HOW NEW YORK IS FED.

Where the Butter, Eggs, Flour, Peaches, Fish, Berries, Apples, Cheese, Beef, Mutton, Pork, Oysters, Game, Poultry, Greens, Celery, Lard, Milk and Potatoes Come From.

THE DEATH OF OLD "HIGH PRICE."

More Markets and Cheaper Dinners Imperatively Demanded.

Comparative Statements of Prices in New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Washington, Baltimore, Quebec, Paris, London, Vienna, Berlin and St. Petersburg.

Ours the Dearest Metropolis in the World.

"How to feed my family" is the personal problem of nearly half a million of men in New York daily. How to feed New York is a greater study—the sphynx of problems. Its belly is a fickle one; its pulse is unreliable. Population ebbs and flows here as it does nowhere else in the world. The fascinations and the profits of the city make vegetable farming in the suburbs slow and melancholy work. Our market houses are rookeries, enough in themselves to deter respectable farmers from sitting in them, and either two or three transfers have to be made of all produce between the farm and the stall. In Philadelphia, Boston and Cincinnati the "trucker," butcher or hunter rides directly into town with his "dearborn," whether he lives five or twenty miles away; the market is either at the tail of his wagon on the sidewalk, or in some covered shed down the middle of the street, or in commodious and even luxurious buildings built by private corporations. To the great mass of people the palpable facts are these—that New York has six considerable market houses, Washington, Fulton, Jefferson, Tompkins, Clinton and Essex; that nearly four hundred huckster wagons go up and down our streets with market produce, and that upwards of eleven hundred "green grocers" dispense fresh meat and vegetables over Manhattan Island. In the markets, collectively, there are over two thousand stalls. About four thousand market wagons come in from the country every week. In the mere retailing of fresh vegetables, fruit and meat, therefore, quite eight thousand persons are capitalists in and around this island. In a general sense it may be alleged that New York includes Brooklyn and all other adjacent cities in this estimate; we are the receiving depot, and the markets and shops of Staten Island, Jersey City, Williamsburg, &c., are supplied from ours. This touches only the question of what is fresh from the shambles and the ground. A broader inquiry is this:

"WHO RAISES THE FOOD FOR NEW YORK?"

Here are, in a small radius, a million five hundred thousand people in round numbers. Within almost as small a radius of *time* there are five millions of people—those who, by our manifold systems of communication, reach into New York and eat as quickly as do we. Engrossing almost all the ocean commerce of the greatest granary and live stock country in the world, the crops arise from a million square miles of harvest, and march into us or through us. So do the hundred thousand acres of swine, the great grazing landscapes of cattle and sheep; belts of orchard and vegetable garden over all the continent burst here and spill their cornucopias. The very fishes on the fog banks of Newfoundland, up the cold rivers, and in the bays, swim, as it were, into New York harbor, hence to be distributed over the continent. If one could stand at some point in the air and get a glimpse of the whole continent, he would see the docks flying, the herds marching, the grain pouring, the fish swimming, the fruit flowing, the milk streaming, and the vegetables rolling as down some mighty amphitheatre to one common centre, New York. The like is true of no other continent or port in the world. Here are paid the highest prices; here are bought the vastest quantities. Fruit that Philadelphia wants to buy, steams past her, preferring the more liberal purse of the metropolis. Peaches grown thirty miles from Philadelphia and Baltimore are eaten in those cities after having made the journey to this market and been distributed back again. If we have exported to foreign countries too largely of our produce, it returns to us through New York almost entirely. Last year we called back from Liverpool thirty-six thousand barrels of pork, although we had sent thither nearly half a million barrels. Amplification upon this subject is unnecessary. There is no dealer in anything that enters into the belly, between San Francisco and Cape Race, who does not fix his eye upon New York as upon some hungry countenance. The stock, provision and grain exchanges of other cities are mere sub-offices for this grand agency and depot. All that is not eaten by the way converges here to be consumed or exported. The proposition of this article is to trace up to its sources all that feeds the people of New York, to show the manner of its transportation and distribution; what it costs the people, and why. For a more immediate question than the corruption of our politics or the relations between employer and man, is that of feeding the people. This is the dearest city in the world to live in, dearer than St. Petersburg. It is dearer to eat here than to lodge here. There must be some artificial reason for the fact that in the common market of the continent there is more hunger than elsewhere, and that life struggles here more pinchingly.

HISTORY OF A BEEFSTEAK.

During one week in August 319 car loads of live produce came over the Erie railroad alone. Of these 188 cars were filled with cattle, making 3,760 cows. During the same week, by all the routes, 520 cars of live produce came into New York, or, altogether, 15,600 head of cattle, calves, hogs and sheep, alive. During the same week there came of salt pork, hams and beef, 9,040 barrels by rail alone. Put these live animals in line and restore the salted flesh to its anatomy and locomotion, and we should have a file of cattle five miles long entering the city every week. The meat that is brought here alive is either marched from the mountain and interior counties of Pennsylvania and New York, or brought by cargo from Buffalo, Cleveland and Chicago. In the former case a buyer, acting either as a factor for a stock merchant, or upon his own account, goes on foot among the farmers and pays cash for sheep or cattle. They are collected by himself and one assistant; these, with a drover's dog, conduct the herd by easy stages eastward. Along all the way there are farmers whose entire lands are reserved for grazing. The drover pays from ten cents a day per head for cattle to ten cents a week for sheep, and this price increases as the city is approached. The drove sometimes advances in the night, and rests feeding in the heat of the day, improving in weight and appearance as it progresses. Cattle purchased, say, in the middle of New York, will command no more than four or five cents a pound in gross; on their way east they will generally increase in weight one-sixth. In the same way stock that comes eastward by rail is collected at points along the road. Trains of live stock now come through from Chicago to New York in eighty hours. These animals get little food on the way, sometimes not any water. Generally they are accompanied by no one, being insured when shipped and consigned to a dealer at the termination of their journey. Whatever livestock is sent here is consumed in and around the city and passes through our markets. The butchers are confederate and have large establishments for killing at commission in Jersey, while the drovers have yards at Fortieth street, 100th street and at Hudson City. There are still many butchers in New York and in all its suburbs, but the "slaughterers" do most of the killing. Take a scene at any one of these drovers' places, say Albany or the Bull's Head. Here are five or ten acres of pens—a dreary, miry stretch of pale fences with wickets between the yards and lanes running in and out. Some of them are empty; others show a cow or two lowing hungrily; yonder is a whole herd cramped in an enclosure, bellowing hustily. Near by the pens is a large hotel, with the sign of the Bull's Head, or the Spotted Cow, upon it. Around it are backed up a great number of short carts, with boys on the seats soapily locked, a cigar stump in the corners of their mouths pointing upward; and over the bar within, or walking to and fro among the pens, whip in hand, the butchers and the factors, with trowsers stuffed in their boots, go chaffering in crisp, dry, hot, unmannerly speech. The trade concluded, a boy picks out his single steer or pair of steers and walks them toward the shambles, while the butcher drives to the same place before him and prepares for the afternoon's work. Communipaw, which is now in full operation, and inviting a competitor by the success it has had, both economically and pecuniarily, is based upon the abattoir system of Paris—the principle of building a vast butchery and letting out its compartments to individual butchers. Drainage, apparatus for saving the blood and the fat, blocks and rings and chains, hose and water in quantity, are afforded. About one or two o'clock you may hear the dying bellow of dozens of strong steers here, or the bleat of calves as they see the throats of their playfellows open to the knife. Many butchers still adhere to their private shambles—lack of enterprise or love of independence or custom impelling them still to maintain these wretched edifices which are the pest of their neighborhoods and blots upon our landscapes. When the beef is killed the hide is sent to the tanner's, the horns and hoofs get to the turner's or the bone boiler's, and the butcher removes the carcass to his shop in the city by means of his short-tailed cart. Between eleven o'clock at night and five o'clock in the morning, over all the ferries and down the almost desolate streets, you may see these jaunty blood takers come at their racing pace, all strong and short of speech—the most individual and peculiar of our people. The meat is divided up upon the block, a part of it hung upon the hooks or exposed on the clean scrubbed tables, and at early dawn the purchasers pour in. There is in New York little or none of that system common in provincial cities of waiting on individual customers at their doors, where the meat is weighed and the bill entered in a leather backed account book, the neighbors meantime peeping and gaping to see what Mrs. Jones has for dinner. There is more noise made in Philadelphia and Boston over the fact that Mrs. Williams buys a shank and can afford only a shinbone and soup than we should have in New York if a citizen ate a whole steer by himself. A calf's head or a sweetbread is there a great social question. Everybody in New York goes or sends to market. First in the list of meat buyers are the boarding house keepers—close dealers as well they may be—having even a harder time than they give their people. Then come the citizens, in person or by proxy, and lastly the restaurant keepers, who are not so considerable a class in a butcher's estimation as they might be.

NEW YORK PRICES AND THE WORLD'S.

The tender and choice morsels of meat go invariably to private families. Sweetbreads are sent to gourmands, to clubhouses and fashionable restaurants; so are kidneys and hearts. Calves' heads are cheap, selling at no more than twenty-five cents apiece, and they are used for mock turtle soups, for stews and broths, by cheap restaurants.

Pigs' feet are favorite at German restaurants, as, also, are the tongues of sheep and beef. The prices of these various parts of the beef, the sheep, the calf and the hog are as follows at this time in Washington Market:—

	Cents.		Cents.
Sweetbreads	30	Soup pieces, briskets, &c.	16
Tenderloins	33	"Lambs' fries"	60
Sirloins	28	Pigs' feet	40
Rumps	24	Sheeps' tongues	4
Rounds	22	Sheep's hind quarter	18
Kidneys	23	Sheep's shoulder	16
Hearts	20	Sheeps' choice rib chops	22
Shins	35	Pork, city cured	15
Shanks	40	Hams	20
Roasting ribs	30	Ham cut, per pound	26
Tongues	60		

To show the difference between the prices of the best meat in the several markets of the city as they stood up to the latest date of preparing this article we append them thus:—

	Jefferson.	Tompkins.	Washington.	Fulton.	Essex.
Tenderloin	35	40	33	34	34
Beef, hindquarters	24	25	30	33	34
Lamb chops	24	28	22	23	24

Here below we show upon the same day the difference in cost of marketing between New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Boston and Washington:—

	New York.	Washington.	Boston.	Philadelphia.	Baltimore.
Sirloin steak	28	26	26	22	21
Beef, hindquarters	30	26	24	22	22
Mutton quarter	18	16	15	15	15

Still further we extract from an article in the London *Morning Star* of September, 1866, a statement of retail prices in the principal cities of Europe, which, by reference to our files of a similar date, we are nearly enabled to put side by side with New York market rates of just one year ago. The American currency we have reduced to gold:—

	Paris.	Berlin.	Vienna.	St. Petersburg.	London.	New York.
Roast of beef, hindquarter	17	14	16	21	20	24
Mutton cutlets, Al	18	12	13	19	14	20
Country cured ham, whole	11	9	8	12	12	16

These are as reliable tables as can be obtained, barring circumstantial causes, such as the relative qualities of the same article as exposed in various countries.

CRIMINAL HOUSEKEEPERS.

These figures demonstrate that New York is as dear as St. Petersburg, and nearly a half dearer than Berlin, Vienna or Paris, and a third dearer than London in the article of meat alone. The difference between prices at Tompkins and Washington markets shows the reckless character of New York housewifery. If our ladies were republican in the sense of helping themselves and fulfilling the first of their economical obligations to society, we should not have a market so dear that clerks and salaried people of every class stand pinched for food to eat. It is the idle or wanton housekeeper of means that keeps her neighbor of less means poor. Rather than 'bargain" a moment, or ride down town, or change her butcher, she pays any sum without murmuring. This is more than waste; it is extravagance. The person arranges the price in New York. While the boarding house keeper visits Washington Market my lady goes to Tompkins, so foolish as to make "caste" even of her turnips and beets. The Tompkins potatoes cost a shilling more, but they have the Tompkins endorsement. This is as absurd as Bob Handy in the play of "Speed the Plough," who tells of a winter when the whole fashion lay in green peas. Butchers are quick to detect recklessness in marketing, and if for a single month all the ladies who go to the stalls were to discriminate between the dear and the reasonable seller we would not have what are called "fancy" prices put upon the necessaries of life.

One cause of the high price of meat here is the number of transfers that take place in the sale of stock. First there is the farmer, who breeds it; then the travelling drover, who must make a commission large enough to thrive upon; then the stock merchant, who consigns to his correspondent in New York; the stock broker, perhaps, comes in at this time and manipulates the beef before it has been seen on "Change." Before it gets down to the butcher four or five mouths have bitten out of the cow. Between the butcher and the public there remain, perhaps, a carter and a "green grocer." The beef has run up from four or five to thirty cents a pound, And when to this is added the "fancy" price, it costs nigh a half day's labor for a couple of pounds of sinew. As to the cleanliness of New York meat that is not always a clear matter. Although the police are more vigilant than they were, calves not a week old are still offered for sale. A good deal of the beef and mutton that is brought here from the country had been so diseased just before death that it was slaughtered to save it. With regard to pork that comes so far and changes so often, that only the eating can tell the good from the bad.

AMONG THE SLAUGHTERERS.

The great bloodshedders of the city live and kill in the neighborhood of Second avenue and First street, where there are some dozen of them. They butcher for themselves or for other parties, freely giving up their shambles in consideration of the hoofs and tongue of the beef. The hoofs are worth forty cents, the tongues twenty-five. In Cincinnati the butchers pay the drovers seventy-five dollars a hundred for the privilege of cleansing the hog and receiving the bristles and entrails. Cattle and sheep that are received here come to the Bull's Head first, on Fortieth street, either by trains or by Albany droves. Many of them have lain up a year with some Putnam or Westchester county farmer, who, seeing a good opportunity to sell, slips them down in a couple of nights. At Bull's Head the steer is bought "on the leg," or by calculation between buyer and seller as to his assumed weight, the mean being the rate of purchase. The animals are then driven at night to the slaughter house and kept in pens. Killing commences at ten or eleven o'clock A. M. The beeves' forelegs are tied together and their hind quarters lifted up by block and tackle. This brings their throats down to the floor, when the slaughterer with a long bladed knife sticks them in such a way that the hide is only punctured. A raw hide, including horns, is worth about ten dollars, and every hole in it takes ten cents off the value. Sheep and calves are killed by tying their feet together, trussing them up till helpless and stabbing them by the score. It is a cruel thing to see them bleed to death in multitudes. There are about a hundred slaughterers in New York and Brooklyn. Ten or a dozen of them are Jewish butchers, appointed by the Rabbis. These kill with a weapon like a sabre, drawing it at a single stroke across the throats. Then they put leaden seal around the hind quarters and the meat is pronounced clean. The "slaughterer" *per se* is the wholesale butcher. Four-fifths of the alleged butchers of New York do not kill at all. The meat is put on trucks and hauled to Washington Market, where at dawn the butchers come to buy a side or a quarter and carry it off to their shops. At the market a factor sells it, receiving about five per cent commission. Thus our beefsteaks get to us, having travelled in many cases from the far confines of civilization, and suffered all tortures by the way. Albany is one of the greatest depots for cattle in the world. There the cars drop them and the drover in person takes possession. He is charged nothing for the use of the stalls, but is expected to buy his hay at the cattle yard inn and board there himself. Of course he is charged about double rates. From day to day the droves proceed toward New York. Along the way a farmer comes down to his gate and sees the steers go by. "I have a green field idle," he says, "I don't mind buying a pair of beeves." He pays for them on the spot. They lie up all the season and fatten. Then he sells them to some other drover going by, and they are directly upon the shambles. About a thousand different drovers come during the year to New York. They correspond with five times as many sub-drovers through the country. The richest butchers in Washington Market are said to be Charles Gwyer, Jed Reno and Daniel Millman.

The West is becoming every year more and more our steward. Westchester county, nearest us on the North, used to send twenty thousand steers, a hundred thousand hogs, sixty thousand sheep, and about ten thousand tons of dairy and green produce to us every year. To-day her population is so dense that three-fourths of all the provisions raised there are consumed within her limits. After a few years we shall be in great part dependent upon remote regions for all that we eat in New York, and our country dependents will buy mutton and veal at our markets. There is still a little "droving" done in the environs of New York, with Paddy's pigs, and Mickey's ewe, and now and then the cow of Mrs. Flanagan is greatly surprised to find itself in a respectable pen at the Bull's Head.

STATEMENT OF A STEER.

A drover gave us, at the Bull's Head a day or two ago, a statement as to a steer that he was able to follow up from its origin to its consumption. These are the stages:—

1. Bought in Trumbull county, Ohio, for $22; estimated weight 590 pounds.
2. Sold to a shipper in Cleveland for $27; shipped to Albany by rail, at a cost of 40 cents a hundred.
3. Sold to a speculator at Albany for $44.
4. Sold to a farmer near Fishkill for $50; kept seven months.
5. Sold to the original drover and recognized by him for peculiar reasons at estimated weight of 900 pounds for $70.
6. Sold to slaughterer at Bull's Head for 9 cents a pound, gross, $81.
7. Brought at slaughter house, hide $11; offal $3; meat $75; total $97.
8. Sold to consumers at 20 cents a pound.

WHERE OUR VEGETABLES COME FROM.

New York has for her vegetable gardens two long, loamy peninsulas, forty leagues in extent apiece, upon either side of her. These are New Jersey and Long Island. To the north is the hardy apple-growing county of Westchester. Northwest among the mountains is the golden butter country. How does all this green and perishable material reach us? First, there are eight hundred truckers and farmers within easy drive of Broadway. These, coming into town, are often hailed on the way by green grocers, hucksters or speculators, and bought out bodily. Two thirds of them come from Long Island. Jersey vegetables are held at premium over those of any other region. The next great contribution to our vegetable markets comes from the waterside villages. Peekskill, for example, sends to New York two sloops and two barges, in such a manner as to achieve six trips a week. These bring down cargoes of butter, eggs, fruit, berries and vegetables, consigned either to some commission dealer or entrusted to the captain of the boat. The dealer charges from five to ten per cent for effecting sale. The captain has more arbitrary rates. He adds the freight and the commission together and charges thus:—For every pound of butter, one cent; for every dozen eggs, one cent; for a barrel of apples or potatoes, twenty-five cents. As the captain's sloop or barge draws off Vestry, Vesey or Dey street she is boarded by hucksters straightway, who fill their wagons and dash off through the town to sell out to citizens. It is surprising to see how soon a great cargo of green things will be distributed. In like manner every town within a hundred miles by water of New York has its schooner or towboat, and the long floats of barges that you see descending the North river every day are only fragments of food in the alimentary canal of the metropolis. Through the Raritan canal and outward by sea Norfolk and the lower peninsulas of Delaware and Jersey are pouring their beets, asparagus and sweet potatoes. So enormous has the aggregate of this "green" business become that hardy speculators, at earliest spring, go down Long Island, New Jersey and the "Eastern shore," contracting for entire "crops" in advance. They furnish small sloops and steamers to ascend the sandy creeks. The era of radishes begins even in March; then follow in quick succession asparagus, rhubarb and string beans. There is a single steamer that brought here this spring thirty tons of radishes. They were packed in the garden. Onions come in large part from Southern and Middle Connecticut, Wethersfield in particular. New Jersey excels in tomatoes, cucumbers, watermelons, muskmelons and squashes. Long Island in corn, cabbages, beets and turnips.

The potato, which is the most universal article of consumption in nature, is rendered here from every part of the Middle States. Delaware and Pennsylvania send us a hundred thousand bushels a year; Ohio sends two hundred thousand. The rest we get from Virginia, New Jersey, and even from Chile, in South America.

Vegetable growers are divided into "patchers," "truckers," "gardeners" and "farmers." A "patcher" is a squatter, such as we see in the environs of the Park, trailing a tuber up some rock. He defrauds the ground out of some few bushels of mercers, or "mubbins," and before they are fit to gather generally pledges them to some green grocer for "poteen." A "trucker" is a vegetable grower exclusively. He buys city manure from private and livery stables at from $6 to $12 a wagon load, sometimes manufactures "poudrette," or manure of human refuse, upon his premises, and uses guano oftentimes to give his ground the fullest strength. His arrangements for drainage and irrigation are complete. He begins at the first suspension of frost to prepare his ground, first ploughing it over, then subjecting it to rake and harrow until every clod to the depth of a foot is broken. The ground is then parcelled out, having been previously richly manured, and the best seeds of Rochester or Connecticut are obtained, while the hothouses, meantime, have been preparing tomato plants, cabbage settings and every variety of vegetable. Before folks have well begun to discard their winter clothing the trucker is on the way to market. His wife, boys and servants hoe all day, pull weeds, keep the vines, roots and stalks watered and free, and down to the end of fall, when the frosts swoop upon the turnips and parsnips, his acre, or ten acres, or even fifty acres of truck give forth plentifully. It is the "trucker" to whom we are indebted for the mass of our freshest vegetables. Some of our New Jerseymen have carried their farming processes into the peninsulas of Old Point and Norfolk, and run their own vessels to market. The freedmen around Hampton Roads have each a little patch of vegetable ground, and this year they have been invaded by speculators in truck who pay them the minimum rates for their little crops. There are within thirty miles of New York twelve hundred truckers; they raise three thousand tons of vegetables a year. The gardener confines himself to sensitive vegetable growing, like celery, to raising hothouse fruit, grapes and produce out of season. He supplies the fruit stores on Broadway chiefly.

Below, from authority already quoted, we give the relative average prices of vegetables, in silver, in the the several markets of Europe and America, during the year 1866; per barrel:—

	New York.	London.	Paris.	Philadelphia.	Quebec.
Radishes	$1 50	$1 70	$0 75	$0 80	$0 60
Potatoes	5 00	5 06	3 20	4 80	4 00
Onions	4 00	4 00	2 20	4 00	—
Cauliflowers	3 00	5 00	3 00	—	—
Cabbages	4 00	2 00	1 75	3 60	2 50
Tomatoes	1 60	—	3 00	2 40	—
Squashes	4 00	—	—	3 25	—

PEACHES.

In the year 1866, which was a light year for peaches, two millions six hundred thousand baskets came to this market. A single family of Delaware peach growers, the Reynolds, sent $360,000 worth, on which they realized, after paying all commissions and freights, about forty cents a basket. The average sale of the same peaches here was ninety cents. This year there have been received fully as many as during the year 1866. Major Reybold, the founder of the Delaware peach trade, was a German boy, who was so poor when he emigrated to this country that he was sold, if local report be true, to pay his passage money. He became a contractor, in course of time, upon the Chesapeake and Delaware canal, where he acquired enough money to purchase large tracts of land in Newcastle county, Delaware, and upon the Bohemia Manor, a beautiful peninsula of Cecil county, Maryland. He had observed that the peach throve better in the loam soil of those regions than elsewhere, and while on the one hand he raised vast nurseries from the peach kernel, he set out as much as a hundred acres of peach trees of all varieties. His sons, Anthony, Philip and John, also became possessed of peach lands, and last year the united family—the Major having deceased about ten years ago—had nearly a hundred thousand peach trees bearing. They also sold about a hundred thousand peach nursery plants at from ten to twenty cents a plant. It takes the plant three years after setting out to mature. The fourth year it will bear handsomely. Therefore it is good for five or six years' steady "crop," although, being a fickle tree, and its climatic conditions imperfectly understood, it is easy to lose a whole year's proceeds by a single late frost. The Delaware peach has no rival in the world, and the King peach is that species called the Late Heath, which is of the sort that is best for preserving and hermetically sealing. The peach seems to be indigenous to Delaware, and after the trees are planted out no pains are taken with them, a crop of wheat or buckwheat being often raised under the orchard. As the peach begins to ripen watches are set on the orchard day and night, and riflemen whose guns are shotted with salt fire upon intruders. The pickers are negroes and boys, and they are forbidden to eat of the fruit. The peaches are laid in baskets of the shape of an inverted truncated cone, marked with the owner's initials, and these baskets are packed in tiers upon six-storied wagons, which drive down to the steamer, that has pushed, perhaps, up some shallow creek as far as her draught will allow. Taken on board, the baskets stand in gratings over all the decks so deep and so numerous that the little steamer is laden almost to her water line. They then take the Delaware, Chesapeake and Raritan canals, reaching New York within twenty hours, seldom stopping at Philadelphia at all, though the people of that inland town stand smacking their lips upon their deserted piers. There are speculators who go into Delaware every spring—fruit gamblers—and these often buy the whole "crop" as it stands, pick it and forward it. The peach growers are not averse to this, the price of labor being very high with them since the extinction of slavery; besides this, they lose ten or twelve thousand dollars every year in unreturned baskets. They hold the speculators responsible only for broken trees.

The season of peach picking is the American vintage. It must be seen in all its beautifulness to be realized. The red tint of the peach trees, the buzz of bees, the sounds of singing and halloo that come out of the low purple foliages, the beautiful velvet surface of the fruit, pursued by reed birds and yellow breasts, make the peach season classical in the beautiful northern county of Delaware.

New Jersey produces an inferior peach, but her "crop" is more to be depended upon than Delaware's. The early peaches that we get come from the flat lands near Norfolk, sandy, like Delaware. About twenty steamboats and five thousand hands have been engaged in "saving" the peaches of 1867. Almost the entire quantity comes to New York. They are consigned here to a commission merchant generally. One firm in West street are said to have received twelve thousand baskets a day. These peaches go into market stalls or are hawked about in huckster wagons. In the Paris exhibition there were fifteen New York exhibitors of canned peaches. This year almost all peaches were packed in lath crates, holding two baskets each.

HOW WE GET OUR GAME AND POULTRY.

On the 3d ult. the wholesale commission houses sold by the quantity live chickens at from fifteen to eighteen cents a pound, spring chickens at seventy-five cents and $1 10 a pair, live ducks at from eighty-eight cents to $1 25 a pair, geese at $2 and $2 50, and live turkeys at twenty-five cents per pound. On the same day, to the consumer purchasing in Washington Market, chickens cost, picked but not gutted, twenty-two to twenty-eight cents a pound; live spring chickens $1 50 a pair; ducks, picked, $1 75 per pair, and turkeys thirty-five cents a pound. Here was a large average difference. This city consumes in Christmas week sixty thousand turkeys. There are, the year round, an average of seven thousand chickens a day brought here. New Jersey, New York State, Pennsylvania and Ohio furnish these almost entirely. Vast quantities of live chickens are collected by the storekeepers in country towns, kept in coops until a lot are collected, and then sent to the city by boat. A chicken will carry farther than almost any consumable animal. Novelties in the way of cars are the poultry and game trains that run over the Western roads in the winter season. These are simply lath covered burden cars, into which water is poured at the engine reservoirs. A single car, with its numerous compartments and roosts, will carry five or six hundred pairs. All poultry is forwarded alive from any considerable distances, except in the coldest seasons, when it will transport for three weeks without spoiling. In the month of December a steamship from this port took to Liverpool forty turkeys as presents to some American gentlemen in London. They were packed in apples and were fifteen days reaching their destination. All of them were sound and roasted excellently.

Considerable excitement was created here a few years ago by the report that great numbers of chickens were fattened upon discarded poultices at quarantine and the various public hospitals, and then sent to our market. It was found out that a large lot came up from Barren Island, where dead horses and all refuse matters are deposited. But these bore an inconsiderable proportion to the vast bulk of poultry consumed. Besides, it is doubtful that poultry of this sort is any worse than that of cleaner fattening. That which goeth into the man defileth him, but hardly that which goes into the chicken.

Few persons have any clear notion of how we get our game. The amateur gunner who goes down the marshes and flats to pick off a few rail or plover, strictly on the wing, is disconsolate to see how thinly settled are the birds. The fact is that the market people have been there before him. Gunning is a trade within six hours travel of New York every where. The game capitalist when the "seed" season begins on the Delaware, fits out a dozen boats, hires for their feed by the day several crews of good natured loafers who would rather shoot than sleep, and he pays them about twenty-five cents a bushel for the birds they get, himself furnishing the powder and shot. The fleet starts out at midnight, together, and at dawn have taken possession of a broad belt of marsh. Then the splutter of fire-firing begins—the boat sailing or poling up for the game after each shot. Both barrels go off at once—the reed birds get so thick and have grown so fat that every splutter lays them out by the dozen. That night the whole "bagging" is on the way to the city. In like manner are rabbits taken. Wild ducks are shot for this market upon the Chesapeake, chiefly. The manner of taking them is this: A swivel is loaded with duck shot and mounted upon a bateau, which is covered with brush in such a manner as to resemble "drift." The artillerists float down upon a flock of canvas-backs or red-heads, and get fairly upon them before the birds suspect. At the discharge of a fowling-piece, all the birds start out of the water, and then the swivel is discharged into the flock, often killing a hundred at one explosion. Partridges are taken by gunning parties who descend into Delaware and Maryland, and on the same excursion slay rabbits, opossums, squirrels, woodcocks and quails. Long Island is a favorite place to kill in this manner. A party surrounds a copse and advances in a lessening circle into it. Nothing escapes; the dogs bring in the game. In this State our game laws are now pretty rigidly enforced by the common action of the farmers and local Justices. Wild pigeons, wild turkeys and wild geese come to us from the Ohio and Mississippi valleys, where they stop in enormous flocks to roost over night. The people find out their haunts, beat them off the bushes with poles, fire volleys into them and kill vast quantities. Sometime our market is so gorged with this Western game that it rots upon the highways or in the cellars where it is stored. Seven hundred barrels of plucked pigeons have arrived here in one week. A flock of birds passed over the State of Indiana in 1862 out of which eleven thousand were killed, and it was supposed that the flock numbered five hundred thousand. Venison comes to us largely from Indiana, Kentucky, Northwestern Pennsylvania, Virginia and northern New York. It will keep two months in fairly cold weather and grow more "gamy" all the time. Four hundred buck alone were delivered here in the month of January last. Elk and moose come seldom to market, but are sometimes sent here by amateurs and find their way to market. Below are the last winter's retail retail prices for the various sorts of birds and game:—

	Highest.	Lowest.
Venison, per lb	$ 30	$ 14
Canvas back ducks, per pair	6 00	1 70
Red head duck, per pair	6 00	1 75
Plovers, per dozen	4 50	1 50
Partridge, per pair	4 00	75
Wild turkey, per lb	30	11
Wild goose, per lb	25	13
Rail, dozen	6 00	2 00
Reed, per dozen	3 00	50
Wild pigeon, per dozen	6 00	2 00
Robins, per pair	1 50	50

It is not too great to say that two hundred tons of birds and game get to this market every winter.

FISH AND HOW THEY CATCH IT.

The codfish, introduced into this latitude by the people of Brooklyn, is the mainstay of the American boarding house. It has been estimated that during Lent half a million codfish balls a day are devoured in New York, these are supplied at five cents apiece in reasonable restaurants and account for the great quantity of thirst that exists on the Bowery side. You may cut the codfish into ten million parts, but each of them will drink. Cod sell at present for $7 25 the hundred, and at nine cents the pound retail. While the cod is the boarding house solace the herring is the apprentice's reward, and the mackerel is the widow's stay. Herring, scaled, bring forty cents a box wholesale, and No. 1 mackerel are quoted at $30. It is impossible that these articles of necessity shall ever fail us. In 1861 the total of fishes shipped out of the British provinces alone was 1,600,000 barrels, or more than a barrel for every man, woman and child in the realm of New York. The bluefish is the daily trite article of consumption here. It is caught off the Jersey and Long Island beaches and in the Sound, with bass. In good fishing season a ton a day comes up to town. The shad is a monstrous "haul," when it comes, from all the great rivers north of the James. The Connecticut shad are esteemed the best. They have yielded as many as thirty thousand of a season. In the river St. John one thousand barrels of shad are annually caught. The Potomac is perhaps the most prolific river for the shad; it gave up in 1860 seven thousand fresh shad and four thousand barrels of shad for salting. This fish is esteemed the noblest in our rivers since the salmon left them. Efforts are now being made to so arrange the Connecticut river that the salmon can ascend it, as they used to do. It has been stocked this year with sufficient spawn for half a million shad and salmon. We get fresh salmon now from the St. Lawrence and its tributaries, as also quantities of pickerel. A cheap article of food, popular with our colored people, is the sturgeon. It retails at four cents a pounds.

TRADE IN SHELLFISH AND OYSTERS.

It is probable that the oyster passes through more hands and demands the employment of a greater number of people than any single article of food. Its consumption is so great in this city that we have a very small excess for transportation inland, and the city of Baltimore has therefore become the main packer and shipper of this delicate food, which can now be eaten almost as fresh at Saginaw, St. Paul and Omaha as in the streets of the metropolis. There are more than four hundred oyster boats belonging to this port. The mass of them are centreboard sloops and schooners of light draught and expense. They make a fleet almost as large as the celebrated Newcastle collier fleet of England. Two-thirds of these boats plant and take up in the North, East, Raritan and Shrewsbury rivers, in the lower bay, the Sound, and in the Jersey inlets. From Providence to Blackwell's Island the Sound is a vast oyster preserve. Little pains are taken with the clams; nature plants and ripens them. So, likewise, with our lobsters, crabs and shellfish at large. The other third of the oyster fleet enters the Delaware and the Chesapeake, coasting beyond Cape May, where many of them are captured by the irate Marylanders and their owners heavily fined for dredging in Maryland waters. The dredge is a great rake that tears up the oyster beds and spoils what it does not clasp. The Chesapeake oysters are smaller than ours, because less pains are taken to fatten them; but they are altogether a sweeter and more edible oyster. Those of York river, Chincoteague and Kent Island are preferred. It takes a sloop with four hands on board of her about a week to load with oysters. These boats lie off the North river, near the foot of Canal street, where the dealers keep their offices in amphibious arks. Fulton market is the retail centre for the best New York water oysters, and in Beekman street, near by, are several oyster packers. The dissemination of these oysters, after they are caught, is the most active part of the trade. Fully two-thirds of the united cargoes go to restaurants. The eating of oysters is a dissipation as great as drinking whiskey. Good average oyster eaters will take three dozen raw, a dozen stewed, a dozen broiled, and close up with a dozen scolloped. Some of the oyster houses in this city will give seats to three hundred persons at once. One Broadway place sells two hundred bushels a day in mid-winter. The oyster trade in reality lasts all the year, though it is nominally forbidden in the hot months. It employs here, altogether, as many as six thousand persons, and twelve hundred thousand bushels are alleged to be eaten here every year. So great is the repute of our oysters that five thousand of them were carried to coasts of Normandy last year, to be planted in French waters. Unless more stringent means are taken to protect these noble mollusks during a part of the year their day of extinction will come, and New York lose the best of its homogeneous habitants. Already the best oysters have commanded $3 a hundred at wholesale. Clams make even a more necessary article of food than oysters. A dozen of them will make a chowder strong enough to support a dozen lives. We can never be starved to death in New York by any blockade so long as we can scrape our river bottoms.

WHAT THE COW GIVES US.

Had the cow been forgotten in the work of creation we should have been anything rather than a milk and water people. It is curious to think that her udder never ran on this continent till the white man sailed her over. The great source of table butter for New York is Orange county. Goshen is its capital. It contributes to our markets about sixty thousand pounds of butter a year, the best that we know. Most of this is purchased before the milk quits the cow. Its wholesale price is now from thirty-five to forty cents a pound. Last week ten thousand three hundred packages of butter were registered as arriving here. One-half of this came from the Western States and one-half the remainder from interior New York. A very great deal of the butter that is sold in this city is merely tallow, commanding no more than eight or nine cents a pound. A city missionary informs us that there are a hundred thousand men, women and children in New York who do not eat butter but by accident the year round. Cheese comes from Herkimer, Oneida and the interior counties, and it is sold abroad for the best English brands. Forty-five thousand boxes came to the city last week. A part of this is for shipment. Milk comes down all the railways to New York by special trains. The poorer classes use goat's milk, and this explains the great number of goats around our suburbs. About sixty thousand quarts of milk a day come to New York, some of it even from Albany and Rensselaer counties. To this is added about half as much water at the city offices. Milk has commanded ever since the war began ten cents a quart at retail. There are upwards of two hundred milk wagoners; they never quit their wagons to serve customers, but make a peculiar cry as they drive up to the doors to compel the servant girls to come out. Eggs sand at thirty cents per dozen to consumers; last week two thousand nine hundred and twenty-nine barrels arrived here. These are forwarded by produce merchants from all parts of the Union, and often sold on 'Change before arrival.

FRUITS.

Apples come from the Mohawk and Hudson valleys, and from all parts of the Union. From one dollar a barrel here nine years ago they now command from three to six dollars. Berries are raised in New Jersey and on Long Island as vegetables are, from plant settings. The mass of cranberries come from swamp lands that demand irrigation; the cranberry plant is a small vine, and the berries are gathered by the boatload; they command from two dollars and a half to ten dollars a bushel. About twelve thousand bushels of cranberries are consumed here yearly.

FLOUR AND ITS MANIPULATORS.

With flour, "the staff of life," as beef is its strength, we shall have exhausted the outline part of this article. Beef is the Great Bear among the constellations. Flour is the pole star; it steadies and determines all things; when its magazines were empty, down went the rebellion. The power and glory of the North is wheat; it is king! New York is the export city, the meeting place of those solemn caravans that contain the results of a year's toils, fears, showers and suns. We consume nearly seven millions of pounds of bread a year. Last year we exported eleven millions of bushels of wheat, yet were saved from a straitened market only by the harvest of California, that sent flour even to Rochester, the capital of the millers. This year the attention of the city and the country is drawn more than to Congress or to President to the great issue of the "crop." If it be large, money will be unlocked and go circulating; men's faces will be less grave; we shall draw the first