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## COST OF LIVING.

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### HOW OLD-AGE PENSIONERS LIVE.

A man, aged 65 years, bright, alert, and in fair condition for his time of life, made good his claim for a pension—10s a week. Later on, as if by way of gratitude, he supplied the Deputy Commissioner (Mr. Clegg) with a number of his weekly bills, and made the boast that he could save out of his allowance. Here is one of his bills:—

20th, rent 2s, milk 1d; 21st, milk 1d, bread 3½d; 22nd, morning paper 1d and milk 1d; 23rd, tram fares 2d, and morning paper 1d; 24th, milk 1d, bread 3½d, morning paper 1d, and sugar 2½d; 25th, milk 1d, and morning paper 1d. Total, 3s 8½d.

To this account the following note was appended:—"You will see that low as the scale is, it includes luxuries that I could do very well without if necessary."

This was a week of low diet. The following bill, however, is one which the Deputy Commissioner says can be regarded as reaching the old man's domestic high-water mark:—

10th instant, rent 2s, matches 2d, raisins 3d, sardines 5d, peppermints 3d, meat pie 1d; 11th, bread 2½d, milk 1d, methylated spirits 6d; 12th, milk 1d, bread 1½d, sausage meat 1½d, beer and lunch 6d; 13th, beer and lunch 3d, milk 1d; 14th, milk 1d, beer and lunch 3d; 15th, milk 2d; 16th, butter 6½d, bread 3d, arrow-root 2½d, tomatoes 3d. Total, 6s 10½d.

This pensioner told the Deputy that his allowance also left him a fair margin for clothes. Mr. Clegg points out that an advantage in this old man's case is the small amount he pays in rent. Women pensioners have, he says, often to pay 5s a week rent, and live on the other 5s, which is sufficient only to provide them with bread and tea and a little butter occasionally.

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