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Mercantile Summary.

—The Omaha *Bee* tells of a clergyman who was catechizing a Sunday school, and, after informing the children that the pastor of a church is its shepherd, while the members are the sheep, he asked: "What does the shepherd do for the sheep?" To the amusement of those present a small boy in the front row piped out, "Shear thm!"

APPARENTLY Henry Westcott, formerly a hardware merchant at Beaverton, has had some old claims hanging over him since he disposed of his business in April, 1896, for he now assigns. — In the autumn of last year Alfred Christian began business as a grocer in London East. Previous to this he had been a clerk and saved some ready cash which he invested in the business. Now this is all gone and an assignment is made.

THE firm of McKenzie & Campbell, general storekeepers at Kirkfield, who assigned two weeks ago, are now offering creditors 40 per cent. of their claims, and it will probably be accepted. — John Jesse, grocer in Hamilton, has assigned. — At a meeting of creditors of Hampton & Co., general dealers, Mount Forest, their statement showed assets of \$14,000 and liabilities \$13,000. An offer is made to creditors by a local banker for the assets, and if accepted it is thought 60 per cent. of the claims will be paid.

THE firm of Cline, Mavor & Keith, marble dealers, Hamilton, dissolved partnership on the 7th inst, the latter two purchasing the former's interest. At the time of the dissolution they owed \$2,500, and had an unavailable surplus of \$1,200. They were granted an extension of time to pay past due wages and some other liabilities. Being unable to carry out this arrangement, an assignment followed. —

J. F. Aitkin went to Watford from Waterford last June, and purchased the grocery stock of R. Hasket, amounting to \$1,500. Having little knowledge of the business, and meeting strong competition, the result of his operations cannot be surprising; it is an assignment.

TOBACCO GROWING.

The prospects of tobacco culture are engaging the attention of Western Ontario farmers and merchants. Louis Wigle, Esq., of Leamington, was recently invited to lecture in Ridgeway on tobacco culture. The lecture was a great success. Many attended. Mr. Wigle went into details of sowing, growing, gathering and curing the weed, and exhibited the necessary apparatus in the way of racks, etc., to those present. He also distributed samples of seed so that many in the community will this coming year take up tobacco culture either as a means of revenue or by way of experiment. And, as Mr. Wigle explained, there is money in it. An acre of good ground will produce from 1,200 to 2,200 pounds of leaf, and this leaf will yield from 10 to 15 cents per pound, according to quality. A fair return to the acre Mr. Wigle estimated at \$200 to \$225. And yet with such a return in view our farmers will continue to ignore tobacco culture at \$200 per acre and raise wheat or peas. So long as the Government taxes tobacco at the present rates, the industry should be profitable.

—"Do you know your orders, sentinel?" was asked of a not overbright Irish soldier on guard duty recently at Fort Logan, Col. "Yis, sor," was the reply. "Know the points of the compass?" continued the officer. "Yis, sor." "If you face the rising sun, your left hand would be on the north of you and your right hand to the south of you. What would be behind you?" "Me knapsack, sor," sentimentously answered the soldier.—N.Y. *Tribune*.

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