

COST OF LIVING.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD.

Sir,—Letters in Tuesday's issue are admirably to the point, and the subject should not be allowed to rest, believing as I do that our legislation is the cause of a great deal of the increase. Pity that we cannot have an elastic tariff, especially as regards wheat and other foodstuffs; or, what would be better, no tariff at all on these goods, bearing in mind that our climate is a dry one, as we cannot rely on the rain coming at the right time when the grain is growing. It is shocking to think that our legislature should discuss lowest salary for an adult in Federal service, and fix it at £110; then vote, without discussion, £600 as a gift every year to themselves.

Twenty-five years ago Sydney was a paradise for the working man, the envy of all the world. What is it like now? If trade was unhampered by high tariff Canada could send us shiploads of wheat, and take another load back of same material; seasons fit in nicely for this to be done; or they would more likely take some other goods on return journey, for ships never leave any port empty. In conclusion, I can assure your readers that the rise in the price of the necessary loaf of bread is being keenly felt in Sydney, to which is added the rise in price of other necessaries of life.

I am, etc.,

Oct. 22.

J.W.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD.

Sir,—Under the heading of "Cost of Living," published in your paper, signed "G.P.H.," his remark that his wife is worried to death with the struggle to make ends meet is only too true for many. I am a wife, too, on a small income, and I find it a cruel torture to put to the "motherhood of Australia." Some are about to increase the population, others are feeding their babies by the natural method given by God to His infants; yet, under the strain of high price foods, husbands out of work, a pittance given if chance gives him employment; age 40 a detriment, single man preferred on application to a billet, how is a woman to rear a family of sturdy, well-conducted Australians? Her life now is eking to get a meal ready for the family, and anyone knows how she, after helping her children, will drink a cup of tea with a pretence to eat; no mother will have all she can require when there is a shortage on the table. This for a woman to have to endure simply because they have married worthy men willing and able to work. One does not ask for a Federal member's salary, but the wages offered to a married man over 40 or younger is terrible, simply because a firm knows he has a wife who will eke out this wage (which a boarding-house keeper would refuse to take from a single fellow), and is compelled to take it or starve. If her babe were a cripple or otherwise afflicted, or to grow up as a "useless mouth," as termed in the French Revolution, there are institutions to receive them, and a wife can go out to augment the wages of her husband, to work by the day, unencumbered; but the mother of a fine healthy babe must struggle on, broken-spirited, at her lot. A healthy babe means "whole attention," and to take one to work with you would not be tolerated, as it would claim too much of its mother's time, as all infants have a right to demand by nature. Our cry for honest work and a living wage for the fathers and husbands of Australia is met with "tariff," and "no married man need apply." Trusting a more able pen than mine will ventilate, with good results, for the wives and mothers of Australia, this struggle to "eat to live," not "to live to eat,"

I am, etc.,

A CLERK'S WIFE.