

## COST OF LIVING.

To the Editor.

Sir—Kindly publish this for the information of careless housewives. Cost of living &c., per week for a family of four:—Fuel, 2/; light, 8d.; bread, 4/;  $\frac{1}{2}$ -lb. tea, 6d.; two cakes, 1/; 4 lb. sugar, 10d.; two tins jam, 1/2; 1 S.R. flour, 4d.; 3 lb. butter, 3/; starch, 1d.; blue, 1d.; soap, 2d.; salt, 1d.; pepper, 1d.; vinegar, 2d.; blacking, 1d.; matches, 1d.; meat, 3/; milk, 6d.; cabbages, 6d.; potatoes, 6d.; fruit, 6d.; newspapers, 7d.; boots, 2/; clothing, 3/; physic—cream of tartar, 1d.; Epsom salts, 1d.; sulphur, 1d.; liquorice, 1d.; eucalyptus, 1d.; barber, nil; gambling, nil; tobacco, nil; beer, nil. No rent to pay—£1 5/4.—I am, &c.,

F. H. BULL.

Maylands, December 15, 1908.

Sir—There is as much in the way we spend our money as in the amount we are able to earn, and the workers who have but a moderate income should carefully study the question of domestic economy in order to have more than a bare living wage. This one can do without being either a crank or a martyr. With two children, one 12 and the other 15, wife and self, our average bill for groceries, fruit, and bread comes to about 14/ on an average every week. Our diet list comprises white and brown bread, rice, sago, barley, butter, eggs, milk, fruit, oatmeal, macaroni, biscuits, peas, beans, lentils, olive oil, potatoes, and vegetables. As we do not use meat, tea, coffee, pickles, sauces, spices, or intoxicating drinks or tobacco, we do not have to spend anything on medicines or lodges. One worker said the laboring man wanted meat three times a day, but muscle workers as well as brain workers can do better work without either flesh foods or stimulants, for the vegetable kingdom, with its grains, fruits, and nuts, provides more force power, pound for pound, than can be obtained from the animal kingdom. The following short list will give at a glance the comparative value of a few of the common articles of food:—Beef, 28 per cent.; mutton, 28 per cent.; poultry, 26 per cent.; fish, 22 per cent.; eggs, 26 per cent.; beans, 82 per cent.; macaroni, 89 per cent.; rice, 87 per cent.; wheatmeal, 88 per cent.—I am, &c.,

C. D. BARON.

Victoria-square, Adelaide,  
December 15, 1908.

Sir—I would like to ask "Bob Careful" how often does the family go out to meals. I have known some people who boast of how little they can live on, but they often pay visits to their friends to save meals at home, thus sponging on some other family. Perhaps "Bob Careful's" family is one of the easy-to-keep sort, and whose clothes and boots never wear out, who are never hungry and are always neat and tidy in their habits. Alas, I wish I had a family who never wanted much. Then I would know how to keep house cheaply. "Bob Careful" forgets rice, sago, cocoa, eggs, fish, and endless other little things that are necessary to life. If he is a man I am glad I am not his wife, because he must be the very essence of meanness. I have been a housekeeper for more than 20 years, and I have prided myself on being a fair manager. I think "Bob Careful's" letter is mean and discouraging to struggling housewives. Nobody needs encouragement more than the housewife, and nobody seems to get less sympathy. Every family is not so easy to keep as "Bob Careful's." Talk about careless housewives! Many wives are careless because they get so little sympathy. Many husbands are ever ready to blame or condemn; but let the husband give a little praise to the tired wife now and again and he will reap the benefit. Many women are heroines, but it is never known. Careless husbands are the cause of careless wives in many cases.—I am, &c.,

CONTEMPT.

Sir—Perhaps "Bob Careful" would publish the address of his landlord, for I, one of many, would like to rent a decent house at 8/6 per week. It is a job to get one at 10/ or 12/ per week, or in fact to get one at all lately. I am paying 12/ for four rooms and kitchen, and thought myself fortunate at that. I should think "Bob Careful" and family suffer from nerves, as he is very careful with tea; not so bread and butter. I suppose that takes the place of pudding, as I see no mention of the ingredients for such, unless they have plain doughboys. How do four adults manage to do the household and personal washing, the cleaning of the house, washing up, &c., and wash themselves for a week on half a bar of soap? Perhaps "Bob Careful" will

enlighten us. He allows no change in vegetables (always cabbage), nor any sauce, pickles, salads, &c. I wonder if he has got everlasting furniture, house linen, curtains, brushes, and brooms, &c. He makes no mention of replenishing such. I suppose he never polishes his silver, knives, furniture, floors, &c., as he doesn't use any polish. I could supply him with heaps of necessary items, which would soon absorb his 7/2 (to credit). Why debar the workman of his tobacco? And every man is not clever enough to cut his own hair. I am of opinion that £2 2/ per week is a bare existence. It does not provide much in case of sickness. A packet of salts does not always keep you in good health and free from doctor's bills. I speak from experience, as I have not long recovered from illness. I am now doing a little sewing to help pay the expenses incurred at that time, as my husband's wages are not sufficient. He is a groom employed by the Tramways Trust. After working every third Sunday all day, and two hours the other Sundays, his wages average £2 per week.—I am, &c.,

#### LIVE AND LET LIVE.

Sir—I am a landlord with a large number of tenants of the working classes, and I have found that what one family can live comfortably on, paying their way and saving money, is starvation to another family who are improvident. One tenant earns £2 2/ a week regularly. His family are always in debt and do not own an article of furniture. The dustbin is always full of bread and meat, bought ready cooked. All clothes are bought ready-made and never mended. Another man never earns more than 30/ a week and is often out of work in the winter. His family pay their way and have bought their furniture since they have been my tenants. There are three children. Another tenant earns regularly £5 a week and expects £7 after Christmas. He and his wife cannot keep out of debt and they buy nothing but food and clothes. I have a customer, one of many, who never earned more than £2 2/ a week and is often out of work in the winter. He has bought the house he lives in, and another, which he lets; his furniture, and a piano, and sewing machine. He has children. I could fill pages with instances of the low-wages man being richer than the high-wages man, because he and his wife are provident. It is not the amount of wages, but the amount of care taken of it that makes it a living wage or not. The miners at Broken Hill are no better for the extra wage they get. It is all bespoken before it is due; it only makes them more wasteful.—I am, &c.,

LANDLORD.