

Subsection 3.—Cost of Living of Wage-Earners.*

An index number of the cost of living in working-men's families has been computed by the Department of Labour since 1913, and is published monthly in the *Labour Gazette*. This index is specifically designed for the purpose of measuring the trends of the cost of living for certain wage-earning classes with a somewhat lower standard of living than that which is measured by the Bureau of Statistics index number of retail prices, shown on pp. 860-861 of the present volume. It is constructed from family budgets, principally a weekly family budget of staple foods, fuel, and rent which has been published monthly in the *Labour Gazette* since 1915 and annually since 1911; in addition, figures are included for clothing and sundry items and further data for fuel, light, and rent. The Labour Department aims, by this method, to have a basis for computation that can be readily applied to the data for any given locality or district at any time, or for any class of labour—for instance, coal miners, who usually do not live in cities. This index is used extensively in negotiations as to wage rates and in the settlement of industrial disputes. An abridgment of the index is presented in Table 12.

* Revised under the direction of W. M. Dickson, Deputy Minister of Labour.

12.—Changes in the Cost of Living of Wage-Earners in Canada, 1929-36, and for stated months, 1937 and 1938.

(Average prices in 1913=100.)

NOTE.—Comparable statistics for December, 1914-28, will be found at p. 811 of the 1938 Year Book.

Year and Month.	Food.	Fuel and Light.	Rent.	Clothing.	Sundries.	All Items. ¹
1929 December.....	161	157	158	156	166	160
1930 ".....	138	156	160	148	165	151
1931 ".....	107	152	158	127	163	135
1932 ".....	96	145	141	114	161	125
1933 ".....	100	142	129	113	157	123
1934 ".....	103	144	129	115	154	123
1935 ".....	111	141	132	115	154	127
1936 ".....	114	142	135	115	154	128
1937—						
March.....	116	141	135	117	154	129
June.....	116	138	140	117	154	130
September.....	119	138	140	118	155	131
December.....	120	140	142	118	157	133
1938—						
January.....	118	140	142	118	156	132
February.....	117	140	142	118	156	132
March.....	118	140	142	119	156	132
April.....	118	140	142	119	156	132
May.....	116	140	144	119	156	132
June.....	117	139	148	118	156	132
July.....	117	139	148	118	156	132
August.....	120	139	148	118	156	134
September.....	116	139	148	118	156	132
October.....	115	140	148	118	156	132
November.....	114	141	148	118	156	132
December.....	113	141	148	117	156	131

¹ The figures for "All Items" were calculated by giving the following weights to each group: food, 35 p.c.; fuel, 8 p.c.; rent, 18½ p.c.; clothing, 18½ p.c.; sundries, 20 p.c.