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BUREAU OF LABOR

CHAS. P. NEILL, Commissioner

RETAIL PRICES

1890 TO JUNE, 1912

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WHOLE NUMBER 106: PART I



RETAIL PRICES AND COST OF LIVING SERIES  
No. 2: PART I



AUGUST 28, 1912

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## CONTENTS.

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<b>Retail Prices, 1890 to June, 1912—Part I.</b>	Page.
Introduction.....	5, 6
Food.....	6-22
Bread weights.....	22
Coal.....	23, 24
Gas.....	25, 26
Explanation of scope and method.....	27-31
Food.....	28, 29
Bread weights.....	29, 30
Coal.....	30
Gas.....	31

### **Retail Prices, 1890 to June, 1912—Part II.**

TABLE I.—Retail prices of the principal articles of food on the 15th of each month, January to June, 1911, and January to June, 1912, by cities and by firms.

TABLE II.—Bread weights: Scaling weight (weight of dough before baking), in ounces, of the principal brands of wheat bread on the 15th of each month, January to June, 1911, and January to June, 1912, by cities and by firms and brands.

TABLE III.—Per cent of increase or decrease in retail prices of the principal articles of food: Price on the 15th of January, February, March, April, May, and June, 1912, compared with price on the corresponding date in 1911, by cities and by articles.

TABLE IV.—Relative retail prices of the principal articles of food, January, 1911, to June, 1912, by geographical divisions.

TABLE V.—Retail prices of coal, for household use, on the 15th of each month, January and April, 1911, and January and April, 1912, by cities and by firms.



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WHOLE NO. 106: PART I.

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## RETAIL PRICES, 1890 TO JUNE, 1912.

### PART I.

#### INTRODUCTION.

This report presents for each of 39 of the most important industrial cities in the various sections of the United States the retail prices of the principal articles of food, the weight of principal brands of baker's bread, the retail prices of anthracite and bituminous coal for household use, and the net price of gas for household use.

This report summarizes data published in previous retail price reports of the Bureau of Labor,<sup>1</sup> and thus furnishes a comparison of retail prices of food from 1890 to June, 1912, and of prices of coal and gas from 1907 to June, 1912. Actual retail prices of the principal articles of food and actual bread weights are shown in this report for the 15th of each month, January to June, 1912, and for purposes of comparison for corresponding dates in 1911. Actual retail prices of coal for household use are shown for the 15th of January and April, 1912, and for corresponding dates in 1911. Actual prices of gas for household use are shown for April 15, 1912, and for the corresponding date in 1911.

Data showing prices paid for food on the 15th of each month during the early part of 1912 were furnished direct to the Bureau by a number of consumers in Washington, D. C., and through the courtesy of the Housewives League of New York similar data were furnished for several other cities. These statements of prices are not published in this report, but have been used by the Bureau for comparative purposes.

The Bureau at the present time is in receipt of monthly reports of prices of the principal articles of food from approximately 675 retail merchants, of monthly reports of bread weights from 140 bakeries, of quarterly reports of coal prices from 165 coal dealers, and of gas prices, as requested, from 60 gas companies in the 39 cities included in the study. The promptness with which the reports are sent in by those who have been requested to furnish information and the interest which has been taken, as indicated by the ready reply to letters of inquiry, are very much appreciated by the Bureau.

<sup>1</sup> Eighteenth Annual Report and Bulletin Nos. 59, 65, 71, 77, and 105.

This cooperation will enable the Bureau to issue a report on retail prices every second month in order to meet the constant demand for current information relative to prices.

The cities included in this report are important industrial cities representing 32 States. In a general way each city selected was that one which had the largest population in the section in which it is situated; but, in addition, two smaller cities were included—Fall River, which is a textile center in Massachusetts, and Scranton, which is situated in the anthracite coal section of Pennsylvania. Within the 39 cities live one-fifth of the total number of people, two-fifths of the urban population, and approximately one-third of the total number engaged in gainful occupations (not including those in agricultural pursuits) in continental United States.

The grade of articles of food quoted is that sold in each city in stores patronized largely by families of American, English, Irish, German, and Scandinavian wage earners. The Bureau has not attempted to quote prices for an article of identical grade throughout the 39 cities. For almost every article this would be absolutely impossible, as the grade varies not only from city to city but also from firm to firm within the same city, and the grade even varies to some extent from month to month within the same store. Stores which vary in a marked degree from day to day or month to month the grade of articles handled have not been included, but in every store there is necessarily some variation in grade.

This report is published in two parts. Part I contains a summary of the whole report and Part II contains all general tables showing actual price quotations and bread weights for the first six months of 1912 and, also for comparative purposes, for the first six months of 1911, city by city.

### FOOD.

Fifteen articles of food enter into the relative prices in this report. These 15 articles represent approximately two-thirds of the expenditure for food by the average workingman's family, as shown in the Eighteenth Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor. Eleven of these fifteen articles were higher in price on June 15, 1912, than on December 15, 1911. The only four of the fifteen articles lower in price were eggs, butter, milk, and sugar, and the price of three of these four are normally lower during the summer months than during the winter months.

Fourteen of the fifteen articles were higher in price on June 15, 1912, than on June 15, 1911. Bacon was the only article showing a decline in price, and the change was only 0.1 per cent. The per cent of advance varied from 2.4 per cent for milk to 18.6 per cent for round steak. Nine of the fifteen articles advanced more than 10 per cent.

The table which follows compares for each of the 15 articles the price on June 15, 1912, with the price on June 15, 1911:

PER CENT OF INCREASE OR DECREASE IN THE RETAIL PRICES OF THE PRINCIPAL ARTICLES OF FOOD: PRICE ON JUNE 15, 1912, COMPARED WITH PRICE ON JUNE 15, 1911, BY ARTICLES.

Articles.	Per cent of increase in price.	Per cent of decrease in price.
Bacon, smoked.....	.....	0.1
Milk, fresh.....	2.4	.....
Ham, smoked.....	2.7	.....
Hens.....	3.8	.....
Sugar, granulated.....	6.0	.....
Potatoes, Irish.....	7.6	.....
Wheat flour.....	10.7	.....
Pork chops.....	11.2	.....
Lard, pure.....	11.3	.....
Eggs, strictly fresh.....	11.8	.....
Corn meal.....	12.7	.....
Butter, creamery.....	15.3	.....
Sirloin steak.....	17.1	.....
Ribroast.....	17.5	.....
Round steak.....	18.6	.....

The next table compares for each of the 15 articles the price on the 15th of January, February, March, April, May, and June, 1912, with the price on the corresponding date in 1911.

PER CENT OF INCREASE OR DECREASE IN RETAIL PRICES OF THE PRINCIPAL ARTICLES OF FOOD: PRICE ON THE 15TH OF JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH, APRIL, MAY, AND JUNE, 1912, COMPARED WITH PRICE ON THE CORRESPONDING DATE OF 1911, BY ARTICLES.

Article.	Price Jan. 15, 1912—		Price Feb. 15, 1912—		Price Mar. 15, 1912—		Price Apr. 15, 1912—		Price May 15, 1912—		Price June 15, 1912—	
	Higher than Jan. 15, 1911.	Lower than Jan. 15, 1911.	Higher than Feb. 15, 1911.	Lower than Feb. 15, 1911.	Higher than Mar. 15, 1911.	Lower than Mar. 15, 1911.	Higher than Apr. 15, 1911.	Lower than Apr. 15, 1911.	Higher than May 15, 1911.	Lower than May 15, 1911.	Higher than June 15, 1911.	Lower than June 15, 1911.
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
Sirloin steak...	2.3	.....	3.0	.....	4.3	.....	9.4	.....	15.8	.....	17.1	.....
Round steak...	2.1	.....	2.8	.....	3.7	.....	9.3	.....	16.7	.....	18.6	.....
Rib roast.....	2.1	.....	2.7	.....	3.5	.....	7.6	.....	14.6	.....	17.5	.....
Pork chops.....	.....	3.8	.....	6.4	.....	0.8	10.9	.....	12.8	.....	11.2	.....
Bacon, smoked	.....	8.6	.....	8.8	.....	7.7	.....	3.2	.....	0.7	.....	0.1
Ham, smoked.....	.....	2.8	.....	2.8	.....	1.9	1.2	.....	3.5	.....	2.7	.....
Lard, pure.....	.....	12.4	.....	11.0	.....	6.7	.....	.....	8.3	.....	11.3	.....
Hens.....	.....	2.1	.....	1.4	.....	1.9	.....	.....	3.9	.....	3.8	.....
Wheat flour.....	.....	.....	1.2	.....	2.7	.....	.....	.....	9.9	.....	10.7	.....
Corn meal.....	5.7	.....	6.0	.....	7.0	.....	9.1	.....	12.3	.....	12.7	.....
Eggs, strictly fresh.....	9.6	.....	26.9	.....	5.4	.....	11.5	.....	12.1	.....	11.8	.....
Butter, creamery.....	18.6	.....	17.2	.....	13.6	.....	26.0	.....	24.9	.....	15.3	.....
Potatoes, Irish.....	49.2	.....	55.8	.....	66.7	.....	77.6	.....	48.5	.....	7.6	.....
Sugar, granulated.....	15.2	.....	15.8	.....	16.2	.....	11.5	.....	8.1	.....	6.0	.....
Milk, fresh.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1.3	.....	2.8	.....	2.4	.....

Of the 15 articles of food, the price of 8 was higher on January 15, 1912, than on January 15, 1911; the price of 9 was higher on February 15, 1912, than on February 15, 1911; the price of 11 was higher on March 15, 1912, than on March 15, 1911; the price of 14 was higher on April 15, 1912, than on April 15, 1911; the price of 14 was higher on May 15, 1912, than on May 15, 1911; and the price of 14 was higher on June 15, 1912, than on June 15, 1911.

The next table compares for each of the 15 articles the price on June 15, 1912, with the average price for the 10-year period 1890 to 1899. Sugar made the least change and potatoes made the greatest change, with advances of 8.5 per cent and 111.9 per cent, respectively. Ten of the 15 articles advanced in price more than 50 per cent.

PER CENT OF INCREASE IN THE RETAIL PRICES OF THE PRINCIPAL ARTICLES OF FOOD: PRICE ON JUNE 15, 1912, COMPARED WITH THE AVERAGE PRICE FOR THE 10-YEAR PERIOD 1890 TO 1899, BY ARTICLES.

Article.	Per cent of increase in price.
Sugar, granulated .....	8.5
Eggs, strictly fresh .....	26.1
Milk, fresh .....	32.9
Butter, creamery .....	33.3
Wheat flour .....	39.3
Lard, pure .....	55.3
Hens .....	58.1
Sirloin steak .....	59.5
Ham, smoked .....	61.3
Corn meal .....	63.7
Ribroast .....	63.8
Round steak .....	84.0
Pork chops .....	86.0
Bacon, smoked .....	96.7
Potatoes, Irish .....	111.9

The next table compares for each of the principal articles of food the retail price on June 15, 1912, with the price on June 15, 1911, within each of the 39 cities and also within each geographical division.

The table shows, for example, that in Boston, Mass., prices on June 15, 1912, compared with prices on June 15, 1911, advanced 12.5 per cent for sirloin steak, 17.8 per cent for round steak, 27.4 per cent for ribroast, 5.1 per cent for pork chops, and declined 1.7 per cent for bacon, etc. The table also shows that prices for sirloin steak on June 15, 1912, compared with prices on June 15, 1911, advanced 12.5 per cent in Boston, 18.4 per cent in Buffalo, 6.6 per cent in Atlanta, 16.2 per cent in Chicago, and 13.8 per cent in Birmingham, etc.



PER CENT OF INCREASE OR DECREASE IN RETAIL PRICES OF THE PRINCIPAL ARTICLES OF FOOD: PRICE ON JUNE 15, 1912, COMPARED WITH PRICE ON JUNE 15, 1911, BY CITIES AND GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISIONS.

City and geographical division.	Sirloin steak: Price June 15, 1912—		Round steak: Price June 15, 1912—		Rib roast: Price June 15, 1912—		Pork chops: Price June 15, 1912—	
	Higher than June 15, 1911.	Lower than June 15, 1911.	Higher than June 15, 1911.	Lower than June 15, 1911.	Higher than June 15, 1911.	Lower than June 15, 1911.	Higher than June 15, 1911.	Lower than June 15, 1911.
North Atlantic division:	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>
Boston, Mass.....	12.5		17.8		27.4		5.1	
Buffalo, N. Y.....	18.4		24.2		21.7		5.4	
Fall River, Mass..	21.3		30.4		22.8		14.0	
Manchester, N. H..	20.5		33.5		22.4		7.0	
Newark, N. J.....	17.5		20.6		24.1		22.8	
New Haven, Conn.	20.3		18.5		24.0		15.9	
New York, N. Y....	18.4		21.9		22.6		21.6	
Philadelphia, Pa..	20.8		22.3		21.4		28.5	
Pittsburgh, Pa....	29.6		26.6		17.9		9.3	
Providence, R. I..	25.0		31.9		34.8		13.8	
Scranton, Pa.....	23.3		25.5		22.4		9.0	
South Atlantic division:								
Atlanta, Ga.....	6.6		8.8		15.6		12.4	
Baltimore, Md....	21.6		19.0		13.5		13.6	
Charleston, S. C..	3.3		5.7		4.2		9.1	
Jacksonville, Fla.	28.2		11.2		15.1		9.0	
Richmond, Va....	20.4		17.0		15.2		22.2	
Washington, D. C.	17.7		25.1		18.1		17.4	
North Central division:								
Chicago, Ill.....	16.2		21.1		12.2		3.5	
Cincinnati, Ohio..	20.9		13.2		22.1		13.8	
Cleveland, Ohio...	23.4		27.5		22.6		15.9	
Detroit, Mich....	13.0		17.8		15.9		11.9	
Indianapolis, Ind.	18.7		18.2		15.2		14.0	
Kansas City, Mo..	21.6		23.1		15.6		23.4	
Milwaukee, Wis...	11.2		21.4		16.9		9.3	
Minneapolis, Minn.	7.1		14.5		13.7		15.8	
Omaha, Nebr.....	40.7		29.4		30.1		22.4	
St. Louis, Mo....	10.2		13.0		13.8		11.3	
South Central division:								
Birmingham, Ala.	13.8		14.8		13.6		11.0	
Dallas, Tex.....		7.0	4.1			0.5		6.2
Little Rock, Ark..	10.1		8.6		3.9			2.4
Louisville, Ky....	19.6		12.6		13.6			6.5
Memphis, Tenn...	19.6		18.2		22.4		6.8	
New Orleans, La..	23.9		28.3		19.6		7.7	
Western division:								
Denver, Colo.....	11.0		22.9		24.4		9.6	
Los Angeles, Cal..	9.5		16.7		7.1		7.3	
Portland, Oreg...	8.3		4.8		3.2			2.6
Salt Lake City, Utah	21.3		19.9		13.7			.3
San Francisco, Cal.	9.4			0.6	7.1		7.2	
Seattle, Wash....	17.7		11.0		18.1		8.6	
North Atlantic division.....	20.8		24.9		24.1		13.7	
South Atlantic division.....	16.5		14.8		14.1		14.8	
North Central division.....	18.2		20.3		18.1		14.6	
South Central division.....	13.1		14.6		12.5		2.3	
Western division.....	13.2		12.4		12.1		5.3	
United States.....	17.1		18.6		17.5		11.2	

PER CENT OF INCREASE OR DECREASE IN RETAIL PRICES OF THE PRINCIPAL ARTICLES OF FOOD: PRICE ON JUNE 15, 1912, COMPARED WITH PRICE ON JUNE 15, 1911, BY CITIES AND GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISIONS—Continued.

City and geographical division.	Bacon, smoked: Price June 15, 1912—		Ham, smoked: Price June 15, 1912—		Lard, pure: Price June 15, 1912—		Hens: Price June 15, 1912—	
	Higher than June 15, 1911.	Lower than June 15, 1911.	Higher than June 15, 1911.	Lower than June 15, 1911.	Higher than June 15, 1911.	Lower than June 15, 1911.	Higher than June 15, 1911.	Lower than June 15, 1911.
North Atlantic division:	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>
Boston, Mass.....		1.7	0.5		5.1		7.7	
Buffalo, N. Y.....		6.3		3.9	20.7			1.2
Fall River, Mass....		3.2	2.9		24.5		4.7	
Manchester, N. H....		6.8	10.0		3.5		2.0	
Newark, N. J.....	7.6		6.8		7.4		5.1	
New Haven, Conn....		2.1	2.6		14.7		11.9	
New York, N. Y.....		.7	7.9		9.9		9.2	
Philadelphia, Pa....	6.2		6.2		9.3		5.0	
Pittsburgh, Pa....	1.3		15.2		9.6			2.7
Providence, R. I....		3.7		2.6	11.2		9.6	
Scranton, Pa.....	5.6		1.6		8.5		24.2	
South Atlantic division:								
Atlanta, Ga.....		2.8		8.5	8.9			3.8
Baltimore, Md.....	.9		4.9		22.4			5.1
Charleston, S. C....	8.8		22.4		16.3		2.2	
Jacksonville, Fla..	3.7			2.8	4.9		4.6	
Richmond, Va.....		7.2	1.2		5.3		3.8	
Washington, D. C..	3.1		2.3		17.7			3.0
North Central division:								
Chicago, Ill.....	2.3		11.0		8.4		7.7	
Cincinnati, Ohio....	5.7		8.3		6.0		10.5	
Cleveland, Ohio....		1.9	4.7		17.7		3.7	
Detroit, Mich.....	7.2		9.1		11.3		16.9	
Indianapolis, Ind..	4.4		.7		7.5		9.7	
Kansas City, Mo....		6.0	4.9		9.0		3.1	
Milwaukee, Wis....		7.1		8.8	6.4		8.1	
Minneapolis, Minn..	5.4			.6	5.6		12.3	
Omaha, Nebr.....	1.3		11.5		18.0		15.9	
St. Louis, Mo.....		4.3		9.4	17.5		2.2	
South Central division:								
Birmingham, Ala..	4.8		2.5		11.2		4.2	
Dallas, Tex.....		1.3		2.0	6.6		5.4	
Little Rock, Ark....	5.3		.2		15.3		.7	
Louisville, Ky.....		18.6		1.4	17.9		5.5	
Memphis, Tenn....	1.0			3.1	11.4			7.5
New Orleans, La....		3.0		.7	11.0			3.0
Western division:								
Denver, Colo.....		6.5	.3		11.6		4.4	
Los Angeles, Cal..	2.6		2.6		14.6			3.0
Portland, Oreg....		1.9	5.4		4.7			16.4
Salt Lake City, Utah.....		6.6		5.8	7.0			.6
San Francisco, Cal..		1.9	4.1		4.8		( <sup>1</sup> )	( <sup>1</sup> )
Seattle, Wash.....	12.0		7.6		12.8		2.9	
North Atlantic division.....		.2	4.4		11.2		7.1	
South Atlantic division.....	1.3		2.8		12.4		.4	
North central division.....	.7		3.1		10.8		9.3	
South central division.....		2.0		.5	12.6			.7
Western division.....		.4	2.2		9.6			4.0
United States.....		.1	2.7		11.3		3.8	

PER CENT OF INCREASE OR DECREASE IN RETAIL PRICES OF THE PRINCIPAL ARTICLES OF FOOD: PRICE ON JUNE 15, 1912, COMPARED WITH PRICE ON JUNE 15, 1911, BY CITIES AND GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISIONS—Continued.

City and geographical division.	Wheat flour: Price June 15, 1912—		Corn meal: Price June 15, 1912—		Eggs, strictly fresh: Price June 15, 1912—		Butter, creamery: Price June 15, 1912—	
	Higher than June 15, 1911.	Lower than June 15, 1911.	Higher than June 15, 1911.	Lower than June 15, 1911.	Higher than June 15, 1911.	Lower than June 15, 1911.	Higher than June 15, 1911.	Lower than June 15, 1911.
North Atlantic division:	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>
Boston, Mass.....	6.8	1.9	.....	.....	3.7	.....	20.7	.....
Buffalo, N. Y.....	20.0	.....	6.8	.....	4.4	.....	17.6	.....
Fall River, Mass.....	10.3	.....	.....	1.2	6.7	.....	25.7	.....
Manchester, N. H.....	8.3	.....	6.2	.....	43.8	.....	31.7	.....
Newark, N. J.....	5.2	.....	8.3	.....	11.6	.....	17.7	.....
New Haven, Conn.....	11.7	.....	6.9	.....	4.8	.....	23.1	.....
New York, N. Y.....	6.7	.....	4.4	.....	9.1	.....	9.5	.....
Philadelphia, Pa.....	7.3	.....	( <sup>1</sup> )	( <sup>1</sup> )	14.9	.....	16.1	.....
Pittsburgh, Pa.....	10.0	.....	9.9	.....	.....	5.3	9.0	.....
Providence, R. I.....	7.3	.....	30.8	.....	10.9	.....	20.3	.....
Scranton, Pa.....	4.2	.....	10.0	.....	14.1	.....	20.5	.....
South Atlantic division:								
Atlanta, Ga.....	5.5	.....	25.5	.....	20.4	.....	17.9	.....
Baltimore, Md.....	12.3	.....	15.5	.....	22.3	.....	15.5	.....
Charleston, S. C.....	13.2	.....	32.8	.....	15.3	.....	14.4	.....
Jacksonville, Fla.....	6.6	.....	23.6	.....	3.5	.....	15.7	.....
Richmond, Va.....	12.9	.....	6.8	.....	8.9	.....	19.2	.....
Washington, D. C.....	3.0	.....	13.8	.....	18.0	.....	13.2	.....
North Central division:								
Chicago, Ill.....	8.0	.....	( <sup>1</sup> )	( <sup>1</sup> )	5.2	.....	4.7	.....
Cincinnati, Ohio.....	7.2	.....	13.3	.....	21.0	.....	10.2	.....
Cleveland, Ohio.....	15.9	.....	6.9	.....	16.6	.....	9.8	.....
Detroit, Mich.....	14.3	.....	2.9	.....	7.7	.....	12.1	.....
Indianapolis, Ind.....	12.7	.....	2.3	.....	18.5	.....	17.1	.....
Kansas City, Mo.....	7.0	.....	17.3	.....	14.5	.....	14.0	.....
Milwaukee, Wis.....	14.4	.....	9.2	.....	( <sup>2</sup> )	( <sup>2</sup> )	10.9	.....
Minneapolis, Minn.....	18.3	.....	9.0	.....	.....	4.4	13.1	.....
Omaha, Nebr.....	13.4	.....	9.4	.....	9.2	.....	9.5	.....
St. Louis, Mo.....	12.4	.....	28.7	.....	33.0	.....	21.4	.....
South Central division:								
Birmingham, Ala.....	7.0	.....	33.1	.....	10.6	.....	18.4	.....
Dallas, Tex.....	4.9	.....	15.4	.....	25.0	.....	.....	0.1
Little Rock, Ark.....	4.7	.....	17.6	.....	.....	10.5	13.7	.....
Louisville, Ky.....	23.5	.....	23.7	.....	20.9	.....	14.3	.....
Memphis, Tenn.....	10.8	.....	13.5	.....	8.9	.....	18.2	.....
New Orleans, La.....	15.0	.....	27.8	.....	14.8	.....	9.5	.....
Western division:								
Denver, Colo.....	12.1	.....	8.6	.....	5.1	.....	17.1	.....
Los Angeles, Cal.....	6.6	.....	20.8	.....	4.2	.....	13.7	.....
Portland, Oreg.....	5.2	.....	11.9	.....	.....	1.7	6.7	.....
Salt Lake City, Utah.....	20.1	.....	7.9	.....	.....	1.8	4.5	.....
San Francisco, Cal.....	8.7	.....	5.9	.....	.....	1.1	21.9	.....
Seattle, Wash.....	.....	0.1	15.9	.....	.....	2.9	11.6	.....
North Atlantic division.....	8.8	.....	7.6	.....	11.1	.....	19.6	.....
South Atlantic division.....	9.0	.....	19.7	.....	15.2	.....	16.0	.....
North Central division.....	12.3	.....	9.8	.....	12.9	.....	12.3	.....
South Central division.....	12.1	.....	21.8	.....	11.6	.....	12.4	.....
Western division.....	9.0	.....	11.8	.....	1.4	.....	13.0	.....
United States.....	10.7	.....	12.7	.....	11.8	.....	15.3	.....

<sup>1</sup> No change.

<sup>2</sup> No data.

PER CENT OF INCREASE OR DECREASE IN RETAIL PRICES OF THE PRINCIPAL ARTICLES OF FOOD: PRICE ON JUNE 15, 1912, COMPARED WITH PRICE ON JUNE 15, 1911, BY CITIES AND GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISIONS—Concluded.

City and geographical division.	Potatoes, Irish: Price June 15, 1912—		Sugar, granu- lated: Price June 15, 1912—		Milk, fresh: Price June 15, 1912—	
	Higher than June 15, 1911.	Lower than June 15, 1911.	Higher than June 15, 1911.	Lower than June 15, 1911.	Higher than June 15, 1911.	Lower than June 15, 1911.
North Atlantic division:	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>
Boston, Mass. ....	37.8		4.3		9.3	
Buffalo, N. Y. ....	48.7		8.8		(1)	(1)
Fall River, Mass. ....	6.3			4.3	14.3	
Manchester, N. H. ....	45.1		7.5		(1)	(1)
Newark, N. J. ....	(2)	(2)	6.0		(1)	(1)
New Haven, Conn. ....	23.5		1.1		3.8	
New York, N. Y. ....	(2)	(2)	4.2		(1)	(1)
Philadelphia, Pa. ....	27.6		3.4		(1)	(1)
Pittsburgh, Pa. ....	21.4		1.0		.3	
Providence, R. I. ....		1.1	7.0		(1)	(1)
Scranton, Pa. ....		15.0	5.7		2.7	
South Atlantic division:						
Atlanta, Ga. ....		5.3	5.5		(1)	(1)
Baltimore, Md. ....	38.5		10.9		(1)	(1)
Charleston, S. C. ....	18.0		10.7		6.4	
Jacksonville, Fla. ....	46.0		13.4			0.1
Richmond, Va. ....	17.1		6.3		(1)	(1)
Washington, D. C. ....	15.3		11.4		.1	
North Central division:						
Chicago, Ill. ....	28.2			3.6	(1)	(1)
Cincinnati, Ohio. ....	32.3		5.1		(1)	(1)
Cleveland, Ohio. ....	43.0			.6	14.3	
Detroit, Mich. ....	76.2		7.7		14.2	
Indianapolis, Ind. ....	6.9		18.1		(1)	(1)
Kansas City, Mo. ....		6.6	2.7			3.9
Milwaukee, Wis. ....	35.7		6.5		(1)	(1)
Minneapolis, Minn. ....	.9		3.4		16.7	
Omaha, Nebr. ....		13.5	6.9		2.5	
St. Louis, Mo. ....		30.3	8.7			2.6
South Central division:						
Birmingham, Ala. ....	21.6		8.1		.1	
Dallas, Tex. ....		25.2	14.9		(1)	(1)
Little Rock, Ark. ....		9.4	5.3		12.3	
Louisville, Ky. ....	27.0			.6		1.8
Memphis, Tenn. ....	15.3		2.5		(1)	(1)
New Orleans, La. ....	11.1		7.3			4.0
Western division:						
Denver, Colo. ....		13.6	11.5		(1)	(1)
Los Angeles, Cal. ....		37.7	5.8		13.1	
Portland, Oreg. ....		38.4	1.1			2.0
Salt Lake City, Utah. ....	32.8		4.6		4.0	
San Francisco, Cal. ....		14.7	8.8			.2
Seattle, Wash. ....		52.4	11.9		.5	
North Atlantic division	18.0		4.3		2.7	
South Atlantic division	20.0		9.8		1.1	
North Central division	13.0		5.4		3.8	
South Central division	5.7		4.5		1.0	
Western division		24.7	7.3		2.6	
United States	7.6		6.0		2.4	

<sup>1</sup> No change.

<sup>2</sup> No data.

In order that the course of prices of each of the various articles through a series of years may be studied, relative prices have been computed for each of the 15 articles included in this investigation. These relative prices have also been combined, so that the course of prices as a whole may be seen. No relative prices were computed for three articles for which actual prices are quoted in General Table I, in Part II of this Bulletin. These articles are chuck roast, leg of lamb (yearling), and storage eggs; and the reasons for their omission from the table of relative prices are shown in connection with the explanation of General Table IV, in Part II of this Bulletin.

A relative price, or index number, as it is technically called, of any article is the per cent which the price of that article at any certain date is of the price of the same article at a date or period which has been selected as the base or standard. The value of the relative price is that it enables the reader to follow more readily the course of prices of a single article, and when these relative prices, or index numbers, are combined also to follow the course of prices of groups of articles. The base selected for the compilation of retail prices of food is the average price for the 10-year period 1890 to 1899. This base period is the same as was used by the Bureau in previous reports on retail prices (Eighteenth Annual Report and Bulletin Nos. 59, 65, 71, 77, and 105), in reports on wholesale prices (Bulletin Nos. 39, 45, 51, 57, 63, 69, 75, 81, 87, 93, and 99), and in reports on wages and hours of labor (Nineteenth Annual Report and Bulletin Nos. 59, 65, 71, and 77). The average for the 10-year period is used as the base for the reason that an average price for a number of years more nearly represents normal conditions than does the price for a single year, because of unusual conditions which may prevail in any one year.

The next table shows for each of the five geographical divisions and for the United States as a whole the relative retail prices of food for each year from 1890 to 1911, and also for each month from January, 1911, to June, 1912. In the first section of the table is shown for each of the five geographical divisions and for the United States as a whole the simple average of the relative prices of the 15 articles. In computing the relative prices shown in the second section of the table for each of the five geographical divisions and for the United States the relative price for each of the 15 articles was weighted according to average consumption in workingmen's families in the particular division or in the United States as a whole. The method of weighting relatives is fully explained and illustrated in the report on retail prices published in Bulletin No. 105. The 15 articles represent approximately two-thirds of the average expenditure for food in the average workingman's family, according to the Eighteenth Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor. The proportion of total expenditures represented by the 15 articles in each geographical divi-

sion and in the United States as a whole, as shown by the Eighteenth Annual Report, was as follows:

	Per cent.
North Atlantic division .....	64.11
South Atlantic division .....	66.43
North Central division .....	63.10
South Central division .....	67.95
Western division .....	57.79
United States .....	63.97

The table of simple and weighted relative retail prices follows:

RELATIVE RETAIL PRICES OF FOOD, SIMPLE AND WEIGHTED AVERAGES, 1890 TO JUNE, 1912, BY GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISIONS.

[Average price for 1890-1899=100.0.]

Year or month.	Simple average of the relative prices of 15 principal articles, shown in detail on pages 18 and 19.					Relative prices, weighted according to the average consumption of the various articles of food in workingmen's families, in each geographical division.						
	North Atlantic division.	South Atlantic division.	North Central division.	South Central division.	Western division.	United States.	North Atlantic division.	South Atlantic division.	North Central division.	South Central division.	Western division.	United States.
1890.....	101.7	100.4	102.0	100.6	106.0	102.0	101.9	100.6	101.7	100.9	105.2	101.9
1891.....	102.7	101.8	104.5	103.2	107.6	103.6	102.1	101.6	104.4	102.8	106.9	103.4
1892.....	101.7	101.2	101.8	99.9	104.0	101.7	101.8	101.2	101.9	100.1	103.4	101.6
1893.....	104.8	102.5	106.4	104.2	103.0	104.6	104.4	102.7	106.2	104.2	102.1	104.1
1894.....	99.4	99.5	100.0	100.3	98.1	99.5	99.2	99.6	99.6	100.4	98.0	99.2
1895.....	97.2	98.2	97.0	97.8	96.0	97.2	97.2	97.8	97.1	97.9	95.6	97.1
1896.....	95.7	97.1	93.9	95.4	94.1	94.9	95.9	97.3	94.0	95.7	94.2	95.2
1897.....	97.3	97.3	95.8	96.6	94.6	96.4	97.4	97.4	96.1	96.9	94.9	96.7
1898.....	100.3	99.7	99.3	100.4	96.7	99.4	100.2	99.7	99.5	99.9	98.0	99.7
1899.....	99.7	102.3	99.4	101.8	100.3	100.6	100.0	102.0	99.6	101.3	101.8	100.8
1900.....	103.0	104.7	102.5	102.2	100.7	102.9	103.0	104.4	102.5	103.1	102.2	103.0
1901.....	108.9	110.3	110.6	110.5	104.6	109.5	108.0	109.7	109.5	109.7	104.9	108.5
1902.....	116.2	116.7	117.4	119.3	111.9	116.8	114.0	115.6	115.4	118.7	110.1	114.6
1903.....	116.3	115.6	117.3	121.4	112.4	116.9	113.7	114.6	115.5	120.3	109.9	114.7
1904.....	117.6	115.8	118.1	122.2	114.8	118.3	115.5	114.9	116.2	121.1	111.1	116.2
1905.....	116.8	116.3	118.1	122.4	115.4	118.3	115.0	115.7	116.3	121.3	111.8	116.4
1906.....	121.4	120.8	122.3	125.8	118.9	122.4	119.1	120.0	120.6	125.0	115.0	120.3
1907.....	126.4	126.4	127.3	131.7	125.5	128.0	123.9	125.9	126.0	130.9	121.8	125.9
1908.....	129.2	131.0	133.1	138.8	128.4	132.5	126.5	129.8	131.5	137.5	123.9	130.1
1909.....	134.7	139.2	141.4	148.3	137.4	140.3	131.2	137.8	139.1	147.1	131.3	137.2
1910.....	140.3	149.8	149.7	157.8	146.3	148.5	135.2	148.4	147.0	156.7	138.8	144.1
1911.....	139.3	145.2	146.9	158.6	145.9	146.9	134.9	142.9	144.4	157.0	139.1	143.0
<b>1911.</b>												
January.....	139.8	148.2	148.7	160.7	148.1	148.2	135.8	147.7	147.0	159.5	142.6	145.0
February.....	136.2	143.4	144.3	157.1	144.4	144.5	131.3	142.0	141.4	155.6	139.3	140.4
March.....	134.1	140.9	141.9	153.8	143.6	142.1	128.8	139.1	138.8	152.3	137.1	137.6
April.....	131.8	138.8	140.7	153.5	142.3	140.6	125.8	136.2	136.5	151.5	134.0	135.3
May.....	132.3	138.8	141.0	152.8	143.4	140.9	126.1	135.9	136.7	150.6	134.8	135.4
June.....	136.4	141.8	145.9	156.7	145.4	144.8	130.3	138.0	141.5	154.1	136.3	139.2
July.....	141.7	148.0	150.4	160.5	147.5	149.4	135.7	142.9	146.2	157.8	138.5	143.7
August.....	142.7	148.9	149.6	161.4	145.4	149.4	137.3	145.0	146.5	159.1	138.1	144.5
September.....	143.4	150.2	150.2	160.9	145.1	149.8	138.7	147.2	148.0	159.3	138.7	145.7
October.....	143.7	148.7	148.0	159.6	147.0	149.1	140.2	147.1	147.1	158.5	141.6	146.2
November.....	144.3	148.1	149.4	160.4	149.2	149.8	142.8	147.6	149.4	159.7	144.8	148.3
December.....	144.6	148.4	151.4	163.1	147.5	150.6	144.2	148.5	152.2	162.9	144.0	150.0
<b>1912.</b>												
January.....	147.9	152.9	155.3	166.7	147.0	153.7	147.6	153.1	156.5	166.2	144.1	153.5
February.....	147.4	151.3	153.9	162.5	144.6	152.1	146.9	150.5	153.5	161.4	141.8	150.9
March.....	143.5	147.4	152.7	160.8	147.0	150.4	140.7	145.1	151.0	158.9	142.7	147.6
April.....	148.8	153.1	159.3	166.7	150.4	156.0	145.5	149.9	158.0	164.7	144.3	152.7
May.....	151.9	158.0	161.3	168.6	151.0	158.6	148.1	154.3	159.2	166.3	143.6	154.6
June.....	150.7	157.6	161.9	168.1	150.6	158.1	147.9	153.4	158.7	165.2	143.7	154.0

The last column of the above table shows that the relative price, computed by giving to each of the articles its weight according to average consumption in workingmen's families, was, in 1890, 101.9 per cent of the average price for the 10-year period 1890 to 1899. In 1891 prices advanced to 103.4; in 1892 there was a slight decline to 101.6, in 1893 an advance to 104.1. After this there was a gradual decline until the lowest price (95.2) in the 22 years covered by this report was reached in 1896. From that time each year showed an advance until the highest yearly price (144.1) in the 22 years was reached in 1910. The price (143.0) in 1911 showed a slight decline from 1910, but was higher than in any year from 1890 to 1909. The monthly relative price in January, 1911, was 145.0. There was a decline until 135.3 was reached in April; then an advance each month until January, 1912, when the relative price was 153.5; a decline during each of the next two months; then an advance until 154.6 was reached in May, and then a slight decline to 154.0 in June, 1912.

The column of the above table which gives for the United States the relative price computed as a simple average of the 15 principal articles of food shows that the course of the simple average yearly prices is exactly the same as the course of the weighted, but the simple relative goes lower during the period of low prices and higher during the period of high prices.

The lowest price during the 22½ years was reached in each of the geographical divisions and in the United States as a whole in 1896, both for the simple averages and for the weighted averages. In the North Atlantic division and in the South Atlantic division prices (both simple and weighted averages) reached the highest level in May, 1912. In the North Central division the highest level was reached in June, 1912, according to the simple average, and in May, 1912, according to the weighted average. In the South Central division prices (both simple and weighted averages) reached the highest level in May, 1912. In the Western division the highest level was reached in May, 1912, according to the simple average, and in November, 1911, according to the weighted average. In the United States, considered as a whole, the highest level was reached in May, 1912, both according to the simple average and according to the weighted average.

The next table compares prices in each geographical division and in the United States as a whole on the 15th of each month, January to June, 1912, with prices on the corresponding dates in 1911.

Considering prices in the United States as a whole, the simple average of the relatives for 15 principal articles of food shows the following:

Jan. 15, 1912, compared with Jan. 15, 1911.....	3.7 per cent advance.
Feb. 15, 1912, compared with Feb. 15, 1911.....	5.3 per cent advance.
Mar. 15, 1912, compared with Mar. 15, 1911.....	5.8 per cent advance.
Apr. 15, 1912, compared with Apr. 15, 1911.....	11.0 per cent advance.
May 15, 1912, compared with May 15, 1911.....	12.6 per cent advance.
June 15, 1912, compared with June 15, 1911.....	9.2 per cent advance.

When the relative prices are weighted according to the average consumption of the various articles of food in workingmen's families, the changes in prices within a year were as follows:

Jan. 15, 1912, compared with Jan. 15, 1911.....	5.9 per cent advance.
Feb. 15, 1912, compared with Feb. 15, 1911.....	7.5 per cent advance.
Mar. 15, 1912, compared with Mar. 15, 1911.....	7.3 per cent advance.
Apr. 15, 1912, compared with Apr. 15, 1911.....	12.9 per cent advance.
May 15, 1912, compared with May 15, 1911.....	14.2 per cent advance.
June 15, 1912, compared with June 15, 1911.....	10.6 per cent advance.

The table follows:

PER CENT OF INCREASE OR DECREASE IN RETAIL PRICES OF ALL ARTICLES OF FOOD FOR WHICH DATA ARE SHOWN IN THIS REPORT: PRICE ON THE 15TH OF JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH, APRIL, MAY, AND JUNE, 1912, COMPARED WITH PRICE ON THE CORRESPONDING DATE IN 1911, SIMPLE AND WEIGHTED AVERAGES, BY GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISIONS.

Geographical divisions.	Price Jan. 15, 1912—		Price Feb. 15, 1912—		Price Mar. 15, 1912—	
	Higher than Jan. 15, 1911.	Lower than Jan. 15, 1911.	Higher than Feb. 15, 1911.	Lower than Feb. 15, 1911.	Higher than Mar. 15, 1911.	Lower than Mar. 15, 1911.
Simple average of the relative prices of 15 principal articles, shown in detail on pages 18 and 19:	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>
North Atlantic.....	5.8	.....	8.2	.....	7.0	.....
South Atlantic.....	3.2	.....	5.5	.....	4.6	.....
North Central.....	4.4	.....	6.7	.....	7.6	.....
South Central.....	3.7	.....	3.4	.....	4.6	.....
Western.....	.....	0.7	.....	.1	.....	2.4
United States.....	3.7	.....	5.3	.....	5.8	.....
Relative prices, weighted according to the average consumption of the various articles of food in workingmen's families, in each geographical division:						
North Atlantic.....	8.7	.....	11.9	.....	9.2	.....
South Atlantic.....	3.7	.....	6.0	.....	4.3	.....
North Central.....	6.5	.....	8.6	.....	8.8	.....
South Central.....	4.2	.....	3.7	.....	4.3	.....
Western.....	1.1	.....	1.8	.....	4.1	.....
United States.....	5.9	.....	7.5	.....	7.3	.....



PER CENT OF INCREASE OR DECREASE IN RETAIL PRICES OF ALL ARTICLES OF FOOD FOR WHICH DATA ARE SHOWN IN THIS REPORT, ETC.—Concluded.

Geographical divisions.	Price Apr. 15, 1912—		Price May 15, 1912—		Price June 15, 1912—	
	Higher than Apr. 15, 1911.	Lower than Apr. 15, 1911.	Higher than May 15, 1911.	Lower than May 15, 1911.	Higher than June 15, 1911.	Lower than June 15, 1911.
Simple average of the relative prices of 15 principal articles, shown in detail on pages 18 and 19:	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>
North Atlantic.....	12.9	.....	14.8	.....	10.5	.....
South Atlantic.....	10.3	.....	13.8	.....	11.1	.....
North Central.....	13.2	.....	14.4	.....	11.0	.....
South Central.....	8.6	.....	10.3	.....	7.3	.....
Western.....	5.7	.....	5.3	.....	3.6	.....
United States.....	11.0	.....	12.6	.....	9.2	.....
Relative prices, weighted according to the average consumption of the various articles of food in workingmen's families, in each geographical division:						
North Atlantic.....	15.7	.....	17.4	.....	13.5	.....
South Atlantic.....	10.1	.....	13.5	.....	11.2	.....
North Central.....	15.8	.....	16.5	.....	12.2	.....
South Central.....	8.7	.....	10.4	.....	7.2	.....
Western.....	7.7	.....	6.5	.....	5.4	.....
United States.....	12.9	.....	14.2	.....	10.6	.....

The relative retail prices in the United States, considered as a whole, of each of the 15 principal articles of food for the 22½ years, 1890 to June, 1912, are presented in the table which follows. General Table IV, in Part II of this Bulletin, shows similar data for the 18 months from January, 1911, to June, 1912, for each of the five geographical divisions. This table shows yearly prices for 1890 to 1911 and prices each month from January, 1911, to June, 1912.

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## RELATIVE RETAIL PRICES OF THE PRINCIPAL ARTICLES OF FOOD

[Average price for

Year or month.	Sirloin steak.	Round steak.	Rib roast.	Pork chops.	Bacon, smoked.	Ham, smoked.
1890.....	99.3	97.6	98.7	96.5	96.5	98.3
1891.....	99.7	98.0	99.6	98.8	97.2	99.5
1892.....	99.6	98.0	99.6	101.1	99.9	101.5
1893.....	99.4	98.5	98.4	105.0	108.9	107.1
1894.....	98.1	97.4	97.9	100.9	102.5	101.7
1895.....	98.7	98.2	97.9	99.7	98.7	98.9
1896.....	98.8	100.5	99.4	97.8	96.3	96.5
1897.....	99.6	101.8	100.1	97.5	97.0	98.5
1898.....	102.1	102.8	102.2	99.7	100.2	97.2
1899.....	104.4	107.0	106.1	103.2	102.9	100.5
1900.....	107.1	109.8	109.3	108.9	110.3	106.9
1901.....	109.4	114.0	112.7	119.0	121.3	111.1
1902.....	114.6	122.3	118.6	127.8	135.9	120.6
1903.....	110.6	116.8	117.0	126.1	140.4	122.1
1904.....	111.0	120.8	117.0	123.1	138.5	119.4
1905.....	110.6	120.0	116.2	125.0	139.3	119.4
1906.....	114.2	124.4	120.5	135.9	150.5	127.8
1907.....	116.7	128.4	123.0	140.9	157.7	131.0
1908.....	119.9	135.5	126.7	144.6	163.2	133.8
1909.....	126.1	140.6	132.2	158.7	176.4	142.1
1910.....	134.0	149.9	137.7	178.3	204.4	159.4
1911.....	134.9	152.6	138.6	170.3	197.2	155.9
<b>1911.</b>						
January.....	134.0	150.9	137.8	170.5	203.5	155.4
February.....	133.7	151.1	138.0	168.4	201.1	154.8
March.....	134.3	152.5	138.7	167.6	198.6	153.8
April.....	134.3	153.0	139.8	167.4	196.5	153.4
May.....	135.8	154.2	140.0	166.8	196.9	154.3
June.....	136.2	155.1	139.4	167.3	196.8	157.0
July.....	136.8	154.6	138.4	171.0	199.3	160.5
August.....	137.3	154.7	138.9	180.7	200.1	162.3
September.....	135.8	153.2	138.8	183.4	199.4	159.8
October.....	133.9	151.7	137.9	179.1	193.2	157.4
November.....	133.0	149.8	137.2	160.8	190.7	153.1
December.....	132.8	149.6	137.4	155.4	187.8	150.9
<b>1912.</b>						
January.....	137.1	154.1	140.7	164.0	186.1	151.1
February.....	137.7	155.3	141.7	157.6	183.5	150.5
March.....	140.1	158.1	143.6	166.3	183.3	150.9
April.....	146.9	167.3	150.4	185.6	190.2	155.3
May.....	157.3	179.9	160.5	188.2	195.5	159.7
June.....	159.5	184.0	163.8	186.0	196.7	161.3

IN THE UNITED STATES, 1890 TO JUNE, 1912, BY ARTICLES.

1890-1899=100.0.]

Lard, pure.	Hens.	Wheat flour.	Corn meal.	Eggs, strictly fresh.	Butter, creamery.	Potatoes, Irish.	Sugar, granulated.	Milk, fresh.
98.5	102.8	110.2	101.3	100.3	99.2	109.0	120.8	100.4
100.0	104.8	112.4	111.5	105.6	105.7	117.1	103.1	100.5
104.4	104.2	104.0	107.7	105.3	106.8	95.4	96.9	100.5
119.2	104.3	95.1	104.0	105.5	108.6	111.8	102.6	100.5
106.4	98.2	88.3	104.4	97.4	102.0	101.8	95.2	100.3
99.8	97.3	89.6	101.0	98.8	97.4	90.6	91.8	99.4
92.1	96.1	94.2	92.8	90.3	93.1	78.8	96.2	100.1
89.0	92.3	104.7	91.2	94.0	93.7	92.5	94.3	100.0
93.5	96.8	106.9	92.9	97.9	95.8	103.9	99.7	99.8
97.1	103.4	94.8	92.9	101.6	97.6	98.8	99.6	98.8
104.9	99.6	94.6	95.6	99.1	101.2	92.8	103.9	100.0
119.6	105.0	94.9	107.6	107.7	103.0	114.0	102.1	101.4
135.6	113.6	95.6	123.9	119.4	109.8	116.7	92.8	104.1
126.0	119.3	102.1	122.1	125.1	110.2	114.7	93.7	107.4
116.3	120.6	118.3	122.9	131.1	108.1	119.0	100.4	107.4
115.8	123.6	118.6	123.5	131.3	111.4	109.3	101.8	108.1
127.3	128.0	108.3	124.5	134.2	118.3	114.6	97.2	110.0
133.5	131.3	118.2	133.5	138.2	127.3	122.2	98.7	118.9
134.3	134.9	127.1	142.6	142.8	127.9	129.8	101.3	123.2
150.5	145.7	138.1	145.7	154.7	134.3	133.4	100.0	126.2
172.9	155.0	135.9	147.9	158.2	139.9	119.5	102.5	131.6
145.3	151.6	127.9	147.2	150.2	131.3	157.0	111.1	132.7
161.1	154.7	130.3	144.6	185.1	140.7	119.2	99.9	135.1
158.5	155.5	129.2	144.6	145.9	133.1	119.0	98.9	135.2
151.4	156.9	127.5	143.7	123.6	128.1	121.2	99.5	134.2
145.2	158.7	126.2	144.5	112.9	117.8	126.5	99.9	132.3
140.9	156.1	125.9	145.1	110.4	114.8	142.5	100.9	129.6
139.5	152.3	125.8	145.2	112.8	115.6	196.9	102.4	129.8
138.6	151.9	125.8	146.9	122.1	119.4	240.1	105.3	129.9
139.8	150.1	126.7	148.7	133.0	126.2	197.6	115.0	130.5
142.6	149.4	127.6	149.5	146.7	131.0	167.8	130.2	131.5
142.5	147.3	129.5	151.2	163.4	138.9	144.1	132.2	133.8
142.6	143.2	130.2	152.3	196.2	149.7	149.0	124.9	134.9
141.3	142.9	129.5	151.9	207.3	159.5	159.0	118.2	135.0
141.2	151.4	130.1	152.9	202.9	166.9	177.8	115.1	134.8
141.1	153.4	130.7	153.3	185.1	156.0	185.4	114.5	135.0
141.2	159.9	131.0	153.7	130.3	145.5	202.1	115.6	134.6
145.6	163.6	132.7	157.6	125.9	148.4	224.7	111.4	134.0
152.6	162.2	138.4	163.0	123.8	143.4	211.6	109.1	133.2
155.3	158.1	139.3	163.7	126.1	133.3	211.9	108.5	132.9

In the above table, as in the preceding table of relative prices, the average price for the 10-year period, 1890 to 1899, is the base, or 100. The figures in the column for round steak, for example, indicate that if the price of round steak for the 10-year period, 1890 to 1899, be considered 100, the price in 1890 was 97.6, or 2.4 per cent below the average for 1890 to 1899; the price in 1900 was 109.8, or 9.8 per cent above the average for 1890 to 1899; the price on June 15, 1912, was 184.0, or 84.0 per cent above the average price for 1890 to 1899, etc.

In connection with the price quotations furnished the Bureau of Labor each month, the retail merchants are invited to state "the cause of any material advance or decline in the price of any article since the middle of last month." Quite a number of the merchants are supplying such statements, and many of them are of much value in studying prices. A few of the statements accompanying June price reports follow. The name of the city but not of the dealer is shown.

BALTIMORE.—"If the present high prices prevail much longer in the wholesale market, I do not know what will become of the retail dealers."

BOSTON.—"Cheap sirloins are so high and poor that I am not cutting any at present. Both grades of cattle have gone up, and the above prices just about let me out without profit."

BOSTON.—"Beef, especially on cheaper cuts, 10 to 20 per cent higher."

BOSTON.—"I do not know the cause of the advance in the price of meats, and the high price of meats is causing us to close our place of business on or about July 4."

CHICAGO.—"Jobbing price on flour has advanced 80 cents per barrel, and unless there is a decline in the near future retail price will also advance."

INDIANAPOLIS.—"Meat steadily advancing. Beef has gone up 5 cents per pound within the last 30 days."

NEW HAVEN.—"Beginning this week we will advance 2 cents per pound on all meats, as we are paying the highest price for beef and lambs in my time. I can not say the reason of this high cost of meat; the jobber blames the farmer; the farmer blames the high price of corn. \* \* \*"

NEW YORK.—"Meats in general are so high if prices continue much longer will be obliged to close up business. Have already lost about \$200 since advance in prices."

PHILADELPHIA.—"No money in meats at the above prices."

PHILADELPHIA.—"The drop in butter is seasonable, although for some reason not as low as it ought to be for this time of year."

PHILADELPHIA.—“We paid (Monday, June 17) 15½ cents per pound for rumps and rounds and 11½ cents per pound for chucks of beef, the highest price in the history of our business. \* \* \*”

SALT LAKE CITY.—“Everything seems to be at the top, but nothing shows any decline.”

A few of the remarks accompanying the price reports for May 15 follow:

ATLANTA.—“The wholesale cost of several items has advanced—fresh meats, flour, and butter—but we are still holding at old prices.”

BOSTON.—“Probably this is the last month we will be in the provision business. The high prices of meats are driving us out of business. We have been in business 15 years, but must get out before we are put out.”

CINCINNATI.—“The recent floods have had the effect of sending cattle to market before their maturity, and grain being the highest in years has had the tendency to give us the highest meat we have handled in many years. Until the grass cattle begin to come in, which is about six weeks hence, we can look for no drop in prices. This morning (May 15) we paid 8¼ cents per pound for steer cattle. Ten years ago the same cattle cost us 5¼ cents per pound.”

FALL RIVER.—“The high prices of meats have cut our meat business almost in two. The cheaper cuts, which we ordinarily sell for 6 to 10 cents per pound, now we have to get 10 to 14 cents.”

INDIANAPOLIS.—“\* \* \* Meat prices have made a sharp advance owing to the scarcity in the grades of meat that we have been selling (good medium grades) and have been compelled to handle higher-priced meats.”

INDIANAPOLIS.—“Owing to the high price of feed, the milk supply this month is the lowest for May on record.”

LOS ANGELES.—“The decline of price on potatoes is due to speculators losing their grip on the market. Shipments have arrived from other States, and as new potatoes will come in freely in a few weeks, they had to let go.”

MEMPHIS.—“The price of meats has advanced. I was compelled to advance my prices on same. I have paid more for meats this year than I ever paid since I have been in business. I don't see any change for some time to come.”

MILWAUKEE.—“We were compelled to raise our price of beef because of the raise in the wholesale price.”

NEW HAVEN.—“These prices given for meats are not sufficient to cover cost; as I am expecting a drop in price do not want to put up prices to extreme.”

PITTSBURGH.—“Good beef is scarce and high, and is cause of driving other meat up. Long, severe winter and high price of grain supposed to be the reason.”

PITTSBURGH.—“Am buying milk cheaper this month, therefore can sell cheaper.”

PORTLAND.—“Raise of prices for beef and pork is due to shortage of stock.”

SALT LAKE CITY.—“Tendency still upward. Sugar 20 cents advance; flour also 20 cents advance since last report. Both fresh and canned meats still advancing wholesale.”

#### BREAD WEIGHTS.

This report includes scaling weights (weights of dough before baking) on the 15th of January, February, March, April, May, and June, 1912, of some 280 principal brands of baker's wheat bread as reported by more than 140 bakers. Reports were secured from a few bakeries showing bread weights on corresponding dates in 1911. Comparisons of weights on June 15, 1912, and June 15, 1911, are available for 60 brands, and of that number the weight of 4 brands was heavier on June 15, 1912, than on the corresponding date in 1911, the weight of 27 brands was unchanged, and the weight of 29 brands was lighter.

The weights of wheat bread shown in General Table II, in Part II of this Bulletin, were reported by several representative bakeries in each city. In order to avoid identification, names of firms and brands are not disclosed, but each firm has been given a number and each brand reported by a firm has been designated by a letter.

A few of the remarks accompanying the bakers' reports of bread weights on June 15, follows:

BALTIMORE.—“Sharp advance in cost of flour.”

DENVER.—“Materials on the increase.”

FALL RIVER.—“Reductions in weight caused by higher cost of materials.”

## COAL.

Comparing retail prices of coal in ton lots, for household use, on January 15, 1912, with prices on January 15, 1911, the average advance for 30 cities on Pennsylvania anthracite white ash, stove size, was 0.6 per cent; the average advance for 28 cities on Pennsylvania anthracite white ash, chestnut size, was 1.5 per cent; and the average decline for 32 cities on bituminous was 1 per cent.

Comparing retail prices of coal in ton lots, for household use, on April 15, 1912, with prices on April 15, 1911, the average advance for 29 cities on Pennsylvania anthracite white ash, stove size, was 6.4 per cent; the average advance for 27 cities on Pennsylvania anthracite white ash, chestnut size, was 7.2 per cent; and the average advance for 32 cities on bituminous was 3.2 per cent.

The table which follows compares, for each of the cities for which data were secured, prices on January 15, 1912, with prices on January 15, 1911, and also prices on April 15, 1912, with prices on April 15, 1911. Three descriptions of coal are included—Pennsylvania anthracite white ash, stove size; Pennsylvania anthracite white ash, chestnut size; and bituminous. The comparisons are of prices of coal for household use and sold in ton lots. General Table V, in Part II of this Bulletin, shows actual prices of the three descriptions of coal above named, in ton lots, in half-ton lots, and in lots of less than one-fourth ton.

The price on April 15, 1912, as compared with the price on April 15, 1911, was higher for Pennsylvania anthracite, stove size, in 25 out of 29 cities from which reports were secured, and there was no change in price in the remaining 4 cities. During the same period, Pennsylvania anthracite, chestnut size, advanced in 25 out of 27 cities, and the price remained unchanged in 2 cities; and bituminous advanced in 17 out of 32 cities, the price remained unchanged in 12 cities, and declined in 3 cities.

In the North Atlantic division Pennsylvania anthracite white ash coal, stove size, was 11.3 per cent higher on April 15, 1912, than on April 15, 1911; Pennsylvania anthracite white ash, chestnut size, was 11.9 per cent higher; and bituminous was 11 per cent higher.

PER CENT OF INCREASE OR DECREASE IN RETAIL PRICES OF COAL IN TON LOTS FOR HOUSEHOLD USE: PRICE ON THE 15TH OF JANUARY AND APRIL, 1912, COMPARED WITH PRICE ON THE CORRESPONDING DATE IN 1911, BY CITIES AND GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISIONS.

City and geographical division.	Pennsylvania anthracite white ash.								Bituminous.			
	Stove.				Chestnut.							
	Price Jan. 15, 1912.		Price Apr. 15, 1912.		Price Jan. 15, 1912.		Price Apr. 15, 1912.		Price Jan. 15, 1912.		Price Apr. 15, 1912.	
	Higher than Jan. 15, 1911.	Lower than Jan. 15, 1911.	Higher than Apr. 15, 1911.	Lower than Apr. 15, 1911.	Higher than Jan. 15, 1911.	Lower than Jan. 15, 1911.	Higher than Apr. 15, 1911.	Lower than Apr. 15, 1911.	Higher than Jan. 15, 1911.	Lower than Jan. 15, 1911.	Higher than Apr. 15, 1911.	Lower than Apr. 15, 1911.
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	
<b>North Atlantic division:</b>												
Boston, Mass.....	2.1		8.6		3.4		12.0		0.1		18.9	
Buffalo, N. Y.....	(1)	(1)	8.5		(1)	(1)	8.2		(2)	(2)	(2)	
Fall River, Mass.....	6.4		16.6		8.9		19.0		(1)	(1)	10.0	
Manchester, N. H.....	(1)	(1)	9.8		3.1		11.2		(2)	(2)	(2)	
Newark, N. J.....	(1)	(1)	8.7		(1)	(1)	8.3		(2)	(2)	(2)	
New Haven, Conn.....	(1)	(1)	20.6		(1)	(1)	20.6		(1)	(1)	(1)	
New York, N. Y.....	.8		12.4		.4		11.7		(1)	(1)	9.5	
Philadelphia, Pa.....	1.1		7.6		3.0		6.9		1.7		9.7	
Pittsburgh, Pa.....		3.4	.3			2.3	1.4		4.6		5.2	
Providence, R. I.....	(1)	(1)	19.4		2.3		20.0		(1)	(1)	23.5	
<b>South Atlantic division:</b>												
Baltimore, Md.....	(1)	(1)	9.1		2.3		8.8		(1)	(1)	(1)	
Jacksonville, Fla.....	(1)	(1)	6.7		(1)	(1)	6.7		4.6		4.6	
Richmond, Va.....	3.6		3.6		3.6		3.6		(1)	(1)	(1)	
Washington, D. C.....	(1)	(2)	7.4		3.4		7.5		(2)	(1)	.3	
<b>North Central division:</b>												
Chicago, Ill.....	(1)	(1)	4.6		1.1		5.7		(1)	(1)	19.1	
Cincinnati, Ohio.....		1.2	5.1			1.2	5.1			5.6	.1	
Cleveland, Ohio.....	3.6		5.5		3.4		5.3		.8		.8	
Detroit, Mich.....	(1)	(2)	1.4		2.0		2.8		(1)	(1)	(1)	
Indianapolis, Ind.....	1.0		7.4		.5		7.8			3.4	10.5	
Kansas City, Mo.....	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	1.3		(1)	
Milwaukee, Wis.....	(1)	(1)	6.3		.5		6.7			2.2	(1)	
Minneapolis, Minn.....	(1)	(1)	5.9		.8		4.9		(1)	(1)	(1)	
Omaha, Nebr.....	(1)	(1)	1.0		(1)	(1)	1.0		1.0		1.0	
St. Louis, Mo.....	(1)	(1)	3.4		2.3		4.0			1.7	.1	
<b>South Central division:</b>												
Birmingham, Ala.....	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(1)	(1)	3.1	
Dallas, Tex.....	3.8		(2)	(2)	3.8		(2)	(2)		3.3	2.3	
Little Rock, Ark.....	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)		7.7	7.7	
Louisville, Ky.....	(1)	(1)	4.9		(1)	(1)	4.9			14.5	.5	
Memphis, Tenn.....	(1)	(1)	1.6		(1)	(1)	1.6		(1)	(1)	(1)	
New Orleans, La.....	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	
<b>Western division:</b>												
Denver, Colo.....	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(1)	(1)	(1)	
Los Angeles, Cal.....	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)		3.5	3.5	
Salt Lake City, Utah.....	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(1)	(1)	(1)	
San Francisco, Cal.....	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)		5.0	5.0	
Seattle, Wash.....	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(1)	(1)	(1)	
<b>Summary:</b>												
North Atlantic division.....	.7		11.3		1.9		11.9		.9		11.0	
South Atlantic division.....	.9		6.7		2.3		6.7		1.2		1.2	
North Central division.....	.3		4.1		.9		4.3			1.0	3.2	
South Central division.....	1.0		2.2		1.0		2.2			4.2	.3	
Western division.....	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)		1.7	1.7	
United States.....	.6		6.4		1.5		7.2			1.0	3.2	

<sup>1</sup> No change.

<sup>2</sup> No data.



GAS.

Net prices of gas for household use are shown in this report for April 15, 1912, and for purposes of comparison, prices on April 15, 1911, are also given. Prices are reported for manufactured gas from 54 companies in 36 cities; for natural gas from 9 companies in 5 cities; and for mixed manufactured and natural gas from 1 company.

Only 8 companies reported any change in price on April 15, 1912, as compared with April 15, 1911. Seven companies supplying manufactured gas reduced prices and 1 company supplying natural gas increased prices, as follows:

Boston, Mass.:

Company C, reduced price from \$0.90 to \$0.85.

Washington, D. C.:

Company B, reduced price from \$1.00 to \$0.85.

Chicago, Ill, price reduced from \$0.85 to \$0.80.

Detroit, Mich.:

Company A, reduced price from \$0.80 to \$0.75.

Milwaukee, Wis., price reduced from \$0.80 to \$0.75.

New Orleans, La., price reduced from \$1.15 to \$1.10.

Denver, Colo., price reduced from \$0.90 to \$0.85.

Kansas City, Mo., natural-gas price increased from \$0.25 to \$0.27.

The net price per thousand cubic feet charged on April 15, 1911, and on April 15, 1912, by each of the companies reporting, is shown in the table which follows:

NET PRICE PER THOUSAND CUBIC FEET OF GAS, FOR HOUSEHOLD USE, ON APRIL 15, 1911, AND ON APRIL 15, 1912, BY CITIES AND BY COMPANIES.

MANUFACTURED GAS.

City and company.	Price per 1,000 cubic feet.		City and company.	Price per 1,000 cubic feet.	
	Apr. 15, 1911.	Apr. 15, 1912.		Apr. 15, 1911.	Apr. 15, 1912.
NORTH ATLANTIC DIVISION.			NORTH ATLANTIC DIV.—CON.		
Boston, Mass.:			Philadelphia, Pa.:		
Company A.....	\$0.80	\$0.80	Company A.....	\$1.00	\$1.00
Company B.....	.85	.85	Company B.....	1.00	1.00
Company C.....	.90	.85	Pittsburgh, Pa.:		
Buffalo, N. Y.....	1.00	1.00	Company A <sup>1</sup> .....	1.00	1.00
Fall River, Mass.....	.80	.80	Company B.....	1.00	1.00
Manchester, N. H.....	1.10	1.10	Providence, R. I.....	.90	.90
Newark, N. J.....	1.00	1.00	Scranton, Pa.:		
New Haven, Conn.....	.95	.95	Company A.....	.95	.95
New York, N. Y.:			Company B.....	1.20	1.20
Company A.....	.80	.80	SOUTH ATLANTIC DIVISION.		
Company B.....	.80	.80	Atlanta, Ga.....	1.00	1.00
Company C.....	1.00	1.00	Baltimore, Md.....	.90	.90
Company D.....	1.00	1.00	Charleston, S. C.....	1.20	1.20
Company E.....	.80	.80	Jacksonville, Fla.....	1.25	1.25
Company F.....	.80	.80	Richmond, Va.....	.90	.90
Company G.....	.80	.80	Washington, D. C.:		
Company H.....	.80	.80	Company A.....	.85	.85
Company I.....	.80	.80	Company B.....	1.00	.85
Company J.....	.80	.80			

<sup>1</sup> For lighting purposes only.

NET PRICE PER THOUSAND CUBIC FEET OF GAS, FOR HOUSEHOLD USE, ON APRIL 15, 1911, AND ON APRIL 15, 1912, BY CITIES AND BY COMPANIES—Concluded.

**MANUFACTURED GAS—Concluded.**

City and company.	Price per 1,000 cubic feet.		City and company.	Price per 1,000 cubic feet.	
	Apr. 15, 1911.	Apr. 15, 1912.		Apr. 15, 1911.	Apr. 15, 1912.
NORTH CENTRAL DIVISION.			SOUTH CENTRAL DIVISION.		
Chicago, Ill. ....	\$0.85	\$0.80	Birmingham, Ala. ....	\$1.00	\$1.00
Cleveland, Ohio. ....	.80	.80	Little Rock, Ark. ....	1.25	( <sup>1</sup> )
Detroit, Mich.:			Louisville, Ky. <sup>2</sup> .....	1.00	1.00
Company A. ....	.80	.75	Memphis, Tenn. ....	1.00	1.00
Company B. ....	.80	.80	New Orleans, La. ....	1.15	1.10
Indianapolis, Ind.:			WESTERN DIVISION.		
Company A. ....	.60	.60	Denver, Colo. ....	.90	.85
Company B. ....	.60	.60	Los Angeles, Cal.:		
Milwaukee, Wis. ....	.80	.75	Company A. ....	.80	.80
Minneapolis, Minn. ....	.85	.85	Company B. ....	.75	.75
Omaha, Nebr. ....	1.15	1.15	Portland, Oreg. ....	.95	.95
St. Louis, Mo. ....	.80	.80	Salt Lake City, Utah <sup>3</sup> .....	1.30	1.30
			San Francisco, Cal. ....	4.92 <sup>4</sup>	4.92 <sup>4</sup>
			Seattle, Wash. ....	1.00	1.00

<sup>1</sup> Natural gas distributed after July, 1911.

<sup>2</sup> Price 75 cents for cooking and heating purposes.

<sup>3</sup> Price 90 cents for cooking and heating purposes.

<sup>4</sup> Gross rate.

**NATURAL GAS.**

City and company.	Price per 1,000 cubic feet.		City and company.	Price per 1,000 cubic feet.	
	Apr. 15, 1911.	Apr. 15, 1912.		Apr. 15, 1911.	Apr. 15, 1912.
NORTH ATLANTIC DIVISION.			Pittsburgh, Pa.—Concluded.		
Buffalo, N. Y. <sup>1</sup> .....	\$0.30	\$0.30	Company G. ....	\$0.27 <sup>1</sup>	\$0.27 <sup>1</sup>
Pittsburgh, Pa.:			NORTH CENTRAL DIVISION.		
Company C. <sup>1</sup> .....	.27 <sup>1</sup>	.27 <sup>1</sup>	Cincinnati, Ohio. ....	.30	.30
Company D. ....	.27 <sup>1</sup>	.27 <sup>1</sup>	Cleveland, Ohio <sup>1</sup> .....	.30	.30
Company E. ....	.27 <sup>1</sup>	.27 <sup>1</sup>	Kansas City, Mo. ....	.25	.27
Company F. <sup>1</sup> .....	.27 <sup>1</sup>	.27 <sup>1</sup>			

<sup>1</sup> For cooking and heating purposes only.

**MANUFACTURED AND NATURAL GAS, MIXED.**

City.	Price per 1,000 cubic feet.	
	Apr. 15, 1911.	Apr. 15, 1912.
SOUTH CENTRAL DIVISION.		
Louisville, Ky. <sup>1</sup> .....	\$0.65	\$0.65

<sup>1</sup> For cooking and heating purposes only.

## EXPLANATION OF SCOPE AND METHOD.

This report presents for each of 39 of the most important industrial cities in the various sections of the United States the retail prices of the principal articles of food, the weight of the principal brands of wheat bread, the retail prices of anthracite and bituminous coal, and the net price of gas for household use.

The cities included are important industrial cities representing 32 States. In a general way the cities selected were those having the largest population in the section of the country in which located, but in addition two smaller cities were included—Fall River, which is a textile center in Massachusetts, and Scranton, which is situated in the anthracite-coal section of Pennsylvania. Within the 39 cities live one-fifth of the total number of people, two-fifths of the urban population, and approximately one-third of the total number engaged in gainful occupations (not including those in agricultural pursuits) in continental United States.

The cities included and the number of firms or companies in each city furnishing information for this report are as follows:

NUMBER OF FIRMS OR COMPANIES FURNISHING INFORMATION, BY CITIES.

City.	Number of retail merchants reporting prices of principal articles of food.	Number of bakeries reporting weight of principal brands of wheat bread.	Number of coal dealers reporting prices of coal for household use.	Number of gas companies reporting prices of gas for household use.	City.	Number of retail merchants reporting prices of principal articles of food.	Number of bakeries reporting weight of principal brands of wheat bread.	Number of coal dealers reporting prices of coal for household use.	Number of gas companies reporting prices of gas for household use.
Atlanta, Ga.....	16	3	.....	1	Milwaukee, Wis....	19	5	6	1
Baltimore, Md.....	21	3	4	1	Minneapolis, Minn..	16	5	7	1
Birmingham, Ala..	16	2	4	1	Newark, N. J.....	14	2	7	1
Boston, Mass.....	16	3	8	3	New Haven, Conn....	11	3	7	1
Buffalo, N. Y.....	20	3	2	2	New Orleans, La....	23	4	4	1
Charleston, S. C....	21	2	.....	1	New York, N. Y....	37	9	9	9
Chicago, Ill.....	24	4	3	1	Omaha, Nebr.....	13	(1)	5	1
Cincinnati, Ohio....	20	5	6	1	Philadelphia, Pa....	25	2	10	2
Cleveland, Ohio....	19	6	6	1	Pittsburgh, Pa....	18	3	5	7
Dallas, Tex.....	13	4	4	.....	Portland, Ore.....	19	5	.....	1
Denver, Colo.....	13	3	5	1	Providence, R. I....	13	3	3	1
Detroit, Mich.....	17	5	5	2	Richmond, Va.....	17	4	4	1
Fall River, Mass....	17	2	3	1	St. Louis, Mo.....	12	3	4	1
Indianapolis, Ind....	13	3	6	2	Salt Lake City, Utah	15	4	4	1
Jacksonville, Fla..	14	5	2	1	San Francisco, Cal..	24	3	5	1
Kansas City, Mo....	15	4	4	1	Scranton, Pa.....	18	4	.....	1
Little Rock, Ark....	16	4	1	1	Seattle, Wash.....	17	4	2	1
Los Angeles, Cal....	17	5	2	2	Washington, D. C..	13	3	9	2
Louisville, Ky.....	13	3	5	2					
Manchester, N. H....	12	4	2	1	Total.....	675	142	168	61
Memphis, Tenn.....	17	3	5	1					

<sup>1</sup> Weight of bread fixed by city ordinance.

## FOOD.

The present report gives retail prices of the principal articles of food in 39 industrial cities in the United States for the 15th of January, February, March, April, May, and June, 1912, and for comparative purposes the prices on the corresponding dates of 1911. Summaries are also presented covering the 22½ years from 1890 to June, 1912, inclusive. Previous investigations of retail prices have been made and published by the Bureau of Labor, as follows: Eighteenth Annual Report, covering 1890 to 1903; Bulletin No. 59, covering 1904; Bulletin No. 65, covering 1905; Bulletin No. 71, covering 1906; Bulletin No. 77, covering 1907; Bulletin No. 105, covering 1907 to 1911.

The retail dealers who kindly furnished information for this report were selected through personal visits of agents of the Bureau of Labor, and are those selling largely to the families of American, English, Irish, German, and Scandinavian wage earners. A comparatively few "down-town" stores are included, but the neighborhood stores predominate. So-called "cut-rate" stores are not included. "Chain stores" (a number of stores in one city owned or controlled by one firm) are not included except in a very few cities where such stores are so numerous that they form a very important factor in the city's trade. The stores selected, with a very few exceptions, deliver all purchases when requested.

After the agent of the Bureau had selected a store arrangements were made for the retail merchant to send to the Bureau a statement of prices of the various commodities on or about the 15th of each succeeding month. Return visits to the various firms are made by agents of the Bureau whenever inquiries concerning the monthly price quotations make this necessary.

The grade of articles quoted is that sold in each city in stores patronized largely by families of American, English, Irish, German, and Scandinavian wage earners.

The Bureau has not attempted to quote prices for an article of identical grade throughout the 39 cities. For almost every article this would be absolutely impossible, as the grade varies not only from city to city, but also from firm to firm within the same city, and the grade even varies to some extent from month to month within the same store. Stores which vary in a marked degree from day to day or month to month the grade of articles handled have not been included, but in every store there is necessarily some variation in grade.

Brief descriptions of each of the articles and necessary explanations concerning each were presented in the report printed in Bulletin 105 (pp. 39 to 45), of the Bureau of Labor. A few additions to those descriptions and explanations are necessary in this report.

*Chuck roast.*

Chuck roast has been added to the list of articles. This is a cut of beef from the forequarter, which includes five ribs and part of the shoulder blade and extends from the neck to the point where the "chuck" is separated from the "ribs." The prices quoted are for the best cut, which is next to the butt end of the "ribs." No relative prices have been computed for chuck roast.

*Wheat flour.*

The name of the brand quoted has been entered in connection with the price. Where a merchant has quoted a brand which carries his firm name, the flour has been entered as "special brand," in order not to disclose the identity of firms who are furnishing information to the Bureau.

*Storage eggs.*

Prices are quoted for storage eggs for the months of January and February. Some few firms continued to quote "storage" eggs for the spring months, but those quotations have not been entered, as it appeared that in some cases, at least, the article quoted as "storage" during the spring months was eggs "iced in transit," and not eggs that had been in storage. No relative prices have been computed for storage eggs.

*Milk.*

In connection with the price quotations, this report indicates whether the milk is sold "raw" or "pasteurized."

**BREAD WEIGHTS.**

The weights of wheat bread, tabulated separately by cities, firms, and brands, for January to June, 1912, are the weights at which the respective breads were scaled on the 15th of each of the indicated months, and, where available, corresponding information for the same months of 1911 is shown for comparison. This scaling weight is the weight of the loaf before baking. While it would be highly desirable to present the weight of the loaf as actually purchased by the consumer, the complications involved in the relation of the scaled weight to the weight of the bread when it passes over the retailer's counter were found to be such that it was impossible to do so. The loss of weight in baking varies with the formula, with the style of loaf, and with the temperature of the oven. A further element of uncertainty affecting weights enters before the consumer actually gets the loaf. The weight, of course, varies with the time intervening between the removal of the loaf from the oven and its final distribution to the

consumer, the loss by evaporation also being partly determined by the conditions under which the bread is kept and by the state of the atmosphere.

The customary loss in baking is variously estimated by bakers, but it may be said that a loaf scaled at 18 ounces will, when cold, if handled under ordinary conditions, weigh not far from 16 ounces, and a loaf scaled at 16 ounces will, when baked and cooled, weigh about 14½ ounces. As noted above, however, the range of loss varies widely.

From Table II, in Part II of this Bulletin, for each city, all fancy, special, graham, rye, and restaurant breads are excluded. All wrapped and so-called "French" breads are so designated.

In the use of these tables it must be borne clearly in mind that weight is only one factor entering into the bread question as an element in the study of prices. The quality of materials used varies widely and is likely to be reflected in the weight at which the loaf is scaled.

It is hoped that at some future time it may be possible to present baked weights as well as scaled weights; but, as already explained in the present report, this was impracticable. The scaled weight tabulated is an accurate statement of the average weight of the loaves of each brand on the specified date.

The most representative bakeries in every city included in this report have promptly furnished to the Bureau of Labor information concerning bread weights on the 15th of each month.

#### COAL.

This report gives prices of coal, for household use, on the 15th of January and April, 1912, and for comparative purposes prices are also entered for the corresponding dates in 1911. The prices shown are those quoted by the retail trade for household use. The table of prices shows Pennsylvania anthracite white ash coal, both in stove size and in chestnut size; bituminous coal, of several kinds; and in a few cities other varieties, such as Colorado, Welsh, and Australian coals. Prices are quoted for sales "in ton lots," "in half-ton lots," and "in lots of less than one-fourth ton." The prices were quoted by coal dealers, who kindly supplied the information at the request of the Bureau of Labor. In some cities practically all sales for household use were of anthracite coal, and in other cities of bituminous coal. The coal dealers in each city were asked to quote prices on the kind of bituminous coal usually sold for household use. The prices quoted are for coal delivered to customers, but do not include charges for storing in cellar or coal bin except when noted.

## GAS.

This report gives prices of gas, for household use, on the 15th of April, 1912, and for purposes of comparison the price on the corresponding date in 1911 has been entered. The prices quoted are the net rates charged for gas for household use as distinguished from use by manufacturing plants and industrial establishments. The prices are the same for gas for illuminating, cooking, and heating purposes, except as noted in the table. Prices are in most cases for manufactured gas, but natural gas has also been quoted where that is in general use. The data were furnished by the gas companies, who kindly responded to the Bureau's request for this information.

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Part II of this report includes five general tables, as follows:

*Table I.*—Retail prices of the principal articles of food on the 15th of each month, January to June, 1911, and January to June, 1912, by cities and by firms.

*Table II.*—Bread weights: Scaling weight (weight of dough before baking), in ounces, of the principal brands of wheat bread on the 15th of each month, January to June, 1911, and January to June, 1912, by cities and by firms and brands.

*Table III.*—Per cent of increase or decrease in retail prices of the principal articles of food: Price on the 15th of January, February, March, April, May, and June, 1912, compared with price on the corresponding dates in 1911, by cities and by articles.

*Table IV.*—Relative retail prices of the principal articles of food, January, 1911, to June, 1912, by geographical divisions.

*Table V.*—Retail prices of coal, for household use, on the 15th of each month, January and April, 1911, and January and April, 1912, by cities and by firms.