other than potatoes and onions, are not included in the regimen because comparable prices for a standard grade cannot be obtained from time to time or place to place and because of marked seasonal fluctuations in supply and consumption. The inclusion of such items, therefore, would impair the accuracy of the index. In the original regimen certain omissions were made partly on account of the difficulty of securing comparable prices.

Some cuts of meat, for example, are excluded because they are not uniformly standardized. Mutton is included and not lamb because the latter, in many places, is available only seasonally. However, the appropriate total weight for meat is distributed amongst the "cuts" included in the index. Proprietary lines of breakfast foods are excluded because they are not universally available.

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

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

3. **Relative "Aggregate Expenditure" of Items and Groups.**—In the *base period* of the index (average of the years 1923 to 1927) the relative importance of each of the four main groups, expressed as a percentage of the weighted average "aggregate expenditure" in the Six Capital Cities (from which all relative index-numbers are derived) was—Food and groceries, 38.7 per cent.; house rent, 21.3 per cent.; clothing, 23.0 per cent.; and miscellaneous, 17.0 per cent., as shown in the first column of the following table. Although the "weights" of each item in the regimen are kept virtually constant, the relative "aggregate expenditure" of the various items and groups will, of course, vary from time to time as relative prices change and, in addition, the distribution of relative expenditure as between the groups and sections is varied from time to time for "relative weighting" purposes on the basis of the changing relativities of population and households as disclosed by successive Censuses.

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

has been published in previous issues of this Report, and these figures for the December quarter, 1944, are shown in the second column of the table for comparison with those of the *base period* of 1923-27:—

Group.	Section.	Percentage of Aggregate Expenditure.			
		1923-27. (Base). Six Capital Cities.		Dec. Qtr., 1944. Melbourne.	
I. Food and Groceries	A Groceries ..	17.44	} 38.66	11.51	} 33.11
	B Dairy Produce ..	10.28		9.27	
	C Meat ..	10.94		12.33	
II. Housing ..	D House Rent— (4 and 5 rooms) ..	21.26	21.26	19.77	19.77
	E Man ..	8.69	} 23.04	10.66	} 28.27
F Woman ..	9.12	13.17			
III. Clothing ..	G Boy, 10½ years ..	2.89		} 17.04	
	H Girl, 7 years ..	1.36	1.59		
IV. Miscellaneous ..	J Boy, 3½ years ..	0.98	} 17.04	0.79	} 11.94
	K Household Drapery	1.09		1.91	
	L Household Utensils	0.49		0.64	
	M Fuel and Light ..	4.92		4.36	
	N Other Miscellaneous	10.54		11.94	
		100.00		100.00	

It should be noted, however, that percentage price variations are measured from the "aggregate expenditures" of the *base period* of the index, and the percentages shown in the foregoing table for the *base period* 1923-27, therefore, are the proportionate "weights" applicable to the various groups and sections in measuring such variations in the index as a whole calculated to *this base period*, and *not* the percentage "weights" of any other period, e.g., those shown for the December quarter, 1944—which would only become of significance in the measurement of variations if the latter quarter were adopted as a *new base* for the index.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(a) November.

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

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

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

New South Wales.		Victoria.		Queensland.		South Australia.		Western Australia.		Tasmania.	
Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.
Sydney ..	1235	Melbourne	992	Brisbane	300	Adelaide	313	Perth, etc.	208	Hobart	60
Newcastle	105	Ballarat ..	38	"Woomba	26	Kadina, etc.	11	Kalg'lie, etc.	17	Launceston	33
Broken Hill	27	Bendigo ..	29	Rockham'n	29	Pt. Pirie	12	Northam	5	Burnie ..	4
Goulburn	15	Geelong ..	39	†Townsville	26	ML Gamb'r	5	Bunbury	5	Devonport	5
Bathurst	10	W'nambool	9	†Bundaberg	11	Peterbor'gh	3	Geraldton	5	Queen's'wn	4
Total ..	1392	Total ..	1107	†Total ..	392	Total ..	344	Total ..	240	Total ..	106

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

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

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

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



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

1. **General.**—The results of inquiries into price movements are available in the following publications:—

(i) *Monthly.*—A mimeographed statement is published each month giving index-numbers for Food and Groceries. The *Monthly Review of Business Statistics* contains annual, quarterly and monthly index-numbers to the latest available date.

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

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

2. **All Items ("C" Series) Index.**—On page 6 hereof is published a table of weighted averages for the six capital cities combined, of "C" series retail price index-numbers, together with index-numbers for the four main groups of items in the "C" Series Index for each year 1914-1945.

In the pages immediately following are published:—

- (i) the "C" series index-number for the last quarter of each year 1939 to 1945 (page 18) and for the month of November, 1914-1920 (page 19), for each capital city and for the six capital cities combined, and showing also separate indexes for each of the four main groups of items;
- (ii) the "C" Series index numbers 1914, 1921, 1929 and 1938-1944 for each of the 30 towns, with the weighted averages for each State, and 30 towns and the six capital cities, together with index numbers for the same periods for three additional towns for which this index is tabulated, (page 20);
- (iii) the "C" series index numbers 1914, 1921 and 1939-1944 and for the six quarters ended 31st December, 1944, for each of the 30 towns with the weighted averages for each State, the six capital cities, and the 30 towns (page 21);
- (iv) "Group" index-numbers for each of the four main Groups of items in the "C" series index for dates and places mentioned in (iii) above (pages 22 to 25).

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

Period.	Sydney.	Mel- bourne.	Brisbane.	Adelaide.	Perth.	Hobart.	Six Capitals. (b)
<b>GROUP I.—FOOD AND GROCERIES.</b>							
Dec. Qtr. 1939 ..	940	942	859	888	926	941	927
" " 1940 ..	974	961	920	903	949	972	956
" " 1941 ..	969	949	920	915	982	986	954
" " 1942 ..	1,060	1,069	977	1,027	1,048	1,082	1,051
" " 1943 ..	1,015	1,037	950	985	1,045	1,058	1,015
" " 1944 ..	1,022	1,046	959	988	1,049	1,039	1,022
" " 1945 ..	1,029	1,055	963	1,001	1,051	1,062	1,030

<b>GROUP II.—HOUSING (4 AND 5 ROOMS).(c)</b>							
Dec. Qtr. 1939 ..	1,040	960	855	891	882	930	969
" " 1940 ..	1,042	973	859	892	882	933	974
" " 1941 ..	1,044	975	860	893	884	933	976
" " 1942 ..	1,042	974	862	893	885	932	976
" " 1943 ..	1,042	974	862	893	885	931	975
" " 1944 ..	1,043	973	863	892	886	933	975
" " 1945 ..	1,043	973	863	892	886	934	975

**GROUPS I. AND II.—FOOD, GROCERIES AND HOUSING.**

Dec. Qtr. 1939 ..	977	947	855	887	907	935	941
" " 1940 ..	998	964	894	897	921	954	961
" " 1941 ..	996	957	895	904	942	963	960
" " 1942 ..	1,051	1,030	930	973	982	1,021	1,019
" " 1943 ..	1,023	1,010	914	947	980	1,006	997
" " 1944 ..	1,027	1,015	919	948	983	995	1,002
" " 1945 ..	1,032	1,021	922	957	984	1,010	1,007

**GROUP III.—CLOTHING.**

Dec. Qtr. 1939 ..	854	862	865	869	840	867	858
" " 1940 ..	1,046	1,042	1,027	1,041	1,010	1,038	1,040
" " 1941 ..	1,179	1,186	1,186	1,182	1,169	1,184	1,182
" " 1942 ..	1,382	1,423	1,355	1,357	1,355	1,384	1,388
" " 1943 ..	1,449	1,435	1,433	1,422	1,395	1,430	1,436
" " 1944 ..	1,441	1,464	1,430	1,416	1,412	1,424	1,442
" " 1945 ..	1,459	1,445	1,446	1,433	1,423	1,447	1,448

**GROUP IV.—MISCELLANEOUS.**

Dec. Qtr. 1939 ..	943	983	960	1,027	957	945	967
" " 1940 ..	1,004	1,021	986	1,060	995	977	1,013
" " 1941 ..	1,072	1,083	1,043	1,156	1,058	1,030	1,080
" " 1942 ..	1,140	1,144	1,109	1,209	1,127	1,095	1,144
" " 1943 ..	1,179	1,157	1,140	1,212	1,140	1,109	1,168
" " 1944 ..	1,169	1,158	1,134	1,213	1,139	1,099	1,163
" " 1945 ..	1,163	1,158	1,133	1,213	1,139	1,099	1,161

**GROUPS I. TO IV.—ALL ITEMS OF HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE.**

Dec. Qtr. 1939 ..	943	932	874	906	899	919	926
" " 1940 ..	1,008	989	938	957	953	976	986
" " 1941 ..	1,048	1,028	985	1,010	1,012	1,023	1,029
" " 1942 ..	1,138	1,136	1,055	1,100	1,090	1,113	1,122
" " 1943 ..	1,143	1,128	1,068	1,099	1,100	1,117	1,123
" " 1944 ..	1,142	1,138	1,069	1,098	1,104	1,106	1,126
" " 1945 ..	1,147	1,137	1,074	1,106	1,107	1,120	1,129

(a) See footnote (a) on page 9.

(b) Weighted average.

(c) See footnote (b) on page 9.

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

Period.	Sydney.	Melbourne.	Brisbane.	Adelaide.	Perth.	Hobart.	Six Capitals. (b)
GROUP I.—FOOD AND GROCERIES.							
Nov. 1914 ..	638	616	614	683	746	687	641
" 1915 ..	844	835	860	858	819	858	842
" 1916 ..	833	791	748	835	854	807	812
" 1917 ..	877	798	825	805	828	949	836
" 1918 ..	877	843	882	862	816	918	861
" 1919 ..	1,073	975	1,069	1,012	987	1,041	1,026
" 1920 ..	1,225	1,220	1,117	1,225	1,113	1,293	1,209
GROUP II.—HOUSING (4 AND 5 ROOMS).(c)							
Nov. 1914 ..	758	608	463	611	586	525	649
" 1915 ..	780	611	472	574	581	571	659
" 1916 ..	791	625	467	573	592	574	665
" 1917 ..	797	657	492	606	602	586	685
" 1918 ..	832	699	526	656	619	614	722
" 1919 ..	866	744	604	707	650	746	768
" 1920 ..	980	807	634	783	718	904	851
GROUPS I. AND II.—FOOD, GROCERIES AND HOUSING.							
Nov. 1914 ..	680	613	560	658	689	630	644
" 1915 ..	825	756	722	758	734	756	777
" 1916 ..	818	732	648	742	761	724	760
" 1917 ..	848	748	707	734	748	820	782
" 1918 ..	861	792	756	789	746	810	812
" 1919 ..	1,000	893	904	904	867	936	934
" 1920 ..	1,138	1,074	945	1,068	973	1,155	1,083
GROUP III.—CLOTHING.							
Nov. 1914 ..	755	780	657	756	698	825	754
" 1915 ..	805	797	690	821	760	833	792
" 1916 ..	903	870	779	919	849	940	881
" 1917 ..	1,009	976	899	1,049	980	1,041	992
" 1918 ..	1,102	1,103	1,025	1,066	1,135	1,200	1,097
" 1919 ..	1,237	1,213	1,192	1,303	1,277	1,344	1,238
" 1920 ..	1,323	1,422	1,274	1,384	1,359	1,430	1,365
GROUP IV.—MISCELLANEOUS.							
Nov. 1914 ..	766	728	728	770	780	699	749
" 1915 ..	798	770	756	803	822	770	786
" 1916 ..	808	784	766	832	869	780	802
" 1917 ..	880	879	836	883	926	865	882
" 1918 ..	988	950	931	988	1,035	945	972
" 1919 ..	1,059	1,016	968	1,035	1,120	1,006	1,036
" 1920 ..	1,209	1,181	1,139	1,200	1,262	1,124	1,194
GROUPS I. TO IV.—ALL ITEMS OF HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE.							
Nov. 1914 ..	712	671	611	699	707	687	687
" 1915 ..	816	768	721	780	755	776	782
" 1916 ..	836	773	698	798	800	783	795
" 1917 ..	892	823	773	832	832	879	847
" 1918 ..	938	890	848	887	885	923	905
" 1919 ..	1,065	988	981	1,018	1,005	1,042	1,022
" 1920 ..	1,193	1,172	1,054	1,164	1,111	1,213	1,166

(a) See footnote (a) on page 9. (b) Weighted average. See page 20 for corresponding figures for years 1921 to 1944.

(c) See footnote (b) on page 9.

## All Items ("C" Series) Retail Price Index-Numbers: Thirty Towns.

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

State and Town.	Nov. 1914.	Year 1921.	Year 1929.	Year 1938.	Year 1939.	Year 1940.	Year 1941.	Year 1942.	Year 1943.	Year 1944.
<b>NEW SOUTH WALES—</b>										
Sydney .. .. .	712	1,046	1,073	913	935	974	1,028	1,107	1,151	1,144
Newcastle .. .. .	..	1,041	1,028	877	901	945	997	1,069	1,109	1,094
Broken Hill .. .. .	..	..	975	1,018	946	975	981	1,049	1,132	1,172
Goulburn .. .. .	..	..	1,033	1,108	893	916	949	1,005	1,087	1,175
Bathurst .. .. .	..	..	947	979	860	883	923	974	1,050	1,092
<b>FIVE TOWNS(a)</b> .. .. .	..	1,048	1,067	911	933	972	1,026	1,104	1,147	1,140
<b>VICTORIA—</b>										
Melbourne .. .. .	671	1,003	1,017	896	924	964	1,008	1,100	1,139	1,135
Ballarat .. .. .	..	..	992	957	850	874	906	950	1,037	1,084
Bendigo .. .. .	..	..	1,002	969	854	875	920	963	1,054	1,096
Geelong .. .. .	..	..	1,019	980	884	911	941	984	1,084	1,110
Warrnambool .. .. .	..	..	1,034	960	892	918	954	998	1,078	1,126
<b>FIVE TOWNS(a)</b> .. .. .	..	1,003	1,011	893	920	960	1,004	1,095	1,135	1,131
<b>QUEENSLAND—</b>										
Brisbane .. .. .	611	923	923	852	870	908	963	1,033	1,072	1,071
Toowoomba .. .. .	..	..	949	916	843	898	951	1,033	1,080	1,085
Rockhampton .. .. .	..	..	972	904	853	867	905	959	1,032	1,073
Townsville .. .. .	..	..	1,025b	939b	902	918	950	1,044	1,075	1,114
Bundaberg .. .. .	..	..	994c	931c	831	847	879	938	1,015	1,057
<b>FIVE TOWNS(a)</b> .. .. .	..	941	922	854	871	909	964	1,035	1,075	1,075
<b>SOUTH AUSTRALIA—</b>										
Adelaide .. .. .	699	989	1,037	888	906	936	988	1,075	1,102	1,098
Kadina, etc. .. .. .	..	..	998	943	786	810	833	882	962	998
Port Pirie .. .. .	..	..	1,025	980	868	896	919	976	1,057	1,087
Mount Gambier .. .. .	..	..	1,029	963	849	872	894	946	1,024	1,061
Peterborough .. .. .	..	..	948	1,043	868	897	924	974	1,053	1,087
<b>FIVE TOWNS(a)</b> .. .. .	..	992	1,030	883	902	931	983	1,069	1,097	1,093
<b>WESTERN AUSTRALIA—</b>										
Perth, etc. .. .. .	707	1,008	1,026	882	901	932	993	1,061	1,104	1,105
Kalgoorlie, etc. .. .. .	..	..	1,048	1,032	1,048	1,066	1,099	1,165	1,175	1,192
Northam .. .. .	..	..	1,030	1,022	900	915	947	1,017	1,070	1,111
Bunbury .. .. .	..	..	1,045	978	914	936	962	1,018	1,065	1,102
Geraldton .. .. .	..	..	1,056	1,051	957	965	990	1,055	1,114	1,165
<b>FIVE TOWNS(a)</b> .. .. .	..	1,020	1,026	897	915	946	1,008	1,070	1,112	1,113
<b>TASMANIA—</b>										
Hobart .. .. .	687	1,070	1,000	887	908	945	1,001	1,078	1,117	1,105
Launceston .. .. .	..	..	1,067	967	872	888	926	974	1,040	1,078
Burnie .. .. .	..	..	1,003	966	865	879	917	971	1,035	1,088
Devonport .. .. .	..	..	994	948	848	861	896	951	1,012	1,053
Queensdown .. .. .	..	..	1,031	972	875	903	936	987	1,045	1,096
<b>FIVE TOWNS(a)</b> .. .. .	..	1,057	986	879	898	936	989	1,060	1,101	1,089
<b>THIRTY TOWNS(a)</b> .. .. .	..	1,013	1,026	894	917	954	1,006	1,087	1,127	1,122
<b>SIX CAPITALS(a)</b> .. .. .	687	1,013	1,033	897	920	957	1,008	1,091	1,131	1,126
<b>Canberra, A.C.T.</b>										
Warrick, Qld. .. .. .	..	..	..	666	956	988	1,040	1,121	1,168	1,153
Port Augusta, S.A. .. .. .	..	..	..	863	883	915	980	1,052	1,076	1,061

(a) Weighted average.

(b) Charters Towers.

(c) Warwick.

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

Period.	NEW SOUTH WALES.						VICTORIA.							
	Sydney.	Newcastle.	Broken Hill.	Goulburn.	Bathurst.	Weighted Average, N.S.W.	Melbourne.	Ballarat.	Bendigo.	Geelong.	Warramb-bool.	Weighted Average Victoria.		
Nov. 1914 (a)	712	..	..	..	..	..	671	..	..	..	..	..		
" 1921 ..	1,046	1,041	975	1,033	947	1,043	1,003	993	1,002	1,019	1,034	1,003		
Year 1939 ..	936	901	955	916	883	933	924	874	875	911	918	926		
" 1940 ..	974	945	981	949	923	972	964	906	920	941	954	960		
" 1941 ..	1,028	997	1,049	1,005	974	1,026	1,008	950	963	984	998	1,004		
" 1942 ..	1,107	1,060	1,132	1,087	1,050	1,104	1,100	1,037	1,054	1,065	1,078	1,095		
" 1943 ..	1,151	1,109	1,172	1,125	1,091	1,147	1,139	1,084	1,096	1,110	1,126	1,135		
" 1944 ..	1,144	1,094	1,179	1,118	1,088	1,140	1,135	1,083	1,101	1,112	1,129	1,131		
1943 Sept. Qtr.	1,154	1,112	1,179	1,126	1,096	1,151	1,139	1,097	1,117	1,128	1,138	1,136		
" Dec. ..	1,143	1,098	1,175	1,116	1,082	1,139	1,128	1,075	1,094	1,100	1,115	1,125		
1944 Mar. Qtr.	1,143	1,097	1,175	1,118	1,085	1,139	1,129	1,074	1,095	1,103	1,115	1,125		
" June ..	1,143	1,089	1,174	1,119	1,086	1,139	1,133	1,082	1,101	1,112	1,122	1,129		
" Sept. ..	1,146	1,093	1,184	1,117	1,090	1,142	1,140	1,087	1,104	1,118	1,138	1,136		
" Dec. ..	1,142	1,095	1,184	1,116	1,089	1,138	1,138	1,087	1,102	1,116	1,140	1,134		
Period.	QUEENSLAND.						SOUTH AUSTRALIA.							
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba.	Rock-hampton.	Townsville.	Bundaberg.	Weighted Average, Queensland.	Adelaide.	Kadina, Moonta, and Wallaroo.	Port Pirie.	Mt. Gambier.	Peter-borough.	Weighted Average, S.A.		
Nov. 1914 (a)	611	..	..	..	..	..	699	..	..	..	..	..		
" 1921 ..	923	949	972	1,025	994	941	989	998	1,025	1,029	948	993		
Year 1939 ..	870	858	867	918	847	871	906	870	866	872	897	901		
" 1940 ..	908	898	905	950	879	909	936	833	919	894	924	931		
" 1941 ..	963	951	959	1,004	938	964	983	882	976	946	974	984		
" 1942 ..	1,033	1,033	1,032	1,075	1,015	1,035	1,075	962	1,057	1,024	1,033	1,069		
" 1943 ..	1,072	1,080	1,073	1,114	1,057	1,075	1,102	998	1,087	1,061	1,087	1,097		
" 1944 ..	1,071	1,085	1,074	1,117	1,057	1,075	1,098	995	1,081	1,064	1,087	1,093		
1943 Sept. Qtr.	1,074	1,078	1,074	1,114	1,058	1,076	1,106	1,004	1,091	1,067	1,090	1,101		
" Dec. ..	1,068	1,083	1,073	1,113	1,053	1,072	1,099	998	1,081	1,056	1,083	1,094		
1944 Mar. Qtr.	1,072	1,087	1,075	1,116	1,056	1,075	1,098	996	1,081	1,057	1,083	1,093		
" June ..	1,072	1,085	1,076	1,119	1,060	1,076	1,096	992	1,077	1,057	1,082	1,091		
" Sept. ..	1,071	1,084	1,074	1,117	1,057	1,075	1,101	995	1,084	1,071	1,095	1,096		
" Dec. ..	1,069	1,084	1,071	1,116	1,056	1,073	1,098	996	1,080	1,070	1,089	1,093		
Period.	WESTERN AUSTRALIA.						TASMANIA.							
	Perth.	Kalgoorlie.	Northam.	Bunbury.	Geraldton.	Weighted Ave. W.A.	Hobart.	Launceston.	Burnie.	Devonport.	Queenstown.	Weighted Ave. Tas.	Weighted Average, Six Capital Cities.	Weighted Average, 30 Towns, Australia.
Nov. 1914 (a)	707	..	..	..	..	..	687	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
" 1921 ..	1,008	1,048	1,030	1,045	1,056	1,030	1,070	1,067	1,003	904	1,031	1,057	1,013	1,013
Year 1939 ..	901	1,066	915	936	965	918	908	888	879	861	903	898	920	917
" 1940 ..	933	1,099	947	962	990	946	945	926	917	896	936	936	957	954
" 1941 ..	993	1,165	1,017	1,013	1,055	1,068	1,001	971	971	951	987	961	1,008	1,006
" 1942 ..	1,061	1,175	1,079	1,065	1,114	1,079	1,078	1,040	1,035	1,012	1,045	1,060	1,091	1,087
" 1943 ..	1,104	1,192	1,111	1,102	1,165	1,112	1,117	1,078	1,088	1,058	1,096	1,101	1,131	1,127
" 1944 ..	1,105	1,199	1,113	1,110	1,176	1,113	1,105	1,067	1,065	1,040	1,102	1,089	1,126	1,122
1943 Sept. Qtr.	1,110	1,197	1,117	1,109	1,179	1,118	1,125	1,086	1,094	1,069	1,103	1,108	1,133	1,130
" Dec. ..	1,100	1,189	1,107	1,097	1,171	1,108	1,117	1,076	1,089	1,056	1,098	1,100	1,123	1,120
1944 Mar. Qtr.	1,102	1,193	1,109	1,104	1,174	1,110	1,105	1,067	1,076	1,040	1,095	1,080	1,124	1,120
" June ..	1,103	1,195	1,113	1,109	1,177	1,112	1,100	1,061	1,056	1,031	1,096	1,083	1,125	1,121
" Sept. ..	1,110	1,204	1,118	1,118	1,184	1,118	1,110	1,072	1,060	1,045	1,110	1,094	1,129	1,126
" Dec. ..	1,104	1,203	1,110	1,110	1,168	1,112	1,106	1,067	1,059	1,042	1,108	1,089	1,126	1,122

(a) For index-numbers for Capital Cities, November, 1914 to 1920, see page 19. (b) Charters Towers. (c) Warwick.

## Retail Price "Group" Index Numbers(d) : Food and Groceries—Group I.

(Base : Weighted average of Six Capital Cities, 1933-27 = 1,000.)

Period.	NEW SOUTH WALES.						VICTORIA.						
	Sydney.	Newcastle.	Broken Hill.	Goulburn.	Bathurst.	Weighted Average, N.S.W.	Melbourne.	Ballarat.	Bendigo.	Geelong.	Warrnambool.	Weighted Average, Victoria.	
Nov 1914 (a)	638						616						
" 1921 ..	964	977	972	956	935	964	923	928	919	941	948	924	
Year 1939 ..	936	965	1,106	991	940	942	942	939	930	946	955	942	
" 1940 ..	932	985	1,009	1,003	951	958	947	935	949	939	935	946	
" 1941 ..	962	1,000	1,134	1,019	985	969	943	930	954	928	946	942	
" 1942 ..	1,040	1,074	1,244	1,095	1,033	1,047	1,042	1,017	1,038	1,002	1,018	1,039	
" 1943 ..	1,042	1,066	1,244	1,079	1,027	1,048	1,055	1,049	1,042	1,013	1,035	1,053	
" 1944 ..	1,025	1,045	1,252	1,079	1,024	1,032	1,049	1,037	1,042	1,006	1,037	1,047	
1943 Sept. Qtr.	1,039	1,062	1,230	1,080	1,005	1,025	1,045	1,056	1,044	1,017	1,033	1,054	
" Dec. "	1,015	1,042	1,236	1,070	1,005	1,022	1,037	1,025	1,032	1,017	1,033	1,054	
1944 Mar. Qtr.	1,019	1,046	1,242	1,081	1,014	1,026	1,039	1,023	1,034	1,005	1,012	1,036	
" June "	1,005	1,034	1,244	1,078	1,025	1,032	1,047	1,035	1,039	1,030	1,030	1,045	
" Sept. "	1,035	1,050	1,264	1,080	1,032	1,041	1,050	1,050	1,054	1,023	1,056	1,061	
" Dec. "	1,032	1,039	1,075	1,075	1,025	1,028	1,046	1,046	1,039	1,001	1,051	1,044	
Period.	QUEENSLAND.						SOUTH AUSTRALIA.						
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba.	Rockhampton.	Townsville.	Bundaberg.	Weighted Average, Queensland.	Adelaide.	Kadina, Moonta, and Wallaroo.	Port Pirie.	Mt. Gambier.	Peterborough.	Weighted Average, S.A.	
Nov 1914 (a)	614						663						
" 1921 ..	935	895	949	9816	9366	950	941	945	968	923	997	943	
Year 1939 ..	864	823	904	961	912	872	897	973	966	937	981	904	
" 1940 ..	889	832	921	966	931	895	906	967	985	919	976	906	
" 1941 ..	911	862	931	981	958	915	905	967	1,005	912	977	912	
" 1942 ..	972	951	992	1,048	1,024	979	1,012	1,053	1,094	988	1,036	1,016	
" 1943 ..	975	974	995	1,044	1,033	982	1,003	1,044	1,076	976	1,039	1,007	
" 1944 ..	965	1,003	1,002	1,049	1,027	977	993	1,030	1,061	906	1,033	997	
1943 Sept. Qtr.	968	956	985	1,031	1,024	975	1,003	1,041	1,075	974	1,035	1,007	
" Dec. "	930	985	988	1,027	1,015	962	985	1,031	1,053	966	1,016	989	
1944 Mar. Qtr.	968	1,003	1,003	1,046	1,028	980	989	1,029	1,057	976	1,018	993	
" June "	967	1,005	1,007	1,051	1,024	980	993	1,021	1,064	987	1,028	999	
" Sept. "	964	1,001	1,000	1,049	1,024	976	999	1,034	1,067	1,011	1,048	1,003	
" Dec. "	930	1,003	998	1,049	1,023	972	948	1,026	1,056	1,010	1,038	992	
Period.	WESTERN AUSTRALIA.						TASMANIA.						
	Perth and Fremantle.	Kalgoorlie and Boulder.	Northam.	Bunbury.	Geraldton.	Weighted Av'ge, W.A.	Hobart.	Launceston.	Burnie.	Devonport.	Queenstown.	Weighted Average, Six Capital Cities.	Weighted Average, 30 Towns, Australia.
Nov 1914 (a)	706						667						
" 1921 ..	1,051	1,110	1,054	1,049	1,031	1,033	1,027	938	1,108	996	1,077	1,011	984
Year 1939 ..	938	1,092	974	967	947	951	923	914	941	933	1,018	925	897
" 1940 ..	949	1,104	986	969	952	961	944	933	961	959	1,029	945	899
" 1941 ..	941	1,113	1,038	966	1,000	995	970	944	999	984	1,037	968	947
" 1942 ..	1,039	1,176	1,078	1,034	1,043	1,041	1,047	1,006	1,055	1,034	1,070	1,031	1,038
" 1943 ..	1,039	1,179	1,071	1,039	1,080	1,068	1,062	1,017	1,090	1,057	1,137	1,032	1,040
" 1944 ..	1,056	1,180	1,060	1,036	1,095	1,066	1,033	988	1,030	1,020	1,135	1,026	1,029
1943 Sept. Qtr.	1,045	1,178	1,070	1,036	1,104	1,071	1,075	1,029	1,103	1,068	1,147	1,047	1,038
" Dec. "	1,001	1,163	1,054	1,015	1,088	1,054	1,038	1,029	1,090	1,057	1,133	1,047	1,019
1944 Mar. Qtr.	1,031	1,169	1,056	1,026	1,092	1,060	1,029	983	1,058	1,022	1,121	1,020	1,023
" June "	1,037	1,179	1,077	1,039	1,102	1,067	1,026	981	1,052	1,008	1,126	1,025	1,029
" Sept. "	1,057	1,188	1,080	1,049	1,112	1,077	1,044	997	1,033	1,029	1,148	1,038	1,039
" Dec. "	1,049	1,183	1,057	1,031	1,073	1,059	1,030	990	1,013	1,010	1,146	1,026	1,025

(a) For Index-numbers for Capital Cities, November 1914 to 1920, see page 19.

(b) Charters Towers.

(c) Warwick. (d) See footnotes (a) on page 9.

"GROUP" INDEX-NUMBERS OF RETAIL PRICES.

Retail Price "Group" Index-Numbers(d) : Housing (4 and 5 Rooms)—Group II.

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

Period.	NEW SOUTH WALES.						VICTORIA.					
	Sydney.	Newcastle.	Broken Hill.	Goulburn.	Bathurst.	Weighted Average, N.S.W.	Melbourne.	Ballarat.	Bendigo.	Geelong.	Warramb-bool.	Weighted Average, Victoria.
Nov. 1914 (a)	758	885	559	681	596	966	608	479	527	668	685	789
Nov. 1921 ..	1,000	885	559	681	596	966	608	479	527	668	685	789
Year 1939 ..	1,035	800	764	821	843	1,015	935	714	731	876	931	938
" 1940 ..	1,040	900	778	827	845	1,023	969	705	733	884	933	930
" 1941 ..	1,043	902	773	870	845	1,024	975	709	728	892	939	936
" 1942 ..	1,043	902	758	881	844	1,024	973	709	742	880	937	936
" 1943 ..	1,043	902	753	882	844	1,023	974	711	743	888	934	936
" 1944 ..	1,043	902	753	882	843	1,023	971	711	743	888	934	933
1943 Sept. Qtr.	1,042	902	753	882	843	1,022	974	710	742	889	934	936
" Dec. "	1,042	902	752	882	843	1,022	974	710	742	888	934	935
1944 Mar. Qtr.	1,043	903	753	882	843	1,023	974	711	743	888	934	935
" June "	1,043	903	753	882	843	1,023	974	712	743	888	934	935
" Sept. "	1,043	903	753	882	843	1,023	973	712	743	887	934	935
" Dec. "	1,043	903	753	882	843	1,023	973	712	743	887	934	935

Period.	QUEENSLAND.						SOUTH AUSTRALIA.					
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba.	Rock-hampton.	Townsville.	Bundaberg.	Weighted Average, Queensland.	Adelaide.	Kadina, Moonta, and Wallaroo.	Port Pirie.	Mt. Gambier.	Peter-borough.	Weighted Average, S.A.
Nov. 1914 (a)	463	547	470	5280	556	594	611	619	566	603	492	566
Nov. 1921 ..	629	547	470	5280	556	594	611	619	566	603	492	566
Year 1939 ..	854	847	753	861	640	840	838	388	710	686	753	862
" 1940 ..	857	852	755	861	642	843	892	387	716	692	753	866
" 1941 ..	860	854	763	863	647	846	893	387	714	712	753	867
" 1942 ..	862	858	768	865	655	849	893	381	713	715	753	866
" 1943 ..	862	859	768	865	658	850	893	383	713	715	753	866
" 1944 ..	863	859	767	865	672	850	892	385	713	715	754	866
1943 Sept. Qtr.	862	859	768	865	668	850	892	384	713	715	750	866
" Dec. "	862	859	768	865	670	850	893	384	713	715	750	866
1944 Mar. Qtr.	863	859	767	865	672	850	892	384	713	715	754	866
" June "	863	859	767	865	672	850	892	384	713	715	754	866
" Sept. "	863	859	767	865	672	850	892	384	713	715	754	866
" Dec. "	863	859	767	865	672	850	892	386	713	715	755	866

Period.	WESTERN AUSTRALIA.						TASMANIA.							
	Perth and Fremantle.	Kalgoorlie and Boulder.	Northam.	Bunbury.	Geraldton.	Weighted Avge, W.A.	Hobart.	Launceston.	Burnie.	Devonport.	Queenstown.	Weighted Avge, Tas.	Weighted Average, Six Capital Cities.	Weighted Average, 30 Towns, Australia.
Nov. 1914 (a)	586	578	616	649	779	709	525	676	594	150	491	529	649	829
Nov. 1921 ..	754	578	616	649	779	709	525	676	594	150	491	529	649	829
Year 1939 ..	881	1,318	886	1,005	1,064	919	925	851	816	763	806	887	965	947
" 1940 ..	883	1,315	890	1,003	1,066	920	933	856	847	767	813	893	973	955
" 1941 ..	884	1,308	894	1,003	1,068	921	933	859	845	769	813	895	976	958
" 1942 ..	885	1,167	870	983	1,062	910	931	860	850	770	806	894	976	957
" 1943 ..	883	1,038	898	970	1,058	902	931	859	850	770	804	894	976	956
" 1944 ..	886	1,036	899	974	1,059	902	932	861	850	770	804	895	976	956
1943 Sept. Qtr.	885	1,038	898	970	1,058	902	931	859	850	770	805	894	975	956
" Dec. "	883	1,036	898	970	1,058	902	931	859	850	770	804	894	975	956
1944 Mar. Qtr.	886	1,036	898	974	1,059	902	931	860	850	770	804	894	976	956
" June "	886	1,036	899	974	1,059	902	931	861	850	770	804	894	976	956
" Sept. "	886	1,036	899	974	1,059	902	932	862	850	770	804	895	976	956
" Dec. "	886	1,036	899	974	1,059	902	931	862	850	770	804	894	976	956

(a) For Index-numbers for Capital Cities, November 1914 to 1939, see page 19.

(b) Charities Towers.

(c) Warwick.

(d) See Footnote (d) on page 9.

## "GROUP" INDEX-NUMBERS OF RETAIL PRICES.

Retail Price "Group" Index-Numbers(d) : Clothing—Group III.  
(Base : Weighted average of Six Capital Cities, 1923-27 = 1,000.)

Period.	NEW SOUTH WALES.						VICTORIA.							
	Sydney.	Newcastle.	Broken Hill.	Goulburn.	Rothurst.	Weighted Average, N.S.W.	Melbourne.	Ballarat.	Bendigo.	Geelong.	Warrnambool.	Weighted Average, Victoria.		
Nov. 1914 (a)	755	..	..	..	..	..	780	..	..	..	..	..		
" 1921 ..	1,255	1,327	1,209	1,374	1,261	1,264	1,371	1,599	1,570	1,463	1,612	1,326		
Year 1939 ..	843	823	850	861	840	842	832	851	841	846	842	833		
" 1940 ..	950	941	970	960	964	951	960	990	986	963	966	970		
" 1941 ..	1,110	1,113	1,125	1,144	1,137	1,119	1,119	1,142	1,119	1,123	1,116	1,120		
" 1942 ..	1,302	1,293	1,280	1,320	1,308	1,302	1,332	1,336	1,337	1,317	1,320	1,331		
" 1943 ..	1,450	1,446	1,438	1,463	1,471	1,450	1,455	1,473	1,466	1,450	1,462	1,456		
" 1944 ..	1,440	1,407	1,430	1,458	1,459	1,438	1,416	1,471	1,490	1,477	1,472	1,450		
1943 Sept. Qtr.	1,463	1,455	1,473	1,475	1,494	1,463	1,454	1,476	1,473	1,470	1,469	1,456		
" Dec. ..	1,449	1,430	1,443	1,460	1,467	1,448	1,435	1,457	1,474	1,433	1,449	1,437		
1944 Mar. Qtr.	1,443	1,422	1,434	1,457	1,463	1,442	1,438	1,457	1,476	1,443	1,454	1,441		
" June ..	1,437	1,383	1,426	1,462	1,451	1,433	1,439	1,471	1,480	1,430	1,451	1,443		
" Sept. ..	1,437	1,395	1,413	1,453	1,458	1,435	1,442	1,465	1,483	1,475	1,458	1,446		
" Dec. ..	1,441	1,420	1,432	1,458	1,461	1,440	1,464	1,489	1,505	1,499	1,496	1,468		
Period.	QUEENSLAND.					SOUTH AUSTRALIA.								
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba.	Rockhampton.	Townsville.	Bundaberg.	Weighted Average, Queensland.	Adelaide.	Kadina, Moonta, and Wallaroo.	Port Pirie.	Mt. Gambier.	Peterborough.	Weighted Average, S.A.		
Nov. 1914 (a)	657	..	..	..	..	..	756	..	..	..	..	..		
" 1921 ..	1,125	1,408	1,452	1,567	1,519	1,235	1,195	1,435	1,480	1,697	1,180	1,238		
Year 1939 ..	840	838	856	855	852	843	863	852	854	842	844	862		
" 1940 ..	952	951	973	968	956	953	961	940	943	947	936	959		
" 1941 ..	1,118	1,121	1,145	1,140	1,126	1,122	1,120	1,090	1,095	1,116	1,109	1,119		
" 1942 ..	1,289	1,297	1,323	1,312	1,308	1,294	1,290	1,247	1,273	1,256	1,278	1,288		
" 1943 ..	1,420	1,426	1,445	1,470	1,448	1,445	1,409	1,388	1,423	1,424	1,413	1,408		
" 1944 ..	1,427	1,406	1,434	1,455	1,438	1,430	1,409	1,395	1,412	1,420	1,429	1,409		
1943 Sept. Qtr.	1,434	1,447	1,482	1,473	1,452	1,442	1,424	1,414	1,429	1,450	1,428	1,425		
" Dec. ..	1,433	1,423	1,398	1,471	1,445	1,433	1,422	1,403	1,417	1,420	1,430	1,421		
1944 Mar. Qtr.	1,424	1,414	1,460	1,451	1,431	1,428	1,415	1,402	1,420	1,422	1,431	1,415		
" June ..	1,425	1,400	1,451	1,458	1,442	1,428	1,395	1,381	1,392	1,404	1,415	1,395		
" Sept. ..	1,429	1,404	1,457	1,458	1,440	1,432	1,411	1,392	1,417	1,429	1,438	1,411		
" Dec. ..	1,430	1,403	1,447	1,454	1,439	1,431	1,416	1,404	1,417	1,426	1,432	1,416		
Period.	WESTERN AUSTRALIA.					TASMANIA.								
	Perth and Fremantle.	Kalgoorlie and Boulder.	Northam.	Bunbury.	Geraldton.	Weighted Av'ge, W.A.	Hobart.	Launceston.	Burnie.	Devonport.	Queensdown.	Weighted Average, Tas.	Weighted Average, Six Capital Cities.	Weighted Average, 30 Towns, Australia.
Nov. 1914 (a)	698	..	..	..	..	..	825	..	..	..	..	754	..	..
" 1921 ..	1,232	1,376	1,382	1,454	1,320	1,277	1,427	1,670	1,523	1,405	1,504	1,513	1,248	1,290
Year 1939 ..	832	855	842	849	847	834	856	853	843	844	853	854	841	841
" 1940 ..	926	959	933	934	936	929	956	964	947	938	943	957	956	956
" 1941 ..	1,098	1,132	1,108	1,108	1,102	1,101	1,123	1,120	1,103	1,114	1,120	1,124	1,118	1,118
" 1942 ..	1,283	1,260	1,269	1,247	1,261	1,280	1,308	1,281	1,277	1,283	1,290	1,298	1,300	1,307
" 1943 ..	1,395	1,400	1,390	1,374	1,395	1,396	1,427	1,404	1,400	1,416	1,394	1,418	1,440	1,440
" 1944 ..	1,401	1,379	1,408	1,403	1,419	1,404	1,423	1,406	1,423	1,407	1,425	1,420	1,435	1,435
1943 Sept. Qtr.	1,413	1,423	1,419	1,404	1,418	1,414	1,443	1,416	1,427	1,443	1,402	1,433	1,450	1,451
" Dec. ..	1,395	1,412	1,400	1,379	1,406	1,396	1,430	1,405	1,424	1,412	1,400	1,420	1,438	1,436
1944 Mar. Qtr.	1,398	1,421	1,408	1,398	1,418	1,400	1,436	1,412	1,427	1,403	1,412	1,426	1,434	1,434
" June ..	1,390	1,412	1,399	1,396	1,411	1,393	1,420	1,392	1,410	1,385	1,412	1,400	1,429	1,429
" Sept. ..	1,404	1,440	1,408	1,410	1,426	1,408	1,433	1,415	1,437	1,414	1,440	1,427	1,433	1,433
" Dec. ..	1,412	1,443	1,419	1,411	1,422	1,414	1,421	1,406	1,419	1,426	1,434	1,419	1,442	1,443

(a) For index-numbers for Capital Cities, November 1914 to 1920, see page 19. (b) Charters Towers.  
(c) Warwick. (d) See footnote (a) on page 9.



Retail Price "Group" Index-Numbers(d) : Miscellaneous—Group IV.

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

Period.	NEW SOUTH WALES.						VICTORIA.							
	Sydney.	Newcastle.	Broken Hill.	Goulburn.	Bathurst.	Weighted Average, N.S.W.	Melbourne.	Bairrat.	Bendigo.	Geelong.	Warrnambool.	Weighted Average, Victoria.		
Nov. 1914 (a)	766	..	..	..	..	..	728	..	..	..	..	..		
" 1921 ..	1,009	995	1,102	951	989	1,011	1,021	956	1,012	1,033	880	1,013		
Year 1939 ..	940	901	1,048	908	888	938	977	900	1,004	980	951	978		
" 1940 ..	984	948	1,101	942	936	982	1,000	1,021	1,037	1,011	985	1,010		
" 1941 ..	1,051	990	1,159	1,006	999	1,048	1,066	1,086	1,094	1,062	1,049	1,067		
" 1942 ..	1,105	1,018	1,214	1,059	1,040	1,100	1,115	1,146	1,154	1,122	1,102	1,117		
" 1943 ..	1,166	1,072	1,276	1,112	1,094	1,160	1,155	1,193	1,216	1,188	1,159	1,159		
" 1944 ..	1,171	1,079	1,287	1,108	1,096	1,165	1,158	1,198	1,221	1,190	1,167	1,162		
1943 Sept. Qtr.	1,176	1,074	1,283	1,114	1,096	1,160	1,156	1,195	1,219	1,195	1,164	1,161		
" Dec. "	1,179	1,076	1,287	1,112	1,095	1,172	1,157	1,195	1,221	1,192	1,161	1,161		
1944 Mar. Qtr.	1,176	1,078	1,289	1,104	1,094	1,160	1,156	1,196	1,223	1,188	1,164	1,161		
" June "	1,172	1,078	1,288	1,113	1,095	1,166	1,157	1,196	1,225	1,186	1,160	1,161		
" Sept. "	1,167	1,079	1,287	1,108	1,097	1,161	1,160	1,202	1,221	1,189	1,165	1,164		
" Dec. "	1,160	1,082	1,284	1,107	1,098	1,163	1,158	1,190	1,215	1,195	1,170	1,162		
Period.	QUEENSLAND.						SOUTH AUSTRALIA.							
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba.	Rockhampton.	Townsville.	Bundaberg.	Weighted Average, Queensland.	Adelaide.	Kadina, Mount, and Wallaroo.	Port Pirie.	Mt. Gambler.	Peterborough.	Weighted Average, S.A.		
Nov. 1914 (a)	728	..	..	..	..	..	770	..	..	..	..	..		
" 1921 ..	944	933	1,002	1,009	988	958	1,033	1,065	1,065	1,032	1,000	1,036		
Year 1939 ..	935	983	960	996	992	962	1,022	980	909	1,017	994	1,039		
" 1940 ..	979	1,003	1,001	1,026	1,002	985	1,051	1,021	1,031	1,055	1,015	1,049		
" 1941 ..	1,028	1,059	1,057	1,085	1,059	1,037	1,127	1,106	1,109	1,116	1,084	1,123		
" 1942 ..	1,077	1,118	1,116	1,125	1,118	1,087	1,184	1,188	1,175	1,185	1,164	1,184		
" 1943 ..	1,129	1,167	1,163	1,180	1,159	1,138	1,211	1,229	1,207	1,229	1,224	1,211		
" 1944 ..	1,137	1,169	1,171	1,187	1,169	1,146	1,213	1,235	1,207	1,232	1,227	1,214		
1943 Sept. Qtr.	1,134	1,169	1,166	1,184	1,162	1,143	1,212	1,231	1,207	1,227	1,225	1,213		
" Dec. "	1,140	1,169	1,166	1,191	1,161	1,148	1,212	1,235	1,209	1,228	1,228	1,213		
1944 Mar. Qtr.	1,138	1,170	1,168	1,190	1,167	1,146	1,213	1,236	1,207	1,229	1,228	1,214		
" June "	1,139	1,170	1,174	1,180	1,171	1,148	1,213	1,235	1,208	1,229	1,227	1,214		
" Sept. "	1,137	1,168	1,171	1,185	1,171	1,146	1,213	1,235	1,207	1,230	1,227	1,214		
" Dec. "	1,134	1,167	1,169	1,183	1,165	1,143	1,213	1,235	1,207	1,232	1,225	1,214		
Period.	WESTERN AUSTRALIA.						TASMANIA.							
	Perth and Fremantle.	Kalgoorlie and Boulder.	Northam.	Bunbury.	Geraldton.	Weighted Av'ge, W.A.	Hobart.	Launceston.	Burns.	Devonport.	Queenstown.	Weighted Av'ge, Tas.	Weighted Average, Six Capital Cities.	Weighted Average, 30 Towns, Australia.
Nov. 1914 (a)	780	..	..	..	..	..	699	..	..	..	..	749	..	..
" 1921 ..	1,039	1,030	1,016	977	1,102	1,029	932	985	941	960	959	932	1,010	1,009
Year 1939 ..	954	974	948	912	1,034	956	918	947	874	887	881	934	962	962
" 1940 ..	985	1,006	975	942	1,053	987	969	973	904	898	919	963	996	997
" 1941 ..	1,043	1,068	1,035	902	1,111	1,044	1,015	1,008	938	936	967	1,005	1,080	1,058
" 1942 ..	1,093	1,122	1,096	1,032	1,160	1,095	1,065	1,050	960	963	999	1,049	1,112	1,110
" 1943 ..	1,136	1,179	1,140	1,084	1,205	1,140	1,105	1,101	1,005	1,011	1,044	1,093	1,180	1,159
" 1944 ..	1,144	1,180	1,143	1,100	1,216	1,147	1,100	1,007	997	1,002	1,052	1,089	1,165	1,164
1943 Sept. Qtr.	1,140	1,185	1,139	1,091	1,208	1,144	1,105	1,105	1,002	1,012	1,052	1,095	1,165	1,164
" Dec. "	1,140	1,184	1,139	1,093	1,210	1,144	1,109	1,104	1,005	1,008	1,055	1,097	1,168	1,168
1944 Mar. Qtr.	1,143	1,189	1,143	1,094	1,214	1,147	1,101	1,103	997	1,003	1,056	1,092	1,166	1,165
" June "	1,147	1,192	1,146	1,097	1,210	1,151	1,098	1,098	997	1,003	1,053	1,088	1,164	1,164
" Sept. "	1,145	1,191	1,145	1,108	1,218	1,149	1,100	1,097	1,000	1,006	1,051	1,089	1,165	1,163
" Dec. "	1,139	1,185	1,139	1,098	1,211	1,142	1,099	1,094	994	996	1,049	1,088	1,163	1,162

(a) For index-numbers for Capital Cities, November, 1914 to 1920, see page 19. (b) Charters Towers.  
 (c) Warwick. (d) See footnote (a) on page 9.

3. "B" Series Retail Price Index-Numbers: Food, Groceries and Rent.—This index measures the prices of food and groceries and the rent of 4 and 5-roomed houses. It was first compiled for the year 1925, and retrospectively for several earlier years. It was designed to replace the "A" series index (food, groceries and rent of all houses), which was the original index compiled in 1912. The first of the following tables covers only the Six Capital Cities and gives index-numbers for the two Groups of the regimen involved split up into their various Sections, while the two succeeding tables give for each of the 30 Towns, the weighted averages of each State, the Six Capital Cities and the 30 Towns:—The "B" Series as a whole (second table—including three additional towns not in the weighted averages), and the "B" Series split up into its two Groups (third table).

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

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

TOWN.	1907.	1911.	1914.	1922.	1939.	1941.	1942.	1943.	1944.
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**SECTION A.—GROCERIES.**

Sydney .. ..	510	574	627	1,115	994	989	1,082	1,016	965
Melbourne .. ..	461	521	562	1,070	957	974	1,034	967	924
Brisbane .. ..	547	614	607	1,105	944	957	1,066	989	934
Adelaide .. ..	510	541	598	1,076	930	912	1,073	979	939
Perth .. ..	572	720	628	1,103	966	983	1,048	1,007	963
Hobart .. ..	501	566	604	1,087	947	950	1,048	971	925
SIX CAPITALS (a) ..	499	564	599	1,093	969	958	1,061	992	946

**SECTION B.—DAIRY PRODUCTS.**

Sydney .. ..	551	574	656	1,080	851	863	924	947	960
Melbourne .. ..	571	567	635	1,087	885	893	943	971	970
Brisbane .. ..	495	581	588	1,083	793	808	871	902	932
Adelaide .. ..	548	651	705	1,018	800	798	861	888	895
Perth .. ..	709	733	735	1,152	870	878	922	976	982
Hobart .. ..	564	587	695	1,091	844	873	932	967	968
SIX CAPITALS (a) ..	563	591	654	1,072	853	862	919	947	956

**SECTION C.—MEAT.**

Sydney .. ..	519	501	668	960	935	1,015	1,089	1,160	1,158
Melbourne .. ..	557	485	663	1,030	968	1,007	1,142	1,242	1,279
Brisbane .. ..	535	488	610	897	822	943	942	1,018	1,026
Adelaide .. ..	553	541	784	1,005	949	969	1,074	1,138	1,151
Perth .. ..	780	834	881	1,103	958	1,070	1,102	1,199	1,239
Hobart .. ..	668	638	780	1,244	961	1,082	1,149	1,265	1,233
SIX CAPITALS (a) ..	558	522	691	1,010	936	1,006	1,092	1,175	1,190

**SECTIONS A, B AND C COMBINED.—FOOD AND GROCERIES.**

Sydney .. ..	523	553	646	1,062	936	962	1,040	1,042	1,025
Melbourne .. ..	517	523	670	1,063	942	943	1,042	1,055	1,049
Brisbane .. ..	530	569	603	1,014	864	911	972	975	965
Adelaide .. ..	532	570	679	1,066	897	905	1,012	1,003	993
Perth .. ..	670	753	728	1,166	938	981	1,029	1,059	1,056
Hobart .. ..	565	592	678	1,133	923	970	1,047	1,062	1,035
SIX CAPITALS (a) ..	533	559	640	1,064	927	947	1,031	1,037	1,026

**SECTION D.—HOUSING (4 AND 5 ROOMS).(c)**

Sydney .. ..	593	701	760	989	1,035	1,043	1,043	1,042	1,043
Melbourne .. ..	455	569	628	820	955	975	975	974	974
Brisbane .. ..	583	571	466	630	854	860	862	862	863
Adelaide .. ..	510	706	655	809	888	893	893	893	892
Perth .. ..	458	544	589	739	881	883	885	885	886
Hobart .. ..	405	452	518	881	925	933	933	931	932
SIX CAPITALS (a) ..	497	612	662	862	965	976	976	975	976

**ALL SECTIONS COMBINED.—FOOD, GROCERIES, AND HOUSING.**

Sydney .. ..	548	606	687	1,036	972	993	1,039	1,040	1,030
Melbourne .. ..	495	539	616	977	945	963	1,014	1,021	1,017
Brisbane .. ..	442	500	554	877	858	889	927	929	923
Adelaide .. ..	524	618	671	975	891	899	963	958	951
Perth .. ..	594	672	679	982	914	941	971	989	987
Hobart .. ..	508	542	621	1,044	922	953	1,000	1,009	992
SIX CAPITALS (a) ..	520	578	648	992	930	956	1,007	1,011	1,004

(a) Weighted average.

(b) See footnote (a) on page 9.

(c) See footnote (b) on page 9.

Retail Price Index-Numbers : Thirty Towns—"B" Series.

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

State and Town.	Nov. 1914.	Nov. 1921.	1929.	1938.	1939.	1940.	1941.	1942.	1943.	1944.	
<b>NEW SOUTH WALES—</b>											
Sydney .. .. .	680	977	1,115	941	972	985	992	1,030	1,010	1,030	
Newcastle .. .. .	..	944	1,068	898	934	950	959	1,005	1,000	987	
Broken Hill .. .. .	..	825	1,078	948	970	953	991	1,052	1,044	1,055	
Goulburn .. .. .	..	926	1,146	908	947	950	957	1,009	1,007	999	
Bathurst .. .. .	..	815	987	867	900	908	910	937	953	951	
FIVE TOWNS(a)	..	965	1,110	937	969	980	988	1,036	1,036	1,026	
<b>VICTORIA—</b>											
Melbourne .. .. .	613	895	1,036	902	945	953	953	1,014	1,021	1,017	
Ballarat .. .. .	..	769	914	808	849	843	841	894	908	907	
Bendigo .. .. .	..	780	952	817	851	864	868	920	923	923	
Geelong .. .. .	..	844	985	872	917	915	912	956	962	958	
Warranbbool .. .. .	..	855	940	808	940	944	941	984	993	995	
FIVE TOWNS(a)	..	876	1,026	895	938	946	946	1,005	1,012	1,009	
<b>QUEENSLAND—</b>											
Brisbane .. .. .	560	840	912	838	848	875	889	927	929	923	
Toowoomba .. .. .	..	771	855	806	830	840	857	913	927	945	
Rockhampton .. .. .	..	779	877	825	843	854	863	901	904	908	
Townsville .. .. .	..	820b	975c	900	920	925	933	974	970	975	
Bundaberg .. .. .	..	694d	867e	781	804	817	835	878	888	886	
FIVE TOWNS(a)	..	824	906	837	858	873	886	926	928	926	
<b>SOUTH AUSTRALIA—</b>											
Adelaide .. .. .	658	808	1,030	862	891	895	899	961	958	951	
Kadlun, etc. .. .. .	..	811	891	702	743	739	738	789	784	776	
Port Pirie .. .. .	..	839	903	838	882	877	889	943	932	923	
Mount Gambler .. .. .	..	770	866	601	838	828	832	879	877	884	
Peterborough .. .. .	..	844	1,042	836	890	805	803	936	926	922	
FIVE TOWNS(a)	..	885	1,020	855	885	888	892	955	950	944	
<b>WESTERN AUSTRALIA—</b>											
Perth, etc. .. .. .	689	916	1,048	887	914	921	941	971	989	987	
Inglewood, etc. .. .. .	..	928	1,010	1,152	1,178	1,184	1,211	1,160	1,122	1,121	
Northam .. .. .	..	898	1,072	911	936	946	980	1,005	1,001	999	
Bunbury .. .. .	..	907	996	945	979	979	996	1,011	1,010	1,020	
Geard Hill .. .. .	..	942	1,090	974	990	995	1,024	1,048	1,069	1,079	
FIVE TOWNS(a)	..	978	1,036	909	936	943	964	988	1,001	1,000	
<b>TASMANIA—</b>											
Hobart .. .. .	630	971	992	891	922	938	953	1,000	1,009	992	
Lanceston .. .. .	..	858	937	867	887	901	913	948	953	936	
Lurnea .. .. .	..	819	972	880	898	914	937	973	998	958	
Devonport .. .. .	..	606	930	846	865	882	898	928	942	920	
Queenstown .. .. .	..	871	920	900	933	942	947	970	1,005	1,004	
FIVE TOWNS(a)	..	911	970	882	908	923	937	978	986	970	
THIRTY TOWNS(a)	..	907	1,044	902	935	945	952	1,001	1,005	998	
SIX CAPITALS(a)	..	644	924	1,054	906	939	950	956	1,011	1,011	1,004
Canberra, A.C.T. .. .. .	..	..	..	1,043	1,026	1,028	1,028	1,078	1,073	1,058	
Warwick, Q.M. .. .. .	..	794	867	732	781	799	817	856	872	886	
Port Augusta, S.A. .. .. .	..	861	1,047	821	861	878	896	932	914	914	

(a) Weighted Average. (b) Charters Towers. (c) Warwick.

## Retail Price Index-Numbers ("B" Series).

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

Period.	NEW SOUTH WALES.						VICTORIA.					
	Sydney.	Newcastle.	Broken Hill.	Goulburn.	Bathurst.	Weighted Average, N.S.W.	Melbourne.	Ballarat.	Bendigo.	Geelong.	Warrnambool.	Weighted Average, Victoria.

## GROUP I.—FOOD AND GROCERIES.

1940	952	985	1,069	1,003	951	958	947	935	949	939	953	946
1941	962	1,000	1,134	1,016	955	969	943	930	944	928	946	942
1942	1,040	1,074	1,244	1,095	1,033	1,047	1,042	1,047	1,038	1,012	1,018	1,039
1943	1,025	1,066	1,234	1,090	1,027	1,048	1,035	1,049	1,042	1,013	1,035	1,053
1944	1,025	1,045	1,252	1,079	1,024	1,032	1,049	1,037	1,042	1,006	1,037	1,047
1943 Sept. Qtr.	1,039	1,065	1,230	1,086	1,025	1,045	1,056	1,044	1,040	1,017	1,033	1,054
Dec. "	1,015	1,042	1,236	1,070	1,005	1,022	1,037	1,023	1,032	994	1,011	1,054
1944 Mar. Qtr.	1,019	1,046	1,242	1,081	1,014	1,026	1,039	1,023	1,034	995	1,012	1,056
June "	1,025	1,044	1,244	1,078	1,032	1,042	1,047	1,033	1,039	1,005	1,040	1,045
Sept. "	1,035	1,050	1,264	1,080	1,032	1,041	1,063	1,050	1,054	1,023	1,056	1,061
Dec. "	1,022	1,039	1,259	1,075	1,045	1,038	1,046	1,039	1,030	1,001	1,051	1,044
1943	1,071	1,096	1,240	1,115	1,055	1,076	1,077	1,070	1,060	1,039	1,059	1,074
July	1,026	1,052	1,212	1,072	1,014	1,032	1,048	1,033	1,022	1,008	1,022	1,045
August	1,020	1,048	1,238	1,072	1,007	1,026	1,044	1,028	1,039	1,003	1,019	1,041
September	1,021	1,045	1,235	1,070	1,006	1,028	1,042	1,028	1,038	1,000	1,020	1,040
October	1,021	1,044	1,236	1,078	1,003	1,020	1,035	1,025	1,053	992	1,005	1,033
November	1,010	1,041	1,239	1,073	1,005	1,017	1,033	1,017	1,024	990	1,008	1,030
1941.	1,019	1,044	1,243	1,082	1,013	1,026	1,039	1,023	1,035	995	1,013	1,037
January	1,017	1,046	1,243	1,082	1,014	1,024	1,036	1,023	1,036	995	1,013	1,036
February	1,020	1,046	1,241	1,080	1,015	1,028	1,036	1,023	1,030	994	1,011	1,036
March	1,022	1,044	1,241	1,076	1,020	1,027	1,040	1,027	1,030	994	1,011	1,037
April	1,020	1,040	1,244	1,076	1,020	1,027	1,042	1,030	1,031	1,003	1,034	1,040
May	1,020	1,040	1,244	1,076	1,020	1,027	1,042	1,030	1,031	1,003	1,034	1,040
June	1,036	1,054	1,248	1,081	1,035	1,041	1,061	1,047	1,055	1,004	1,037	1,048
July	1,036	1,054	1,248	1,080	1,035	1,041	1,061	1,047	1,055	1,004	1,037	1,048
August	1,038	1,053	1,250	1,083	1,035	1,043	1,066	1,051	1,057	1,001	1,031	1,044
September	1,036	1,053	1,250	1,083	1,035	1,043	1,066	1,051	1,057	1,001	1,031	1,044
October	1,027	1,044	1,255	1,077	1,027	1,035	1,053	1,044	1,044	1,014	1,030	1,032
November	1,027	1,044	1,255	1,077	1,027	1,035	1,053	1,044	1,044	1,014	1,030	1,032
December	1,018	1,031	1,251	1,073	1,025	1,027	1,043	1,033	1,030	999	1,031	1,039

## GROUP II.—HOUSING (4 AND 5 ROOMS). (b)

1940	1,043	900	778	872	845	1,023	969	795	785	884	933	950
1941	1,043	900	773	870	845	1,024	972	798	782	882	932	950
1942	1,043	902	748	883	844	1,024	975	799	742	880	932	950
1943	1,042	902	753	882	844	1,023	974	799	742	880	934	950
1944	1,043	903	753	882	843	1,023	974	795	743	883	934	953
1943 Sept. Qtr.	1,042	902	753	882	843	1,022	974	790	742	880	934	955
Dec. "	1,042	902	752	882	843	1,022	974	710	742	888	934	954
1944 Mar. Qtr.	1,043	903	753	882	843	1,023	974	711	743	888	934	955
June	1,043	903	753	882	843	1,023	974	712	743	887	934	954
Sept. "	1,043	903	753	882	843	1,023	973	712	743	887	934	954
Dec. "	1,043	903	753	882	843	1,023	973	708	743	887	934	953

## GROUPS I-II.—FOOD, GROCERIES, AND HOUSING.

1940	984	950	953	950	908	980	913	843	864	915	944	946
1941	959	991	957	957	910	988	933	847	847	912	941	946
1942	1,039	1,005	1,032	1,009	957	1,026	1,014	894	920	956	984	1,005
1943	1,029	1,000	1,044	1,007	953	1,026	1,021	908	923	962	993	1,012
1944	1,030	987	1,055	999	951	1,026	1,017	907	923	958	995	1,009
1943 Sept. Qtr.	1,038	999	1,041	1,004	952	1,034	1,022	911	922	964	992	1,013
Dec. "	1,023	985	1,045	994	940	1,020	1,010	899	916	950	979	1,001
1944 Mar. Qtr.	1,026	987	1,049	1,001	945	1,023	1,011	898	918	951	979	1,002
June	1,030	988	1,050	999	952	1,026	1,016	906	921	957	990	1,008
Sept. "	1,036	990	1,062	1,000	956	1,032	1,026	916	930	968	1,006	1,017
Dec. "	1,027	984	1,059	997	952	1,024	1,015	907	921	955	1,003	1,007

(a) See footnote (a) on page 9.

(b) See footnote (b) on page 9.

Retail Price Index-Numbers ("B" Series)—continued.

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

Period.	QUEENSLAND.						SOUTH AUSTRALIA.					
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba.	Rockhampton.	Townsville.	Roadberg.	Weighted Average Queensland.	Adelaide.	Walterton and Melbourne.	Port Pirie.	Mt. Gambier.	Perth-Brantford.	Weighted Average B. A.
1940	889	821	921	969	932	866	900	967	1,005	919	976	906
1941	911	862	931	981	958	915	905	967	1,005	912	977	912
1942	927	931	952	1,048	1,024	979	1,012	1,053	1,094	988	1,056	1,016
1943	975	974	995	1,041	1,033	982	1,003	1,044	1,076	984	1,039	1,007
1944	965	1,003	1,002	1,049	1,037	977	993	1,030	1,061	996	1,033	997
1943 Sept. Qtr.	968	936	985	1,031	1,024	975	1,003	1,041	1,075	986	1,035	1,007
Dec. "	950	985	988	1,027	1,015	962	985	1,030	1,053	974	1,016	989
1944 Mar. Qtr.	968	1,003	1,003	1,046	1,028	980	980	1,029	1,057	975	1,018	993
June "	967	1,005	1,007	1,051	1,032	980	995	1,031	1,064	987	1,028	999
Sept. "	964	1,001	1,000	1,049	1,024	976	990	1,034	1,067	1,011	1,048	1,003
Dec. "	959	1,003	998	1,049	1,023	972	988	1,026	1,056	1,010	1,038	992
1943.												
July	1,002	991	1,012	1,061	1,031	1,008	1,024	1,063	1,100	1,003	1,059	1,028
August	953	943	958	1,009	1,001	958	996	1,031	1,065	977	1,025	999
September	950	935	984	1,023	1,017	958	980	1,029	1,059	978	1,022	999
October	952	986	987	1,023	1,020	964	986	1,028	1,054	976	1,016	986
November	948	985	988	1,025	1,013	960	984	1,032	1,052	972	1,015	988
December	951	986	989	1,034	1,012	964	984	1,031	1,053	973	1,017	988
1944.												
January	963	995	996	1,037	1,017	974	990	1,032	1,056	976	1,017	993
February	971	1,006	1,004	1,050	1,034	983	996	1,027	1,057	977	1,019	993
March	971	1,007	1,007	1,052	1,032	982	980	1,026	1,058	977	1,018	992
April	969	1,007	1,007	1,052	1,032	982	980	1,026	1,058	977	1,018	992
May	965	1,007	1,007	1,051	1,029	979	996	1,036	1,061	982	1,027	999
June	965	1,001	1,006	1,051	1,033	979	1,001	1,036	1,072	1,003	1,038	1,005
July	966	1,005	1,002	1,052	1,030	979	1,005	1,036	1,073	1,011	1,055	1,000
August	966	1,004	1,000	1,052	1,031	978	1,003	1,036	1,073	1,011	1,051	1,007
September	960	994	997	1,042	1,019	972	990	1,028	1,056	1,011	1,038	994
October	961	1,005	997	1,054	1,031	974	989	1,027	1,057	1,020	1,039	993
November	957	1,003	997	1,047	1,023	971	986	1,026	1,057	1,003	1,037	991
December	958	1,005	999	1,047	1,025	972	989	1,025	1,056	1,006	1,039	993

GROUP II.—HOUSING (4 AND 5 ROOMS). (b)

1940	857	832	755	861	642	843	892	987	716	692	773	866
1941	860	854	793	863	647	846	893	985	713	712	767	867
1942	862	858	766	865	655	849	893	981	713	715	765	866
1943	862	859	768	865	668	850	893	983	713	715	755	866
1944	863	859	767	865	672	850	892	985	713	715	754	866
1943 Sept. Qtr.	862	859	768	865	668	850	892	984	713	715	756	866
Dec. "	862	859	768	865	670	850	893	984	713	715	756	866
1944 Mar. Qtr.	863	859	767	865	672	850	892	984	713	715	754	866
June "	863	859	767	865	672	850	892	984	713	715	754	866
Sept. "	863	860	767	865	672	850	892	984	713	715	754	866
Dec. "	863	860	767	865	672	850	892	984	713	715	755	866

GROUPS I.-II.—FOOD, GROCERIES AND HOUSING.

1940	875	849	854	925	817	823	893	739	877	828	895	888
1941	889	837	863	933	825	866	890	736	869	832	893	892
1942	927	913	901	974	866	926	963	789	943	879	938	955
1943	929	947	904	970	868	928	958	784	932	877	926	950
1944	923	945	908	971	886	928	951	776	923	884	922	944
1943 Sept. Qtr.	925	916	898	964	883	924	958	782	931	878	924	950
Dec. "	914	934	900	962	878	916	947	776	918	870	912	939
1944 Mar. Qtr.	925	945	909	973	887	927	949	775	920	872	913	941
June "	924	940	911	976	889	927	953	776	925	879	919	945
Sept. "	922	943	907	975	884	925	955	778	927	883	931	948
Dec. "	919	945	904	975	884	923	948	774	926	886	925	941

(a) See footnote (a) on page 9.

(b) See footnote (b) on page 9.

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

Period.	WESTERN AUSTRALIA.					TASMANIA.					Weighted Average, 6 Capital Cities.	Weighted Average, 30 Towns, Australia.
	Perth.	Kalgoorlie.	Northam.	Dunbury.	Geraldton.	Weighted Average, W.A.	Hobart.	Launceston.	Burnie.	Devonport.		

GROUP I.—FOOD AND GROCERIES.

1940	949	1,104	986	969	932	961	944	933	961	939	1,029	945	939	942
1941	961	1,113	1,039	996	1,000	995	970	935	999	984	1,037	958	947	951
1942	1,029	1,176	1,078	1,034	1,043	1,041	1,047	1,008	1,035	1,034	1,079	1,033	1,031	1,033
1943	1,059	1,179	1,071	1,039	1,050	1,058	1,062	1,017	1,096	1,057	1,137	1,052	1,037	1,040
1944	1,050	1,188	1,066	1,038	1,095	1,056	1,033	988	1,010	1,020	1,135	1,024	1,026	1,029
1943 Sept. Qtr.	1,002	1,178	1,054	1,036	1,068	1,071	1,075	1,029	1,103	1,068	1,147	1,024	1,036	1,039
Dec. "	1,045	1,103	1,054	1,015	1,088	1,074	1,077	1,009	1,090	1,057	1,133	1,047	1,015	1,019
1944 Mar. Qtr.	1,051	1,169	1,056	1,026	1,092	1,060	1,029	982	1,058	1,022	1,121	1,018	1,020	1,023
June "	1,037	1,179	1,072	1,037	1,102	1,067	1,026	981	1,013	1,008	1,120	1,014	1,025	1,029
Sept. "	1,047	1,185	1,080	1,049	1,112	1,077	1,044	997	1,032	1,029	1,145	1,032	1,036	1,039
Dec. "	1,049	1,185	1,057	1,031	1,074	1,059	1,030	980	1,018	1,019	1,146	1,036	1,022	1,025
1943	1,069	1,207	1,099	1,071	1,119	1,098	1,083	1,040	1,120	1,081	1,161	1,074	1,065	1,065
July	1,052	1,168	1,058	1,022	1,095	1,061	1,070	1,023	1,095	1,062	1,136	1,058	1,026	1,027
August	1,040	1,166	1,052	1,014	1,089	1,054	1,071	1,014	1,093	1,062	1,143	1,051	1,020	1,023
September	1,045	1,161	1,054	1,014	1,088	1,054	1,072	1,026	1,095	1,072	1,144	1,054	1,020	1,023
October	1,045	1,164	1,054	1,014	1,088	1,053	1,069	1,010	1,094	1,069	1,141	1,054	1,014	1,023
November	1,044	1,164	1,053	1,017	1,089	1,055	1,034	990	1,081	1,030	1,173	1,054	1,012	1,015
December	1,040	1,163	1,054	1,017	1,089	1,055	1,034	990	1,081	1,030	1,173	1,054	1,012	1,015
1944	1,051	1,168	1,054	1,024	1,090	1,060	1,035	989	1,084	1,032	1,120	1,055	1,020	1,023
January	1,052	1,169	1,055	1,023	1,092	1,061	1,026	978	1,084	1,031	1,122	1,055	1,020	1,023
February	1,050	1,169	1,059	1,023	1,092	1,059	1,025	978	1,088	1,030	1,120	1,055	1,020	1,024
March	1,052	1,169	1,059	1,023	1,092	1,059	1,025	978	1,088	1,030	1,120	1,055	1,020	1,024
April	1,049	1,170	1,059	1,024	1,093	1,058	1,024	978	1,089	1,031	1,120	1,055	1,020	1,023
May	1,054	1,174	1,070	1,034	1,097	1,064	1,022	978	1,091	1,031	1,120	1,055	1,020	1,023
June	1,059	1,174	1,070	1,034	1,097	1,064	1,022	978	1,091	1,031	1,120	1,055	1,020	1,023
July	1,069	1,187	1,085	1,035	1,117	1,079	1,032	989	1,095	1,025	1,135	1,054	1,023	1,033
August	1,071	1,192	1,084	1,035	1,117	1,079	1,032	1,003	1,092	1,027	1,135	1,054	1,023	1,033
September	1,061	1,184	1,084	1,035	1,115	1,081	1,052	998	1,098	1,028	1,137	1,054	1,023	1,033
October	1,056	1,183	1,063	1,035	1,105	1,065	1,048	998	1,096	1,028	1,135	1,054	1,023	1,033
November	1,045	1,186	1,063	1,035	1,109	1,056	1,049	998	1,096	1,028	1,135	1,054	1,023	1,033
December	1,028	1,185	1,054	1,029	1,066	1,056	1,019	974	1,094	1,001	1,119	1,068	1,019	1,023

GROUP II.—TOURISM (4 AND 5 ROOMS)(b)

1940	882	1,315	890	1,003	1,066	920	933	856	847	767	813	803	773	933
1941	883	1,368	879	1,001	1,068	921	933	859	845	769	812	802	776	938
1942	885	1,410	874	983	1,062	920	933	860	830	770	806	805	776	937
1943	885	1,038	898	974	1,058	902	931	859	830	770	805	804	775	956
1944	886	1,036	898	974	1,059	902	932	861	830	770	804	804	775	956
1943 Sept. Qtr.	885	1,038	898	970	1,058	902	931	859	850	770	803	804	775	956
Dec. "	885	1,036	898	970	1,058	902	931	859	850	770	804	804	775	956
1944 Mar. Qtr.	886	1,036	898	974	1,059	902	931	860	850	770	804	804	776	956
June "	886	1,036	899	974	1,059	902	932	862	849	770	804	804	776	956
Sept. "	886	1,036	899	974	1,059	902	932	862	849	770	804	804	776	956
Dec. "	886	1,036	899	974	1,059	902	932	862	849	770	804	804	776	956

GROUPS I.-II.—FOOD, GROCERIES AND HOUSING.

1940	931	1,184	916	976	995	943	938	901	914	884	942	933	930	945
1941	941	1,212	926	976	1,024	943	953	913	937	899	947	937	936	952
1942	971	1,160	1,009	1,041	1,048	988	1,000	918	973	928	970	908	1,007	1,001
1943	960	1,122	1,009	1,010	1,099	1,001	1,009	933	998	942	1,005	988	1,011	1,003
1944	987	1,221	1,010	1,010	1,079	1,000	992	935	958	920	1,004	970	1,004	998
1943 Sept. Qtr.	901	1,121	1,000	997	1,084	1,003	1,016	961	1,002	949	1,011	995	1,010	1,004
Dec. "	980	1,111	1,000	995	1,074	992	1,000	968	994	913	1,002	984	997	992
1944 Mar. Qtr.	984	1,114	1,003	992	1,077	996	988	932	947	913	908	965	1,004	993
June "	983	1,120	1,007	1,007	1,083	1,000	995	932	947	913	908	965	1,004	998
Sept. "	994	1,126	1,007	1,007	1,089	1,000	995	932	958	913	1,011	976	1,010	1,004
Dec. "	985	1,221	1,007	993	1,086	996	995	932	950	919	1,010	973	1,002	996

(a) See footnote (a) on page 9.

(b) See footnote (b) on page 9.

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

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

In issues of these publications prior to Labour Report No. 28 of 1937, information was given regarding movements in the rents of 4-roomed and 5-roomed houses. While the index-numbers were useful in a general way as a measure of changes in rents in any one town from time to time, there has been an increasing tendency to regard them as an adequate measure of the relative absolute levels of rents in different towns at any given date. In order to prevent such a misuse of the figures, and because of increasing doubts as to the ability of the Bureau, except at prohibitive cost, to ensure that returns of rents from all these towns shall be based on continuously representative samples, it was decided to limit the information collected to the prices of food and groceries. Should any industrial tribunal desire further information on house rentals in any of these towns, the Bureau will be prepared to consider requests for special investigations by its field officers.

### § 9. Changes in the Regimen of Indexes.

**1. Revisions to 1936.**—Since the original compilation of retail price indexes by the Bureau, the regimens of the several Groups and Sections have undergone some modifications. These are briefly as follows:—

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

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

Since the December quarter of 1936, following on the resolutions of the 1936 Conference of Statisticians, the rentals of 4 and 5-roomed houses in certain towns have been collected and tabulated on a somewhat different basis from that previously used, and for convenience is known as the "Census" basis. The returns in the twelve more important cities and towns show the rents of individual houses, on the basis of which variations from a pre-determined standard are measured. This standard, the change

in which has affected the index-numbers only in respect of the relative levels of rents in the different towns, and in respect of their absolute height, was determined by means of a special investigation of the 1933 Census data relating to rentals of all 4 and 5-roomed wood and brick houses occupied by fully-employed wage and salary-earners. This method not being generally applicable to the circumstances of small country towns, on account of the greater diversity of average "quality" of houses, the level of rents in these towns has continued to be determined from a sample of houses selected by house-agents in accordance with definite standards laid down. The variations in rentals from this standard, however, are measured in the same manner as described above for the twelve more important cities and towns.

(iii) *Clothing and Miscellaneous.*—The regimen for clothing and miscellaneous household requirements was originally introduced in 1921, and the first revision was made in the March quarter of 1935. Details of the original regimen were never published, but the revised regimen of 1935 appeared in Labour Report No. 26. A second revision took place in the September quarter of 1936, as part of the general revision of the regimen by the Conference of Statisticians of April, 1936. The main features of this revision are referred to in (iv) below. Some minor alterations have since been made in the regimen.

(iv) *Revision of 1936.*—The revision of the regimen by the Conference of Statisticians of April, 1936, was of a comprehensive nature. The Resolutions of the Conference are reprinted in Appendix XI. of Labour Report No. 27.

This Conference not only recommended extensive revisions of the regimen from which the indexes are compiled, but also considered methods of collection and compilation. As a result of its deliberations, and subsequent discussions by correspondence, many improvements and refinements were introduced.

The changes in the regimen were made with a view to improving the index-numbers as measures of price variations. They comprised chiefly the elimination or replacement of articles no longer in demand, or which experience had shown to be unsuitable media for the measurement of price variations; the alteration of units of quantity in certain cases to conform with those in most general use; the adjustment of the mass-unit allotted to certain articles to bring them into accord with present-day consumption habits; and the re-adjustment of the population weights applicable to the several groups and sections of the regimen in accordance with the results of the 1933 Census. Definite grades or qualities were also established for each article in the regimen, to ensure that quotations should be given, as far as possible, for the same article at all times and in all places, and expert field officers were appointed to personally collect prices to the standard qualities laid down. Improved methods of collecting and weighting average house rentals were also adopted (see paragraph (ii) above).

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

The method of effecting this is shortly as follows:—Up to the June quarter, 1942, all such changes were made by equating the new aggregate of the section embodying the changes to the former aggregate. This course



was adopted when items were added to or omitted from the regimen, and when a change was made in the standard of any item. From the September quarter, 1942, however, all changes of standard were effected by an appropriate adjustment of the "mass unit" or "weight" so as to preserve the percentage weight which the item carried in the aggregate from time to time, and wherever possible, the "weight" of any item dropped from the regimen was transferred to an article of a similar nature which would serve as a more appropriate medium for the measurement of the variations of the article dropped than the remaining items of the section—the "mass units" of which under the former procedure in effect were proportionately increased to carry the aggregate of the item dropped, or reduced to admit the new item added. See also par. 3 on pages 14 and 15.

While this involves no break of continuity in the index-numbers for the six capital cities as a whole, slight alterations of the relative positions of individual towns are inevitable on account of the alteration of former standards. The effect, however, is more noticeable in the group index-numbers than in those covering a combination of groups, wherein the losses and gains tend to balance out. Thus, in comparing group index-numbers for individual towns in respect of periods including the dates of change referred to in paragraphs (i) to (iv) above, the following considerations should be kept in mind:—

*Food and Groceries.*—These index-numbers are substantially comparable throughout the period up to the June quarter of 1936. From and including the September quarter of 1936, the index-numbers for individual towns are comparable with each other, but are not strictly so with those for previous quarters.

*Housing.*—No change was ever made in the method of calculating the rentals of "All Houses", and consequently these index-numbers were comparable throughout the whole period of their existence.\* In regard to rentals of houses of 4 and 5 rooms, however, the index-numbers for individual towns are comparable with each other up to the June quarter of 1936. In the September quarter, 1936, a change was made in the weighting system which gave rise to slight disparities not due to rental fluctuations, and rendered the rent figures for individual towns not strictly comparable with those of former periods. The change, however, thereafter made the index-numbers for any one town more comparable with those of other towns. In the December quarter of 1936 the rent tabulations in the two principal towns of each State were placed on an entirely new basis, which rendered them incomparable individually with average rents of previous periods. This change was also introduced with the object of making the index-numbers for the principal towns more comparable *inter se* in any given quarter.

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

2. **The Regimen under War Conditions.**—Between the comprehensive revision of 1936 and the outbreak of war in 1939 changes in conditions did not require any appreciable revision of the regimen or mass-units of items

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

therein. The adjustments made in 1936 had brought the basis of the index "up-to-date" in the sense that it conformed reasonably closely to normal pre-war usage. Although the effects of the war produced some variations from normal consumption in 1940 and 1941, it was not until 1942 (as explained in Section 2 (5) of this Chapter) that fundamental changes began to occur. As there explained, the years 1942, 1943 and 1944 produced temporary changes of a far-reaching character which, if permanent and stable, must have necessitated fundamental re-adjustments in the regimen and mass-units of the index. But the resultant changes in the index would have been so extensive as virtually to create a new index which would not have been continuously comparable with the "C" series index either as compiled pre-war nor as it is likely to be compiled in post-war years. Consideration of the matter led to the conclusions—

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

### § 10. Retail Price Index-Numbers and Wage Variations.

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

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

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

The considerations upon which the basic wage is fixed are set out in successive judgments of the Court and briefly summarised in Chapter III. (Section 3) of this Report. On this matter, reference should be made to the Basic Wage Judgments of the Court, particularly those of 1934, 1937 and 1941,\* and to the general statement of principles set out in the judgment on the "Munition Workers' Case"† of 1943 † Certain State industrial tribunals use the index-numbers directly for automatic or quasi-automatic adjustment of the rates of wages determined by them as tribunals,

\* 33 (1) A.R., p. 144; 37 C.A.R., p. 583; 44 C.A.R., p. 41.  
 † 50 C.A.R., p. 191.

while some State tribunals have regard to the index-numbers and other factors in considering what "cost of living" variations they should make in rates of wages.

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

The automatic adjustments in wages prescribed in awards of the Court on the basis of retail price index-numbers are sometimes referred to as "cost of living" adjustments and the index is popularly referred to as a "cost of living index". This at times creates misconceptions as to the nature of the retail price index since the term "cost of living" connotes not only change in cost of living due to changes in prices, but also changes in cost of living due to changes in standard of living. Beyond that, use of the term "cost of living" index sometimes creates the erroneous impression that the retail price index purports to embrace all that should be included in a desirable standard of living. As pointed out in the opening sections of this chapter, the "C" series index is a retail price index of specific meaning.

The following is a brief statement of the index-numbers used by the Commonwealth Arbitration Court from time to time:—

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

The Commonwealth Arbitration Court adopted this series in 1913 to determine the *relative* basic wage for towns throughout Australia, and to vary what is popularly known as the "Harvester" Basic Wage of 1907—the wage (42s. per week for Melbourne) declared by Mr. Justice Higgins to be sufficient to meet the "normal needs of the average employee, regarded as a human being, living in a civilized community." For this purpose the base index number (1,000) of the series was selected by the Court as equivalent to a basic wage of 48s. per week. This series had very little application after May, 1933, because of the adoption by the Court successively of the "*D*" series at that date, the "*C*" series in May, 1934, and the "*Court*" series in July, 1937.

(ii) "*B*" Series.—The "*B*" series covers the items food and groceries and rent of 4 and 5-roomed houses, with the prices ruling in the years 1923-1927 as the base (1,000) and is actually the food and rent constituent of the "*C*" series described in (iii). This series was first compiled in 1925, and is available for the six capital cities for the years 1907 and 1911, and for the month of November of the years 1914 to 1920, and quarterly thereafter for the 30 important towns of Australia. It was designed to replace the "*A*" Series, but was never used in connexion with the adjustment of wages by Industrial Tribunals. This series appears on pages 26 to 30 of this Report.

(iii) "*C*" Series.—The All Items ("*C*" series) covers food and groceries; rent of 4 and 5-roomed houses; clothing (man, wife and three children);

household drapery, household utensils, fuel, lighting and other miscellaneous items, with the prices ruling in the years 1923-1927 as the base (1,000). The regimen is published in full in this chapter.

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

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

(iv) *The "Court" Series.*—The "Court" series of index-numbers was created by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in its basic wage judgment of 23rd June, 1937, and operated from 1st July, 1937. Its purpose was to provide a set of index-numbers which would be published by, and under the direct control of, the Court. It was created primarily for the purpose of removing conditions which tended to engender the impression that the Commonwealth Statistician was in some way responsible for the fixation and adjustment of wage-rates. Its introduction has the added advantage of enabling the index-numbers to be specially numbered in the manner most convenient for adjustment purposes, and of enabling the Statistician to change the base of his index-numbers without upsetting the wage and adjustment provisions of the Court's awards. It is at present based on the Commonwealth Statistician's "C" series index, and is obtained as follows:—The Court in 1937 decided to equate to the base index-number of the "C" series index (1,000) the "Court" series index-number 81.0, and as this was the weekly rate in shillings allotted in 1934 by the Court to this base index-number as its "needs" basic wage (see (iii) above), each "C" series index-point is thus equal to .081s. By the simple process of multiplying any "C" series index-number by this factor, therefore, the result to the first decimal place (*as it stands*) is the corresponding "Court" series index-number, which also expresses in shillings the amount of the "needs" basic wage as fixed by the Court for that index-number—with the proviso that any decimal point of .5 or more shall be regarded as the next higher number of shillings. To this wage is then added the relevant "constant" and other loadings granted by the Court to make up the total basic wage for the awards concerned. In the normal course the Court hears and decides issues raised as to the suitability of the index-numbers for the purposes to which it applies them. The "Court" series entirely supersedes the "C" series for all wage adjustments decreed by the Commonwealth Court. A set of index-numbers under this series is reproduced in Appendix III. of this Report, while a "Ready Reckoner" for the weekly "needs" basic wage equivalents of "C" series and "Court" series index-numbers is shown at the end of the following section (see page 38.)

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

The series has for its base the "*A*" series index for each town for the December quarter of 1929, which is varied according to the ratio of change indicated by the "*C*" series index-number for the whole of 1929 and the corresponding "*C*" index-number of the town for the quarter for which the adjustment is to be made. It will thus be seen that, whereas the "*D*" index for each town from the December quarter of 1929 fluctuated in the same way as the "*C*" index for the same town, the relationship of different towns was that of the "*A*" series for the December quarter of 1929, slightly modified by the difference in movement between the "*A*" series and the "*C*" series index for each town since that quarter.

This series was superseded by the judgment of the Court referred to under "*C*" series. The index-numbers of this series were published in Appendix VIII. of Labour Reports Nos. 24 to 27.

(vi) *Food and Groceries*.—The regimen of food and groceries is a component part of each of the series of retail price index-numbers mentioned above. Details of the regimen will be found on page 10. This index was first compiled in 1912 and is available yearly for the six capital cities from 1901 to 1911 and monthly for the 30 important towns of Australia from 1912 to date. An index computed from the prices of food and groceries only was for a time used for the adjustment of old-age and invalid pensions, and also for the adjustment of the wages of members of the North Australian Workers' Union above the 20th parallel. Both these adjustments were later effected by means of the "*C*" Series Index, but the provisions for the adjustment of pensions were repealed as from 6th April, 1944.

(vii) *The "200 Towns" Series*.—This series was tabulated for the month of November each year in respect of 200 of the more important towns of the Commonwealth. Up to November, 1936, it covered the cost of food and groceries combined with the rent of 4 and of 5-roomed houses respectively, but thereafter the tabulation was limited to food and groceries only. This table has been used mostly in discussions of suitable relative rates for country towns, but the index-numbers have not been directly employed by Industrial Tribunals in this connexion. The base of this table is the weighted average cost of food and groceries in the six capital cities in 1923-27 = 1,000. This series has been compiled for the month of November since 1913. It was originally confined to 100 towns, but was increased to 150 in 1915, and 200 in 1923. The tabulation of this index was discontinued after November, 1942 as a war-time economy. A reference to these index-numbers will be found on page 31.

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

The following table shows the automatic scales of quarterly, half-yearly or yearly adjustment adopted by the Commonwealth Arbitration Court in its Basic Wage Judgments of 1934 and 1937 for the "needs" portion of its basic wage. From 1st May, 1934, to 30th June, 1937, the amount of wage shown constituted the basic wage payable exclusive of certain "loadings" legally regarded as part of the total basic wage.\* But from 1st July, 1937, the amount of wage shown by the scale was designated by the Court the "needs" basic wage, and a "loading" (generally referred to as the "prosperity" loading) determined by the Court was added

\* See first paragraph, p. 73.

to it. This is a "constant" (non-adjustable) loading, but at different rates according to locality and industry, and is fully described in Section 3 of Chapter III. of this Report. The method followed by the Court was to fix an amount of basic wage after hearing evidence and argument by representatives of employers and employees covering a wide range of relevant factors (primarily relating to "capacity of industry" to pay and general economic conditions), and then to determine an automatic adjustment scale.

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

(As adopted by Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, April, 1934, and June, 1937.)

\* Basis—

(a) "C" Series.—Index-number 1,000 = 81s. per week (1s. = 12.345679), or £311 per annum (£1 = 4.739336) (Operative 1st May, 1934).

(b) "Court" Series.—"C" series index-number 1,000 = "Court" series index-number 81.0 (Operative 1st July, 1937).

Index-number Divisions.		Wage Per week ("Needs").	Index-number Divisions.		Wage Per week ("Needs").
"C" Series.	"Court" Series.		"C" Series.	"Court" Series.	
		£ s. d.			£ s. d.
587-598 ..	47.5-48.4	2 8 0	933-944..	75.5-76.4	3 16 0
599-611 ..	48.5-49.4	2 9 0	945-956..	76.5-77.4	3 17 0
612-623 ..	49.5-50.4	2 10 0	957-969..	77.5-78.4	3 18 0
624-635 ..	50.5-51.4	2 11 0	970-981..	78.5-79.4	3 19 0
636-648 ..	51.5-52.4	2 12 0	982-993..	79.5-80.4	4 0 0
649-660 ..	52.5-53.4	2 13 0	994-1006..	80.5-81.4	4 1 0
661-672 ..	53.5-54.4	2 14 0	1007-1018..	81.5-82.4	4 2 0
673-685 ..	54.5-55.4	2 15 0	1019-1030..	82.5-83.4	4 3 0
686-697 ..	55.5-56.4	2 16 0	1031-1043..	83.5-84.4	4 4 0
698-709 ..	56.5-57.4	2 17 0	1044-1055..	84.5-85.4	4 5 0
710-722 ..	57.5-58.4	2 18 0	1056-1067..	85.5-86.4	4 6 0
723-734 ..	58.5-59.4	2 19 0	1068-1080..	86.5-87.4	4 7 0
735-746 ..	59.5-60.4	3 0 0	1081-1092..	87.5-88.4	4 8 0
747-759 ..	60.5-61.4	3 1 0	1093-1104..	88.5-89.4	4 9 0
760-771 ..	61.5-62.4	3 2 0	1105-1117..	89.5-90.4	4 10 0
772-783 ..	62.5-63.4	3 3 0	1118-1129..	90.5-91.4	4 11 0
784-796 ..	63.5-64.4	3 4 0	1130-1141..	91.5-92.4	4 12 0
797-808 ..	64.5-65.4	3 5 0	1142-1154..	92.5-93.4	4 13 0
809-820 ..	65.5-66.4	3 6 0	1155-1166..	93.5-94.4	4 14 0
821-833 ..	66.5-67.4	3 7 0	1167-1179..	94.5-95.4	4 15 0
834-845 ..	67.5-68.4	3 8 0	1180-1191..	95.5-96.4	4 16 0
846-858 ..	68.5-69.4	3 9 0	1192-1203..	96.5-97.4	4 17 0
859-870 ..	69.5-70.4	3 10 0	1204-1216..	97.5-98.4	4 18 0
871-882 ..	70.5-71.4	3 11 0	1217-1228..	98.5-99.4	4 19 0
883-895 ..	71.5-72.4	3 12 0	1229-1240..	99.5-100.4	5 0 0
896-907 ..	72.5-73.4	3 13 0	1241-1253..	100.5-101.4	5 1 0
908-919 ..	73.5-74.4	3 14 0	1254-1265..	101.5-102.4	5 2 0
920-932 ..	74.5-75.4	3 15 0	1266-1277..	102.5-103.4	5 3 0

\*Formulae for Construction of Tables—

(a) "C" Series.—Let N = number of shillings in wage per week. Then  $12.345679 \times (N - .5) + 1$  gives the first, and  $12.345679 \times (N + .5)$  gives the second of the pair of numbers in the index-number division for N shillings. Decimal fractions in result to be disregarded.

(b) "Court" Series.—Each "C" series index-number point = .081, and each of the first of the pair of index-number divisions for the "C" series in above table when multiplied by this factor gives to the first decimal place (as it stands) the first of the pair of index-number divisions for the "Court" series—from which the second of the pair becomes obvious. (NOTE.—All "Court" series index-numbers must be derived through their corresponding "C" series index-numbers.)

Both the amount of wage and the adjustment scale operate only until the Court otherwise determines, and representatives of employers and employees have the right to approach the Court for variation of the wage or for variation of the adjustment scale. Only the "needs" portion of the total basic wage is adjustable.

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

The tables giving index-numbers of retail prices for (i) cost of living, including articles other than food, and (ii) foodstuffs only, appearing in previous issues of this Report were discontinued for the duration of the war, owing partly to the need for economy, and partly to the information for many countries being no longer available. The figures, which were taken chiefly from the League of Nations *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics*, and the International Labour Office *Year Book of Labour Statistics*, are of course still obtainable in part from the publications mentioned.

## CHAPTER II.—WHOLESALE PRICES AND PRICE INDEXES.

### § 1. Melbourne Wholesale Price Index.

1. **General.**—The data on which this chapter is based relate almost entirely to wholesale prices in Melbourne. An index of Sydney wholesale prices is compiled by the Government Statistician of New South Wales, and published in the *Year Book* and the *Monthly Summary of Business Statistics* of that State.

The index of Melbourne wholesale prices was first computed in 1912, and has been continued on the same lines since that year. The items included in the (old) Melbourne wholesale price index comprise chiefly basic materials which in the form of raw material, food, or as a source of power, enter into production for home consumption. The purpose of the index, therefore, is to measure the changes in the prices of these particular materials rather than the changes in prices generally. As Australia does not, to any extent, manufacture from imported raw materials commodities for export, the local consumption appears to give the most appropriate weighting. Any lack of uniformity in the variations of the index-numbers for these wholesale prices and for retail prices would indicate broadly changes in the relation of manufacturing and distributing charges to the cost of basic materials.

The scope of this wholesale price index can best be understood by an examination of the list of commodities included which is given on page 40. This list is, to a large extent, comparable with that used in the compilation of the *Economist* and *Statist* index-numbers for Great Britain, but differs largely from that used for the wholesale price index-numbers of the United States (Bureau of Labour) or Canada (Department of Labour).

2. **The Grouping of the Commodities.**—The commodities are divided into eight groups, as set out on page 40. The descriptions of the groups are given in the following tables with the proportional cost of each group for the year 1944. These proportions cannot be used with any degree of accuracy to combine "group" index-numbers owing to the possible wide differences in the proportions compared with those for the *base period*. See paragraph following table on page 15.