



THE HIGH COST OF LIVING—OBSERVATIONS BY A GOVERNMENT COMMISSIONER.

The following extracts are taken from a paper read before the Canadian Economic Association at Ottawa on September, 1913 by Mr. R. H. Coats, Statistician, Department of Labour, and one of the members of the High Cost of Living Commission appointed by the Government during the month of December.

Probably 40 or 50 per cent of the income of the average city is spent for food.

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The cost of living has risen by over one half, in a decade and a half.

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The articles which have gone up fastest have been food products, notably Canadian grown food products.

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The consumer in our city is paying anything from 50 to 100 per cent more for his foods than the farmer in the country receives.

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It is impossible at the present to ascertain what profits the packers are making.

Bread is cheaper in London than in Winnipeg.

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Canadian bacon was selling in England about the middle of August at 80 to 84 shillings per long cwt. i.e., 17 to 18 cents per lb. In Montreal at the same date the wholesale price was 20 cents.

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The beef trust beyond a doubt sets prices to consumer and producer in the United States. Trade methods we are fast adopting here are essentially the same.

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The inherent danger is that the big canneries may by combination force out the little ones, and thus gain a position where they can dictate to the grower what he will get and to the consumer what he will pay.

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