

in the St. Lawrence Market, this city, for more than twenty years. He compromised with creditors at 30 cents on the dollar a dozen years ago. He is the owner of some good real estate, but unfortunately it is pretty heavily encumbered. The general hard times has affected his business materially, and the result has been an assignment.—Geo. Hall, a baker, has been doing business in Toronto since 1875. A month ago he made a statement showing he was worth between \$15,000 and \$20,000, but strange to say, he has just made an assignment.

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## HIDES AND SKINS.

You have seen steamers in a fog on the great lakes, with bearings lost; the captain knows not in which direction lies port or open water. Tanners are in a similar position to-day. The thick clouds of uncertainty have settled on the market, and all are equally in vain groping in the dark to make out the future. As in seamanship, there is under such circumstances a test of skill. Different firms are adopting different policies, just as the captains try varied expedients to make port. Some manufacturers have stopped tanning altogether; others have curtailed production in part, while a very few are keeping their vats well filled with hides at current quotations.

On Monday of this week, at a meeting of Toronto hide merchants, it was decided to reduce the prices paid butchers 50 cents per cwt. On Wednesday a report was received from Chicago announcing that the market there had become demoralized, and, in consequence, another drop of 50 cents took effect on the local street. It now appears that the report from Chicago was exaggerated, and came through a source from which bear influences have persistently emanated these last several weeks. Butchers now receive four, five and six cents for their offerings. The last sales of No. 1 cured, of which we have definite knowledge, were made at 7½c., but it is said that hides are now being offered at 7c. One would naturally think that at these prices hides would be good property for some weeks yet. But there is apparently no reason in market conditions to-day. Those who are usually best posted as to the market's future, frankly confess they are at sea now.

During October, 1894, dealers paid 50 cents for sheepskins. All through the month just closed 70 cents has been paid for sheepskins. The wool market is undoubtedly in a position to warrant better prices this year than last; but the improvement has not been so marked as to lead to so great a difference in the values of sheepskins at the two dates. At present prices pullers are losing money. A test was made this week, when it was found that 250 skins, when pulled, realized \$248, while the cost of the skins and expenses of pulling amounted to \$263, leaving a loss of \$15, where a profit should have resulted. The usual advance in sheepskins of five cents will not make this week.

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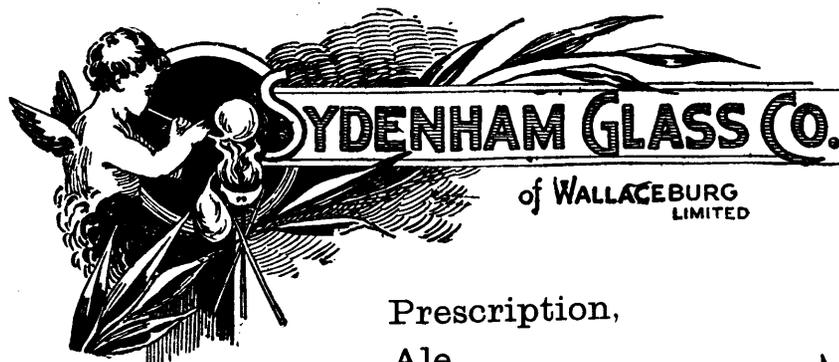
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