

High Price of Wood—Wood Lands of Monroe County.

The scarcity of wood during the fall, and the continued high price through the winter, has caused considerable discussion as to the ability of the surrounding country to supply the growing consumption of the city. Many are of the opinion that within five years, coal yards, to furnish private houses, will be as plenty as wood yards are at present. Still, we think, there is abundance in this county to last us for ten to fifteen years to come; to say nothing of the large quantities that will reach us from the south, by canal. If ever the numerous plank road projects leading from the city to various sections of the county, are constructed, farmers will be induced to bring it in from a distance.

The number of acres of land taxed in this county, is 392,869. The quantity improved, according to the returns of last year, was 281,011 acres—leaving 111,858 unimproved. Deduct, say, 11,858, as barren, bog and swail, and we still have 100,000 acres of wood land left. The most of it, however, is over ten miles distant from the city. With muddy roads, it is a losing job to a farmer to bring it in, even at \$3 the cord, as a team, for four months in the year, cannot draw over half a cord. Plank roads will remedy this; one cord and a half is the usual load drawn over them by a span of horses.

The census of 1835, compared with that of 1845, plainly demonstrates the rapid decrease of our timber lands, which are constantly being transferred to the head of *improved*.

In the county of Monroe, the average for the past ten years has been near 6000 acres annually. In the county of Cayuga, 3,798 acres. Madison, 4,467. Oswego, 5,665. Oneida, 6,187.

Estimating the timbered lands in this county at 100,000 acres, with an annual decrease as rapid as the last ten years, we have but sixteen years' supply;—allowing the introduction of coal for household purposes, will keep pace with the increase of the population of the city.

This demand for fuel and mechanical purposes, effects the value of timber land, not only in this county, but neighboring ones share in the increase of value. Every acre cleared adds to the worth of the uncleared, and farmers are destined to find the wood lands the most profitable part of their farms. We will instance a case for example:—

Suppose wood land can be bought ten to fifteen miles from the city, at \$25 the acre, which will average fifty cords, standing. It can be cut for 44 cents the cord; and the expense of a team over a plank road, at 30 cents, to go and return in a day, *carrying a cord and a half in a load to market*, which can be sold at \$3 the cord.—The matter would stand thus:

C O S T.	
One hundred acres, at \$25 per acre.....	\$2,500
Interest, say, for five years.....	875
Expenses of team on road for 5000 cords, carrying 1½ cords to a load.....	1,050
Chopping 5000 cords, at 44 cents.....	2,200
Incidental expenses.....	200
Taxes for five years, estimate.....	50

Total expenses.....\$6,875

C R E D I T.	
Five thousand cords of wood, at \$3....	\$15,000
Worth of land, with timber for fencing, at \$15 per acre.....	1,500

Total credit side.....\$16,500

We assume that a farmer will always keep a span of horses, whether he draws wood or not; and we have charged nothing for their use. If he is under the necessity of keeping extra teams, we call the expense of their hay and grain, and man to drive, at \$1 the load. Then the matter would stand thus:

Cost, as above given.....	\$6,875
3330 loads of 1½ cords each, at \$1.....	3,330

\$10,205

Sale of wood and value of land, \$16,500.

If these premises be correct, a profit of \$6,395 is still shown, after paying the cost of land and all other expenses. In order to make round numbers, we will throw in \$395 more for contingencies, and it will still leave a profit of \$60 an acre.

If the land is bought within six miles of the city, even at \$50 the acre, a team could bring two loads a day, over a plank road, to market, which would leave a profit of \$40 the acre, as the expenses would be less for marketing, and the land would be more valuable than if ten to fifteen miles distant. In the meantime, the prospect is equal for an increased price for his wood.

Much of our wood now comes down the Genesee Valley Canal, from Livingston county. The remaining unimproved or wood land in that county is also rapidly diminishing. The number of acres of land taxed in that county, is 390,000. Improved, 239,000 acres. Leaving but 125,000 acres of wood land and waste—and not more than 30,000 of that within ten miles of the canal. All over that distance, the hauling would have to come in competition with that teamed ten to fifteen miles from this city, and that from Livingston has to pay boat freight besides.

On reviewing the whole, our opinion is that wood will hold, on an average, for years to come, at present prices. The exorbitant advance last fall and winter—sometimes reaching \$6 a cord—will induce many farmers to cut more than their usual quantity; while not a few have gone into it as a business for the coming season. The consequence will be, another fall, we should not be surprised at a decline—the market being overstocked. But take the next five years together, we doubt not it will average \$3 a cord.

MONROE.