

LEATHER AND ITS MANUFACTURES.

The Customs returns of the past three years supply the figures in the following Table:—

Values of Imported Leather, &c.

DESCRIPTION.	1863.	1862.	1861.
	\$	\$	\$
Leather.....	139,924	146,730	159,743
" Manufactures.....	56,192	52,458	50,254
Dressed Skins.....	2,638	1,747	3,688
Boots and Shoes.....	22,124	19,375	46,348
Saddlery.....	2,367	4,258	4,868

Relative to Spanish Sole,—a staple in the Leather Trade,—it may be stated, for the sake of comparison, that 1862 opened with a very small stock in market; prices, therefore, advanced rapidly until March, when the quotation was 29c. per lb. From May until August, rates declined to 23½c. to 24c.; advancing again gradually, until 27c. was reached at close of December. The demand had been tolerably steady throughout the year, and about equal to the supply;—those tanners who were able to lay in stocks of the raw material on the best terms, and who were well skilled in manufacturing, having found their business remunerative.

In January, 1863, prices were fully maintained; but a decline commenced in February, when the price of best quality was 22c.,—(or 1½c. @ 2c. under lowest rate of 1862,)—in the three following months, 23c. was steadily maintained; but 22c. was again the price in December,—the year closing with a considerable stock in market.

There has been increased production in 1863 throughout the Province; but the business has only been remunerative to the Tanners who had capital and superior facilities for carrying on operations. The manufacture of various kinds of curried leather, in small tanneries scattered over Canada, can scarcely be said to have been prosperous during the past two years,—prices of finished stock being too low, as compared with the cost of green hides. The manufacture of Patent Leather is said to have been profitable.

The importation of leather from the United States to this city during the past year or two, has been comparatively small. The quantity required for consumption may be estimated, by looking at the productive capacity of the Boot and Shoe manufactories,—noticed on next page.

The quantities of Sole Leather inspected during 1863 and 1862 were:—

	1863	1862
Sides of No. 1	100,040	75,343
" No. 2	30,726	23,042
" No. 3	4,540	2,981
TOTAL.....	135,306	102,266

Several shipments of Buffalo-leather have been made to England, which are understood to have resulted favorably. Upper-leather has also been sent from this city to purchasers in the States. The quantity shipped to the West Indies in 1863 was valued at \$18,785,—the whole quantity exported that year amounting in value to \$62,018.

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