

vidual for its oil and skin alone was placed at \$20. Last autumn it was discovered that the flesh made quite a savory dish, and it became so popular at the fashionable watering places along the coast that a Philadelphia firm recently made a proposition to take all that may be caught along the coast this season, with the view of working much of it into mince meat. The Cape May company, it is said, will reject the offer, as it already has offers from prominent Philadelphia and New York hotels and restaurants, and it is believed that there will be a demand for the meat which cannot be met.

The meat is red and juicy, and resembles in appearance beef, but is more solid, finer grained, and very tender; much more like venison, which it resembles in flavor. They are taken in seines about 1,000 feet long and very wide, and when captured, if not already drowned, are killed by stabbing with knives. It would seem that the outlook for the success of a new and valuable industry being established along our coast was most excellent.—*The Leather Gazette.*

Chicory With Coffee.

The chicory root, which was used more with coffee when the latter brought a higher price than it does now, but which is still greatly used on the Continent, somewhat resembles a parsnip. The stem rises to a height of two or three feet, the leaves round the base being toothed, not unlike those of the dandelion—indeed, it is closely allied to that plant. The preparation of chicory, as carried out in Belgium, is very simple. The older white roots are selected, cleaned, sliced, and kiln-dried, and are then ready for the manufacturer. It is roasted in an iron cylinder, called a drum, which revolves over a coke furnace. When taken out it is of a dark brown color, and while hot it is soft and pliable, but after being raked out and subjected to draught of cold air, it became hard and crisp, and is then ready for the mill. From the mill the powder is passed through a cylinder sieve, from which it emerges as fine as the finest flour; and the partially ground pieces, or foreign matters that might have found their way into the chicory, drop into a separate bin. The shades of color vary occasionally to suit the taste of the purchaser. The chicory root is cultivated in Belgium, Holland, France, and Germany. In Belgium, where it is also used as a vegetable, it is very extensively grown, its culture and its manufacture (both of which are unrestricted) forming two of the greatest industries of that country; and its infusion is largely drunk as an independent beverage. For home consumption it is put up in small round and square packets of various weights, with highly colored attractive looking labels attached, and so dispensed to the public who can also purchase it in a loose state. To preserve it in good condition, chicory should be kept in a dry globe; otherwise, it will be, come lumpy and rank, and unfit for use. Instead of being ground down to a fine powder, chicory is sometimes granulated that is to say, ground into grains or small lumps. This is often done when it is intended for export, as in this state it can be packed loosely in barrels, and is less likely to deteriorate. When export-

ed in powder it is packed in tin cases, which are hermetically soldered down to prevent injury from atmospheric changes. The *London Grocer* says that large quantities prepared in both ways are annually shipped from Belgium to all parts of the world.—*Scientific American.*

The Wheat Heater.

Just before the introduction of the roller system wheat heaters were "all the rage." They certainly approved themselves to millers; at least those properly constructed enjoyed a large sale, and in the hands of intelligent millers certainly made a difference in the grade of flour. When rolls came, the earliest converts had but one article in their creed, which was the potency of rolls to do all that was necessary to make good flour. Wheat cleaning, and along with it wheat heating were largely lost sight of. And a good many millers to-day have forgotten about wheat heaters. Yet they are made and sold and used in roller mills as well as in burr mills.

The philosophy of the wheat heater is that the steam heat puts the bran in a better condition for separation than it is in naturally, and hence enables the miller to make a whiter flour, and a closer yield. The steam heat draws the moisture from the interior of the berry and toughens the bran. The wheat heater performs the same function that wetting the wheat does in Colorado and other western states where the wheat is very dry, and where the bran would inevitably be more or less pulverized if ground without dampening. Of course this toughening process makes the bran less liable to pulverization. Some wheats need this toughening process more than others, and it is more necessary at some times than at others. The months of June and July are about the best months to mill, and the wheat heater gives to the wheat a trifle higher temperature than these months—about blood heat.

If any one doubts the efficacy of steam heat as a toughener, let him heat some wheat quite hot and then put it through a scourer, scouring close enough to remove particles of the bran. He will find that the particles removed are larger than would be taken off on wheat that had not gone through a preparatory process. Of course, the tougher the bran and the less liable to pulverization it is, the whiter will be the flour, and this is true both in roller mills and burr mills.—*American Miller.*

The Value of a Dollar.

In answer to a question from a correspondent, the *Boston Commercial Bulletin* undertakes to compare the purchasing power of a dollar at the present time with the period prior to any extensive use of machine-made textile fabrics. It gives a table of price of fourteen leading articles of necessity for various periods since 1825, with the same adjusted upon an equalized scale, and arrives at the conclusion that a dollar will purchase now as much of those articles as \$1.35 would have done in 1875. \$1.32 in 1855. 91 cents in 1845, or \$1.19 in 1825. It attributes the rise in prices between 1849 and 1854 to the gold discoveries of California, and that between 1870 and 1882 to the re-emption of specie pay

ments and accelerated enterprise, while the low prices of 1845 and of 1885 are left unexplained, except as "owing to the low prices of commodities that have brought about the condition of things under which a dollar will buy more to-day than in most previous periods in the history of the nation."

Our contemporary takes its stand beside those theoretical economists who insist so much upon the dependence of values on the fluctuations in the precious metals. But the influence of the abundance or scarcity of gold in the world upon commodities is utterly insignificant, compared with that of its abundance or scarcity in the pockets of the people. Prices are exceptionally low now, as they were in 1845, because money has been withdrawn from full circulation. The masses cannot buy. Therefore products drop down to find a market upon the basis of the reduced ability to purchase. The influx of gold from California after 1848 did not cause gold to be worth less and therefore prices to be higher, but it produced excitement and stimulated activities through a free circulation of money which confidence inspired. Prices expanded by the heat of accelerated motion.

But circulation of money is not the only thing upon which values depend. Competition is found to be a potent factor in the present day, almost eclipsing that of the new discoveries and inventions, which ever tend to cheapen production. If the purchasing power of a dollar does not exhibit as great fluctuations or changes in the staple agricultural products as in manufactured products, it is only because the application of machinery to their production has not been so easy or so effective in multiplying them. Nor has competition been so effective in this case for the same reason. If we take the table of prices which the *Bulletin* gives, we find that the decrease in the value of a ton of iron is phenomenal, the drop since 1855 amounting to 50 per cent. and that of silk equally so.

Of course the fluctuations in individual commodities are not exactly the same thing as the purchasing power of the dollar, and we accept the results of our contemporary's labors as reaching an expression of the latter, and yet it is only through an abstraction of those fluctuations that the expression is found, and not through any investigation into the abundance or scarcity of gold at those periods. We think it important to understand that the quantity of money or specie in the world is of little concern to the merchant or to the great body of consumers. What is of more importance is that that little should circulate, be put to use. If money is as bad for business, and for the community, as idle people or idle machinery. We venture the assertion that if half the money now hoarded were destroyed and the balance put into circulation, we should have better business and better prices than at present. The dollar has very little purchasing power, in a practical sense, as long as it is locked up, and yet in the theoretical sense its power rises because commodities plead for it in falling prices.—*Journal of Fabrics.*

Recent Legal Decisions.

BANKRUPTCY—DEBT—DISCHARGE.—Where a bankrupt debtor orally promises to pay a