

On the whole, Empire butter appeared to be particularly popular with the large provision firms ; it was stocked in nearly three-quarters of the branches of non-local multiple organisations and in the five department stores included in the enquiry.

In the Second Survey the decrease in the sales of Australian and New Zealand butter was partly offset by the increase in Irish, and on the whole the relative position of Empire butter appeared to be only slightly lower than in the First Survey. In Birmingham, there was a sharp decrease in Australian sales with little corresponding increase in Irish, but in Liverpool on the other hand the popularity of Irish in the summer more than counterbalanced the decrease in other Empire types.

The prevailing opinion amongst those retailers with experience of Empire butter was that its popularity had increased within the last two years, particularly in London, Liverpool and Birmingham.

V.—RETAIL PRICES.

As indicated in a previous section, it was not possible in all cases to distinguish between the various grades of butters and between salted and unsalted varieties. For the purposes of this report, therefore, butter from any one country is considered as one type. Many of the main types of bulk butter sold in this country are of one variety or grade ; in those cases where more than one variety or grade is sold, this would account for some part of the range in the retail prices recorded for these types.

An attempt was made to trace the retail price movement over the period of the enquiry and a weekly record was kept of the prices noted. As these prices were from different shops and different towns each week, they are not strictly comparable, but on the whole the areas are sufficiently varied for the monthly averages shown in Figure IV to be fairly representative.

The enquiry extended over a period of six months (April–September, 1929) ; during that time the average retail prices of most butters rose about 1*d.* per pound. Wholesale prices of butter in 1929 were falling during the early part of the year. In April when the enquiry started, they had begun to rise ; from July to August there was a