

75. Bearing in mind that the long lengths and the heavy lengths cost more than the quoted price, and that it costs very much more to handle, and it has often to be taken in to the saw and resawn, do you not think that handicap is quite enough without putting any duty on the extra sizes?—I do not think any duty should be added to the heavy stuff at all. Quite the reverse.

76. If the duty was increased on the small size, seeing that the cost to the merchant will be very much greater on the large sizes, do you not think the large sizes should come in free?—No, I do not think so. I think, in the majority of cases in New Zealand the Oregon is sought for for heavy work. It would never be used except for heavy work and for framing. It is quite unsuitable for flooring and ordinary finishing.

77. It is suitable for joists, &c.?—Yes.

78. The small sizes are competing with the rimu. If more duty is put on the small sizes, do you not think it would be a fair thing to take some duty off the large sizes?—I think, if anything, the duty should be reduced on the heavy stuff.

79. You are aware as an architect that the cost of timber has increased all over the world?—Yes.

80. Probably you have not had a chance of reading the last report of the British Royal Commission on this question, in which it is estimated that timber has risen 50 per cent.?—I am not surprised.

81. During the next ten years it is estimated it will increase 50 per cent. again?—I should hardly think it would increase so much as that.

82. You are not surprised that there has been a rise in the cost of timber in New Zealand?—No.

83. Now, in using rimu for joists, you would prefer heart to sap?—Yes, anywhere.

84. Are you aware that a group of rimu-millers who are working in the King-country and the Waikato have very carefully tested the percentage of first-class heart, and have found that there is only 6 per cent. of first-class timber?—Only 6 per cent.?

85. Now, Oregon is sent out all heart, and I want you to tell us if, in your opinion, all-heart Oregon is not superior to timber that may be partly heart and partly sap?—Yes, if it were all heart; but I know from the best Oregon authority that Oregon varies enormously throughout the States in quality. Its defect is that it makes such a large growth that the wood is very stringy. For rough framing I believe that in the majority of cases Oregon would be preferable. I do not think it would be so good for weatherboarding.

86. Are you aware that No. 1 merchantable, for shipping to the colonies, has to be passed by an inspector before shipment, and it is the custom to condemn any timber that contains sap in that grade?—Yes.

87. If it is a bit under that grade it is rejected?—When you reflect that the Oregon tree is often 6 ft. in diameter, you cannot wonder that the heart is so great.

88. Is it not a fact that it is better than rimu owing to its being all heart?—It does not follow. The sap of one timber might be better than the heart of another.

89. Do you not think it would decay quicker?—I would rather take my chance of red-pine weatherboarding.

90. Speaking of afforestation, no doubt you are aware that the increase in consumption, from evidence gathered recently, has been out of all proportion to the increase in population?—That is so.

91. Whilst the population of the United States has increased 53 per cent., the consumption of lumber has increased 94 per cent.; further, are you aware that, whilst in 1895 in New Zealand the output was 191,000,000 ft., it increased to 413,000,000 ft. in 1905—more than twice as much?—No, I was not aware of that.

92. Seeing that this is so, do you not think that is another reason why there should not be a prohibitive duty put on Oregon pine?—Yes, I certainly think it would be a mistake to put a prohibitive duty on Oregon.

93. The importation should rather be encouraged?—It should be encouraged in heavy stuff.

94. Speaking of the Crown timber supply, I suppose you were referring to your own district?—Yes.

95. With reference to the burning of timber off lands, do you not think it is the duty of the Government to settle all open lands capable of settlement before putting settlers on bush lands where the bush cannot be used and must be burned?—Decidedly, if the timber can be moved in the future.

96. *Mr. Clarke.*] In answer to a question by Mr. Field, did I understand you to say that you do not connect mouldings with joinery in the increased cost?—Not exactly. I was speaking more of the rise in the timber. We get our mouldings from the mills; but the joinery, such as doors, sashes, and cupboards, is supplied usually by the factories apart altogether from the miller.

97. Is not the term "joinery" usually meant to be manufactured work?—Yes, that is so; but I distinguished, and meant it to be understood to be the general rise in timber.

98. Then, with regard to the future supply, bearing in mind that the report of this Commission will, no doubt, have some influence on the timber-supply of this country, do you not think everything possible should be done to insure a future supply?—Decidedly.

99. And you are aware, of course, from reports published by Departments in our own Dominion, that it is quite wrong to speak of our inexhaustible forests?—Yes.

100. And that practically our supply, assuming that the output continues at about the same rate—that it may last for comparatively few years—say, from forty-five to fifty at the outside?—Yes.

101. Do you not think, then, that under the circumstances the Government of this country should at very short notice take some steps to see that this Dominion is not left entirely dependent