

47. I want to point out that the amount stated by Mr. Brent was 1s. 6d., not 1s. On that point I should like to know whether, seeing the comparatively small effect that a rise of 2s. in timber would have on the total cost of a cottage, the quantities and values of sawn timber should be taken into account for the reason that the extra cost of dressing will be enough to account for the difference?—I really cannot say.

48. Is that a fair way of looking at it?—I do not know. My reference to the increase in price is with respect to mouldings.

49. We are talking of sawn timber only. In view of that, 1s. 6d. would be a moderate amount?—I think it is within the mark even then—even a little more than that. The cost increases as you rise in size.

50. You say that 2s. per hundred for all classes of timber would be a fair thing for ten years: would it not be fair to assume that 1s. 6d. would be a fair thing?—Yes.

51. You would not contradict on that point?—I would not without data before me to go into it.

52. Putting the cost of timber alone, in ten years at 2s. per hundred, that means an increase in the price between now and ten years ago, and makes £15 difference in a house of five rooms?—I think I would modify my former statement. It would not include mouldings—excluding mouldings it would be that approximately.

53. You told us how houses can be dearer than they used to be. Numerous items were mentioned by you. Houses are better-finished than they used to be. There is the bath, pantry, wash-house, &c.?—Yes, they are better-finished and of better construction.

54. Are mouldings more in use now than ten years ago?—I do not think so. It is very much the same in that respect—that is, in the class of house you refer to. Of course, I do not speak of four-roomed cottages built to let.

55. I am talking about workers' cottages?—I was referring to the better class of workers' cottages.

56. You think they have at least as many mouldings in their house now as they had before?—Yes, every bit. Mr. Bain was speaking of workers' cottages. He has them to let; but they are cheap cottages. People do not go to architects for that class of work. People who go to architects want good buildings.

57. How does that agree with the large stocks of timber that we see?—There is a slump in trade. Generally, you cannot buy seasoned timber here at all.

58. Do you use shingles?—We do not use shingles.

59. You are a believer in our afforestation?—Decidedly.

60. Can you see any good reason for private individuals being asked to keep their timber lands for an indefinite period rather than use them now?—Most men who take up land do so to make money out of it.

61. Would it be a fair thing to ask a business man to retain it?—I do not think so.

62. Of course, you agree that it would be a good thing for the State to have large forest reserves?—It is a work I think for the State to undertake. It may pay individuals in certain cases, such as those who have poor land suitable for afforestation.

63. Do you know anything about the class of timber that would grow here?—No, I am not prepared to make any suggestion on that.

64. On this question of Oregon pine, we are told that we must have the large pieces and encourage their admission into the country; but, on the other hand, in regard to the smaller pieces, seeing that they are competing severely with the red-pine of this Dominion, would it not be a fair thing to increase the duty? I understand that you are in favour of that?—No, I did not say that. I did not say it would be advisable.

65. What about those other timbers that you mentioned—viz., Californian redwood, Manchurian, and any other timbers which might enter into competition with us?—I know nothing about Manchurian timbers. We cannot fall back on Baltic. It is America we have to look to. Oregon pine is not used much in America, except in the Western States. The haulage is too great. It is simply sent where it can be most easily shipped.

66. It behoves us to watch those things in the matter of imported timber?—I doubt if it would affect our trade unreasonably.

67. The duty of 2s. per hundred on Oregon pine was put on a good many years ago?—I am aware of that.

68. That was at a time when millers were suffering under the same trouble as they are now?—Yes.

69. Now that they are in distress there would be more reason for increasing the duty rather than reducing it?—Yes.

70. *Mr. Leyland.*] You have told us clearly where Oregon is most suitable for constructive purposes. Is rimu not more suitable for flooring and ceiling work?—For such work it is no doubt far and away preferable to Oregon.

71. It is our custom to season rimu in the north. Would it not be better if it was seasoned before it was matched or machined?—You mean, in the mill.

72. Cut to the size and then seasoned before it was put through the machine?—It might be a better job. I could not say. Of course, it would shrink again then.

73. With reference to the increased duty on large sizes of Oregon, I just want to point out that when we are told that Oregon can be landed at a certain price what is stated in the following quotation. It will not be a waste of time if I may read a quotation here. The prices are fixed or quoted on a basis of the E list—that is, a basis of \$15, f.o.b.

74. Now we turn to the price-list, and we find here that it is only the small size and the short lengths that carries the 15-dollar basis, and some of the sizes of the same quality cost as high as \$25.