

116. Also black-pine?—Yes, more than we have down here.

117. Any birch at all?—They have got some along the Catlin's River, along the flats; but in the hilly parts there is very little birch, except kamahi.

118. Is there a percentage of the forest good milling-timber—large trees?—Yes.

119. A large proportion are big trees, are they?—Yes, large trees for Southland.

120. Is there very much superior to what we saw the other day at Longwood?—No, I do not think so. Of course, you passed there a lot of birch bush; but I mean, with regard to the area where Moore's mill was working, it (Catlin's) is not equal to it. On the average there is some better bush down towards Otatau, but then as you get back on the hills it is not nearly as good at Moore's.

121. That district does not come under your jurisdiction?—No.

122. Do you know that there are large areas that have been cleared by the settlers and that have been given up?—I do not know about that.

123. *Mr. Stallworthy.*] You said there was an area of 36,000 acres now being worked. Have you any idea of the acreage that has been abandoned as having been worked out?—No.

124. Is it equal to that now being worked?—I think it is more.

125. What is the acreage still available?—Something like 1,132,400 acres.

126. You do not see the end of the timber industry here by a long way?—No.

127. *Mr. Barber.*] You stated that it averaged only about 500 ft. to the acre?—It is very hard to say what it does average, because the greater part has never been explored; but as we are exploring we find that there is a great deal more timber than we had anticipated.

128. *Mr. Morris.*] Is it accessible?—Not at present.

129. *Mr. Stallworthy.*] When did Mr. Massey get his last area?—It was in New River. His last grant was about four years ago.

130. There was nothing to prevent a man who already had a large area from acquiring more?—Nothing that I know of.

131. *Mr. Morris.*] Is there no condition as to building mills?—Yes, you must have a mill on the area within six months after it has been rented—a fully equipped mill on the area, or on a site approximate to it.

132. Who is reaping the benefit of the grass on Mr. Massey's areas? Is he grazing them?—No.

133. How long is it since you offered the grazing-rights of those areas?—About twelve months ago.

134. You were asked about replanting. Would it not be more profitable to graze those areas than to replant them?—I think it would.

135. Does the Crown Lands Board open land for settlement with timber on it, or has it given that up?—It does not do it at present, at all events.

136. *Mr. Mander.*] In selecting areas for milling purposes, do you not think it would be wiser to do it by the quantity of timber on the land rather than by the number of acres?—I should say that the life of the mill would be the best means.

137. Do you not find, when you start working bush, and the tops are felled, that it is very hard to keep fires out of it?—That is so.

138. And as a sawmiller you run a big risk of being destroyed by fire?—Quite so.

139. *Mr. Hanan.*] Has the Crown sold any timber areas without fixing a time within which the timber must be removed?—Not to my knowledge. According to the regulations it cannot be done, and should not be done.

140. Is the time fixed by the regulations within which the timber must be removed?—Yes.

141. What time is fixed?—I think, as near as I can remember, in one instance the area must be cleared in four years, and in another in three years; but we will have the regulations in a second.

142. Has the Land Board, to your knowledge, any trouble in connection with the bush not being removed within a certain time?—There are many instances in which the bush has not been removed up to the time specified.

143. *Mr. Mander.*] Extensions are usually granted?—Yes, if there are reasonable excuses for the sawmiller not having the land cleared. Regulation 40 says, "The holder of every sawmill license other than for kauri must within six months of the date of his license provide and fit up, either upon his sawmill area, or upon some other site approved of by the Commissioner, a substantial and fully equipped sawmill, including all the necessary buildings thereto appertaining, which sawmill plant shall be of sufficient capacity and be kept in continuous working operation unless valid reasons shall be given to the Commissioner for such stoppage."

144. The point I want to get at is this: Is there any time mentioned for that license to expire?—There is.

145. The point is this: A license may be given to a man to cut timber; he may keep that for twenty or thirty years and do nothing?—There is a limited time. Regulation 31 says, "The original license for the first area shall be for a period of three years from the date thereof, and the licensee shall not enter upon any additional or reserved area, or cut or take timber therefrom until it shall be granted to him from the surrender of his previous area."

146. Then I take it that if the timber is not cut out in three years that license ceases to have any effect?—That is so, unless there is an extension granted.

147. *Hon. the Chairman.*] That will only apply to that area?—To that area; and then, "For the 200 acres or other area comprised in the original license for the remainder of the term it shall be at the rate of one year for each 50 acres."

148. Do you know of cases where licenses have been forfeited because the timber was not cut out within the time mentioned in the license?—No.