

57. Not for the purpose of putting up the price?—We cannot possibly do that. I wish we could, the same as the sawmillers have done. We should only be too pleased to do it.

58. You stated that the increase in the cost of timber has gone up to the extent of £12 per room?—Roughly, I should think it would amount to that.

59. That on a seven-roomed house would amount to £84?—That is what it would be.

60. Making a total of £370? There are the outbuildings?—It all depends on the size of the house.

61. I have worked it out?—I reckon about £50 or £60 of an increase in a four- or five-roomed house compared to what it was.

62. *Mr. Field.*] Covering everything?—No, timber only.

63. *Mr. Jennings.*] Timber at that time was 3s. 9d. and 4s. per hundred: have you any idea with regard to cost of chimneys, painting, paperhanging, &c.?—There is a general rise all through.

64. But you were very clear as to the increase in cost of timber?—I have given you two or three lines I recently worked out, and there is a difference of £194 on these two lines alone.

65. *Mr. Field.*] This increase has been apparent for twenty years?—I think the greatest has been in the last ten years.

66. Can you give us an idea in regard to the last eight years?—I think the ruling rate was about 6s. 6d. and 6s. 9d. for rough timber.

67. And now what is it?—10s. 6d.

68. An increase of 4s.?—Yes.

69. How many feet of timber would be in one of those cottages you speak of?—About 16,000 ft. or 17,000 ft.

70. As much as that?—Yes.

71. *Mr. Jennings.*] 20,000 ft. for a seven-roomed house?—It all depends on the size.

72. *Mr. Field.*] And what do you say the difference would be in that class of house for 16,000 ft.?—I think between £50 and £60. I have not gone into it closely, but I should say about £60.

73. An increase of £50 or £60 in a house of that size would show an increase of considerably more than 4s. per 100 ft. in the timber. If the increase was £50 or £60 in a house of that size, it would amount to considerably more than an increase of 4s. per 100 ft.?—It is an increase of from 3s. 9d. to 10s. 6d.

74. You speak of twenty years ago?—Yes, I am quoting from 3s. 9d. time.

75. But the increase in the cost of the building, if the increase of timber has only been 4s. per 100 ft., could not be £50 or £60 on such a building as I have mentioned?—Of course not.

76. In the last eight years it would be less—something like £32?—Just about half the money.

77. We desire our figures to be directed very largely to the occurrences of the last seven or eight years. That is why I mentioned eight years, and the sawmillers have mentioned eight years?—That would be the increase here during that time.

78. Does your Building Association get any more discounts than an outside builder?—No, just the same. As a matter of fact, it is only since this last rise that we got that discount.

79. We have had it in evidence that it costs something like 8s. 6d. per 100 ft. to produce this timber?—Yes.

80. Do you think, in view of the cost being that amount, the 10s. 6d. is an exorbitant price to ask?—It all depends on how they work it out. To my mind, it seems a fair profit on the rough timber. Then you have got to consider the dressed lines. There is an enormous increase in them and the mouldings, which must bring them considerably more profit, to my mind.

81. Taking the rough timber only, and the cost of production, do you think 2s. per 100 ft. will be too much profit?—I take it from the evidence given that the 8s. 6d. per 100 ft. covers depreciation and everything else. The other was fair.

82. No, it did not represent the interest on capital?—I understood it did.

83. We had the evidence of the last witness?—He said his firm in a general way.

84. I think you will find that there is no intention whatever of suggesting that this figure covers interest on capital?—What does the 4s. 6d. cover? That leaves 4s. 6d. to them.

85. Look over that list and see?—I am not a sawmiller.

86. At any rate we have sworn evidence that the cost of production is 8s. 6d. and that it does not cover interest on capital. Two shillings includes interest on capital. That is their profit. Would that be too much?—I do not think it would be if the other lines were cheaper.

87. Did you say that Oregon was a better timber than our rimu?—I did not say so, but I think it is.

88. More durable?—Yes.

89. Can it be used for all purposes?—I do not think it can.

90. For what can it not be used?—It would not do so well for some finishing work.

91. Would you agree with this statement by the chairman of the Wellington Builders' Association in a deputation to the Government some time ago, that Oregon was not suitable for work exposed to the weather?—I have not had experience. We do not use very much of it.

92. You do not use much of it?—Not for certain classes of work.

93. We have had it in evidence that it costs to put Oregon in Dunedin—to land it in the yard—about 10s.?—Not quite so low as that, I think.

94. We had it in evidence from witnesses that on board ship it costs 7s. 9d. per 100 ft.—some said a little less or a little more, but 7s. 9d. seemed quite certain. You have got to pay 2s. duty;—that brings it to 9s. 9d.; but there is some 6d. or so cartage and wharfage that brings it up to 10s. 3d.?—These figures are right.

95. *Mr. Leyland.*] Wharfage alone is 6d.?—I do not suppose I could put into the yard at less than 12s.