

COAL PRICES.

(Continued from page 670)

ment given, according to the Free Press is, that the duty would keep out Pennsylvania coal, and thereby enable the home miners to operate on a much larger scale, under which conditions they would be able to reduce prices.

The Commercial is not quite sure that this would be the result. A year ago coal was selling in Winnipeg at about \$3.50 per ton, to consumers. Pennsylvania anthracite and our own western anthracite were selling at the same price. Last summer the price of coal was advanced in Pennsylvania to such an extent that the local dealers were obliged to put the price up to \$10 per ton in Winnipeg. Now, here was a chance for our home miner to keep his price down and increase his output. But he did not do anything of the kind. He simply took advantage of the increased cost of the imported coal to add \$1 per ton to the price of the home commodity. If the cost of Pennsylvania coal were further increased by a duty upon the article, could we expect our western producers to drop prices back to below what they were during the winter of 1895-96? "Not much." More likely they would take advantage of the increased cost of the imported article to give the screw another turn against the consumer.

EARLY CLOSING OF STORES.

It is to be hoped there will be no retrograde legislation affecting the law governing the early closing of stores. A great deal has been accomplished in Winnipeg, in the interest of early closing, but there is still much room for progress in the same direction, and it is hoped that further progress will be made, rather than that there should be a move backward. What has been already accomplished has proved of great benefit to hundreds of persons, including business men and their employees in the city of Winnipeg.

The present danger appears to be, as The Commercial mentioned last week, that the opening of auction rooms will cause the merchants to withdraw from the present early closing arrangement, and thus there would soon be a retrograde movement back to the old system of late business hours. If merchants are compelled to close at a given hour, it certainly seems unfair that auction rooms should be allowed to open up after the stores are closed, for the purpose of selling ordinary store merchandise. If this is to be allowed under the law, it will no doubt speedily lead to the breaking up of the early closing arrangements as now in force. Such a result could not be regarded otherwise than as a moral calamity to the entire community.

The regular auctioneers who are engaged in selling household furniture, etc., should not be affected by this law. Those who would sell ordinary store merchandise after the stores were closed, would be the Cheap John class of traders, who are, to put it mildly, of very little benefit to the community. They generally have a lot of shoddy rubbish to dispose of, which they often manage to sell at far in advance of actual values.

It is greatly to be hoped that nothing will be done to weaken the law. After the hard fight which has been waged for years to secure what has been accomplished, it would be most discouraging to have all this good work destroyed now.

BAD NUMBERING

The numbering of the buildings in Winnipeg is exceedingly bad. It is some years since the numbering was done, and many houses are not now numbered at all. Many of the old numbers have been defaced, covered up or removed. Where the numbers remain on the buildings, it would take a search warrant to find them. The figures are small and of a dull lead color, which renders them almost indiscernible on most of the buildings. This bad condition of the numbering of the buildings is a great nuisance to citizens, who have frequently to attend calls at the door, sometimes at a very inconvenient hour in the night, only to discover that some one is hunting for a certain number, and the only way it can be found, is to repeatedly ring up people along the street. It is time the numbering was revised, and the present useless numbers replaced by something which could be more easily observed.

Winnipeg Wheat Inspection.

The following shows the number of cars of wheat inspected at *Winnipeg for the weeks ended on the dates named, compared with the number of cars inspected for the corresponding weeks a year ago, as reported by Inspector Horn to the Board of Trade:

Grade.	Feb. 13.	Feb. 20.	Feb. 27.	Mar. 6.	Mar. 13.
Extra Man. H'd	0	0	0	0	0
No. 1 hard.....	74	52	49	19	49
No. 2 hard.....	22	3	7	8	13
No. 3 hard.....	11	7	7	7	4
No. 1 North'n.	0	0	0	1	0
No. 2 Nor h'n.	0	0	0	0	0
No. 3 North'n.	0	0	0	0	0
No. 1 white type	0	0	1	0	0
No. 2 white type	0	0	0	0	0
No. 1 Spring...	0	0	1	0	1
No. 2 Spring...	0	0	0	0	0
No. 1 frosted...	1	4	2	6	3
No. 2 frosted...	2	2	5	2	0
No. 3 Frosted...	0	0	0	1	2
No. 1 Rejected.	10	1	1	0	2
No. 2 Rejected.	2	0	0	0	1
No Grade.....	0	1	0	1	1
Feed.....	0	0	0	0	0
Total for week.	122	75	77	45	76
Same week last year.....	227	352	383	358	354

*Wheat inspection at Emerson going on via the Northern Pacific to Duluth, included in Winnipeg returns. A considerable portion of the wheat moving is inspected at Fort William, and does not show in these figures.

Wheat Stocks.

The visible supply of wheat in the United States and Canada, east of the Rocky Mountains, for the week ended March 13, 1897, shows a decrease of 1,819,000 bushels, against a decrease of 473,000 for the corresponding week last year, a decrease of 814,000 bushels the corresponding week two years ago, and a decrease of 1,248,000 bushels three years ago.

The following shows the visible supply by weeks, for four years; the second table shows the visible supply at the end of each week in the current year, compared with the three previous years;

	1896.	1895.	1894.	1893.
Jan. 4..	69,842,000	87,896,000	79,957,000	81,756,000
" 11..	68,948,000	86,616,000	80,431,000	81,000,000
" 18..	67,853,000	85,280,000	80,387,000	81,217,000
" 25..	67,853,000	84,665,000	80,204,000	81,451,000
Feb. 1..	66,734,000	83,876,000	79,891,000	81,399,000
" 8..	65,719,000	82,322,000	79,669,000	80,913,000
" 15..	65,020,000	80,733,000	78,600,000	80,547,000
" 22..	65,011,000	79,476,000	77,957,000	79,458,000
March 1..	64,080,000	78,701,000	76,589,000	78,653,000
" 7..	62,690,000	77,717,000	74,607,000	77,163,000
" 14..	62,123,000	76,873,000	73,300,000	76,690,000
" 21..	61,318,000	76,773,000	72,167,000	75,308,000
" 28..	61,018,000	74,808,000	71,480,000	73,614,000
April 4..	60,322,000	72,703,000	70,702,000	72,231,000
" 11..	59,330,000	70,457,000	69,217,000	70,000,000
" 18..	58,430,000	68,010,000	68,425,000	71,587,000
" 25..	57,910,000	66,770,000	66,893,000	73,077,000
May 2..	55,619,000	62,100,000	65,150,000	70,000,000
" 9..	54,000,000	59,623,000	63,310,000	72,613,000
" 16..	53,110,000	58,484,000	62,044,000	71,552,000
" 23..	51,208,000	54,214,000	61,324,000	70,150,000
" 30..	50,340,000	52,289,000	59,391,000	70,367,000
June 6..	50,147,000	49,739,000	58,311,000	69,629,000
" 13..	49,450,000	47,787,000	57,103,000	68,371,000
" 20..	49,819,000	46,255,000	55,832,000	68,068,000
" 27..	47,830,000	44,661,000	54,657,000	68,318,000
July 4..	47,109,000	43,359,000	54,114,000	61,318,000
" 11..	46,720,000	41,427,000	53,154,000	60,323,000
" 18..	46,743,000	40,435,000	53,771,000	58,900,000
" 25..	47,142,000	39,229,000	52,144,000	59,344,000
Aug. 1..	46,734,000	38,637,000	50,601,000	59,140,000
" 8..	46,429,000	37,835,000	50,231,000	58,862,000
" 15..	45,870,000	36,825,000	50,000,000	57,420,000
" 22..	45,150,000	35,038,000	49,771,000	57,248,000
" 29..	45,574,000	36,438,000	49,913,000	56,310,000
Sept. 5..	46,403,000	36,764,000	49,163,000	56,110,000
" 12..	47,002,000	38,092,000	49,214,000	57,331,000
" 19..	46,055,000	39,055,000	50,189,000	58,020,000
" 26..	48,716,000	40,768,000	51,413,000	60,220,000
Oct. 3..	50,116,000	41,482,000	53,014,000	63,273,000
" 10..	54,804,000	44,100,000	55,077,000	65,220,000
" 17..	54,238,000	44,100,000	56,659,000	66,371,000
" 24..	55,000,000	50,480,000	58,190,000	69,337,000
" 31..	58,650,000	52,000,000	60,027,000	71,344,000
Nov. 7..	60,023,000	50,950,000	61,229,000	74,081,000
" 14..	60,000,000	50,330,000	62,282,000	76,733,000
" 21..	59,071,000	62,221,000	63,914,000	77,230,000
" 28..	58,014,000	63,903,000	65,152,000	77,091,000
Dec. 5..	56,312,000	63,760,000	65,978,000	77,767,000
" 12..	56,281,000	60,834,000	68,172,000	80,121,000
" 19..	55,163,000	60,393,000	69,071,000	82,011,000
" 26..	54,433,000	60,958,000	69,561,000	80,221,000

	1897.	1896.	1895.	1894.
Jan. 2..	54,651,000	60,812,000	87,848,000	79,313,000
" 9..	53,872,000	63,915,000	80,615,000	80,412,000
" 16..	52,469,000	67,958,000	83,539,000	80,321,000
" 23..	51,203,000	67,023,000	84,065,000	80,204,000
" 30..	49,691,000	66,734,000	83,376,000	79,891,000
Feb. 6..	47,835,000	66,110,000	82,322,000	79,669,000
" 13..	46,653,000	65,930,000	80,733,000	78,600,000
" 20..	45,915,000	65,011,000	79,476,000	77,957,000
" 27..	43,707,000	64,599,000	78,701,000	76,589,000
March 6..	42,708,000	62,690,000	77,717,000	75,701,000
" 13..	41,449,000	62,123,000	76,873,000	74,808,000

Bradstreet's report of stocks of wheat in Canada on March 6, is as follows:

	Bushels.
Montreal.....	459,000
Toronto.....	200,000
Kingston.....	13,000
Winnipeg.....	235,000
Manitoba, interior elevators	2,412,000
Fort William, Port Arthur & Keewatin.....	3,153,000

Total stocks in the United States and Canada as reported by Bradstreet's was follows, on March 6, 1897:

	Bushels.
East of the Mountains.....	60,419,000
Pacific Coast.....	1,537,000
Total stocks a year ago were:	bushels
East of the Mountains.....	92,653,000
Pacific Coast.....	4,296,000

Bradstreet's report for the week ended March 18, shows a decrease of 1,213,000 bushels of wheat east of the mountains, making the total 59,206,000 bushels on the date.

Worlds stocks of wheat on March 18, 1897, (United States, Canada, in Europe, and for Europe) were 119,121,000 bushels compared with 154,042,000 bushels on March 1, 1896; 170,659,000 on March 1, 1891; 181,116,000 on March 1, 1893; 188,000 on March 1, 1893; 145,615,000 on March 1, 1892; 99,523,000 on March 1, 1891; 95,811,000 on March 1, 1890; 109,724,000 on March 1, 1889.