

Cost-of-Living Index and Prices of Staple Foods.—By October, 1948, the cost-of-living index had reached 159.6. That point marked the beginning of a plateau which lasted nearly a year and a half. Between October, 1948, and February, 1950, the index averaged 160.6, and did not vary more than 2.1 points above or below that level. However, by March, 1950, higher food prices and rents raised the index to 163.7 as against 161.6 at February and a fairly steady increase was shown to the end of the year.

4.—Annual Index Numbers of Living Costs, 1940-50, and Monthly Index Numbers, 1949 and 1950

(1935-39=100)

NOTE.—Figures for the years 1913-34 will be found at p. 863 of the 1946 Year Book and those for 1935-38 at pp. 954-955 of the 1948-49 edition.

Year and Month	Food Index	Rent Index	Fuel and Light Index	Clothing Index	Home Furnishings and Services Index	Miscellaneous Index	Total Index
1940.....	105.6	106.3	107.1	109.2	107.2	102.3	105.6
1941.....	116.1	109.4	110.3	116.1	113.8	105.1	111.7
1942.....	127.2	111.3	112.8	120.0	117.9	107.1	117.0
1943.....	130.7	111.5	112.9	120.5	118.0	108.0	118.0
1944.....	131.3	111.9	110.6	121.5	118.4	108.9	118.9
1945.....	133.0	112.1	107.0	122.1	119.0	109.4	119.5
1946.....	140.4	112.7	107.4	126.3	124.5	112.6	123.6
1947.....	159.5	116.7	115.9	143.9	141.6	117.0	135.5
1948.....	195.5	120.7	124.8	174.4	162.6	123.4	155.0
1949.....	203.0	123.0	131.1	183.1	167.6	128.8	160.8
1950.....	210.9	132.9	138.3	182.3	169.2	132.6	166.5
1949							
January.....	202.2	121.7	130.0	181.9	167.0	126.6	159.6
February.....	200.4	121.7	130.8	181.8	167.8	128.1	159.5
March.....	199.1	121.7	131.0	182.7	167.9	128.1	159.2
April.....	198.5	122.4	131.0	183.2	168.0	128.4	159.3
May.....	199.5	122.4	129.1	183.3	168.1	128.4	159.5
June.....	202.9	122.4	128.7	183.3	167.7	128.4	160.5
July.....	207.2	123.4	129.1	183.3	167.5	128.5	162.1
August.....	209.2	123.4	129.5	183.2	167.4	128.9	162.8
September.....	207.0	123.9	130.1	183.5	167.4	128.9	162.3
October.....	205.0	123.9	134.1	184.1	167.2	130.2	162.2
November.....	203.3	123.9	135.1	183.7	167.4	130.2	161.7
December.....	201.9	125.0	135.2	183.7	167.1	130.5	161.5
1950							
January.....	199.4	125.0	135.6	183.3	167.0	131.6	161.0
February.....	201.3	125.0	135.9	183.0	166.4	132.1	161.6
March.....	204.0	132.7	136.3	181.4	166.3	132.1	163.7
April.....	204.5	132.7	138.0	181.2	166.4	132.3	164.0
May.....	204.6	132.7	137.5	180.8	166.4	132.3	164.0
June.....	209.0	132.7	137.1	180.7	166.9	132.4	165.4
July.....	214.3	134.9	137.7	180.7	166.9	132.5	167.5
August.....	216.7	134.9	138.4	180.9	168.9	132.5	168.5
September.....	218.8	135.5	140.8	182.3	171.1	132.8	169.8
October.....	220.1	135.5	141.0	183.5	172.7	133.3	170.7
November.....	218.6	136.4	140.6	184.5	174.8	133.4	170.7
December.....	218.8	136.4	140.7	184.9	176.4	134.1	171.1

Table 5 presents average and relative prices (basis: 1935-39=100) of staple foods that enter into the food index, a very important factor in the cost of living. The details given in regard to these staple commodities for the years from 1939 to 1949 and for each month for the latest two years will be found useful to students of cost-of-living trends.