

## 40.—NOTES ON THE USE OF SQUID FOR FOOD IN THE UNITED STATES.

By J. W. COLLINS.

Much change is being brought about in the American markets in the matter of the utilization of marine products for food, and apparently this is, in a measure, due to the aggregation of people of foreign birth in the more important coast cities. The most remarkable innovation in the direction of the utilization of sea products for food which has recently come to my knowledge, is that of the demand for squid (chiefly *Loligo pealei*) for food in New York markets, where this species is sought and apparently highly appreciated by the Italians, of whom there are large numbers residing in New York City.

Mr. E. G. Blackford states that the demand for squid has been constantly increasing for the past four years, and this branch of the trade is becoming a profitable one. "The entire consumption," he says, "appears to be by the Italians. I have known of as much as 4,000 pounds being received from Long Island and sold in one day. The demand is steady, and if the squid are in good order they are readily sold at from 3 to 6 cents per pound. When properly cooked the squid is a most excellent dish."

Mr. Blackford thinks that the influence of the Ichthyophagous Club of New York has had much to do with the introduction of squid for food, and says that about three or four years ago the club first ventured to cook and serve squid at one of their annual dinners. It is a well-known fact, however, that squid are highly valued for food in Oriental countries, and that an important fishery for them is carried on in China. It is also probable that the Italians, who are the consumers of this product in New York, learned to eat squid in their native country, before emigrating to America.

Mr. Atkins Hughes, of North Truro, Mass., who is engaged in the trap fishery at that place, makes the following statement in regard to the demand for squid:

"When in New York the past three or four years I was told that the Italians used squid for food, but that the quantity was small and the price low. Very little encouragement was given me to ship until the past season (1887), when a fish dealer in the Fulton Market said to me, about October 1: 'If you can ship me a few barrels of squid occasionally I think I can sell them at a low price.' The squid season was nearly over then, but in looking over my books I find that we shipped to dealers in New York about 50 barrels in 1887, which sold from 2 to 5 cents per pound, netting about \$3 per barrel."

Under date of December 2, 1887, he says: "The squid season is about over. Some days we have a few bushels in our weirs, but they have

become such an article of food among the Italians of New York that we can obtain better prices by shipping them there, than by selling them for bait."

From the foregoing, it would appear that with the increase of population in this country and with a better knowledge of the food value of certain species of marine animals which have heretofore not come into general use, it is supposable that the food supply from our ocean fisheries can be very considerably increased. Some species of fish that are held in the highest esteem in Europe, and which occur in the greatest abundance off our coasts, are seldom or never eaten by Americans, and there is practically no demand for them in our markets. Perhaps the most noted of these is the Skate (*Raia*), while many species of the flat-fishes—flounders, dabs, etc.—are so little prized that their capture is a matter of minor commercial consequence.

WASHINGTON, D. C., April 20, 1888.

---

**41.—NOTE ON THE OCCURRENCE OF MACKEREL OFF THE COAST OF FLORIDA.**

**By J. W. COLLINS.**

Capt. John W. Emmons, master of the schooner *Belle of the Bay*, of New London, Conn., recently arrived in New York from a winter's fishing cruise for Red Snappers on the grounds off of Cape Canaveral, Florida. He fished in that region from December 12, 1887, to April 14, 1888. In a conversation which I had with him three days ago, he stated that during January of the present year he saw several schools of mackerel in the vicinity of Cape Canaveral, but chiefly about 15 to 25 miles southeast from the cape, and that as many as one hundred specimens of the fish were caught by his crew on the fishing gear used for the capture of Red Snappers. These mackerel were from 12 to 15 inches in length. The captain is confident that they were all of the common species, *Scomber scombrus*.

Although he frequently saw schools of mackerel, he is of the opinion that purse-seines could not be used because of the abundance of sharks, which would tear the nets to pieces.

WASHINGTON, April 25, 1888.