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## THE COST OF LIVING.

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE ARGUS.

Sir,—We are having in the country a magnificent harvest, which will, doubtless, a little later benefit us in Melbourne, but in the meantime, owing to the low wages, scarcity of work, and high cost of living in town, it is very hard to make both ends meet. For the scarcity of work and lowness of wages one must lay the blame on the Shops and Factories Act and such like legislation, and the employment of women, but the cost of living is largely the result of rings amongst the middlemen. Take bread; at the present price of flour, it will pay handsomely at 4½d. to 5d. per 4lb. loaf; we pay from 6d. to 7d., according to the suburb. For milk we pay 4d. quart, the price paid by the dealers being from 4d. to 6d. gallon, showing a profit of 300 to 400 per cent. According to the market reports, the retail price of meat should be 30 to 40 per cent. less than charged to us. The butchers have never had such a good year, notwithstanding the high prices of stock. In firewood an increase of 2d. per cwt. has been made, 1/1 per cwt. for box blocks now being charged. For butter we pay 2d. a pound more than we ought, and so through many necessaries. Can nothing be done?—Yours,  
&c.  
HOUSEHOLDER.

Jan. 5.

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