

43. I understand the men and the millers are living here in a state of harmony?—Yes. We work along all right.

44. *Mr. Leyland.*] In regard to wages, they are not the only factor in causing an increase in the cost of production?—No.

45. You say your men have gone back into rougher country; and does not that mean that the miller has to employ extra hands?—Yes, in some cases.

46. Then, not only has the extra cost of wages to be taken into consideration, but also the extra number of hands, in arriving at the cost of production?—Yes, in the bush it takes more hands to get out the same quantity of timber than in level country.

47. That would add to the 5d. considerably?—Yes.

48. Then you say that upon the average the men have lost a day per week. Does that not also add to the cost of production, because the employer has certain current expenses which he cannot get out of on that idle day?—It will make a great difference to the employer, because he makes more profit than us.

49. It would pay the employer to work every day?—Yes.

50. You told us the average wage was 8s. a day for the tallyman?—£10 10s. a month.

51. But you did not tell the Commission that it was paid the day the mill stopped—he gets it whether working or not?—He can claim the full time.

52. I also see that the bullock-drivers are paid by the month, whether working or not?—They are very nearly extinct now.

53. Then, I suppose the clerks would be paid, too, whether the mill was working or not?—The tallying-man is the only clerk at the mill.

54. There must be a book-keeper?—It is generally done in the towns, but he has to be paid.

55. Then the manager has to be paid?—I should think so.

56. Do you think it is fair that the manager of the mill should be a member of your union—do you think it fair to the employer or to your union?—The general managers of the mills are not members.

57. But the man in charge?—He is generally not.

58. You said he was?—I meant the man managing the bush—he is different to the man managing the mill.

59. With reference to the five idle mills, there are, of course, certain current expenses in connection with the mills and the interest, and who pays that expense?—The employer, I suppose.

60. Should not that be taken into consideration in working out the cost of production—the risks and the liabilities?—Of course, the mills are generally running—they are not built for the purpose of standing idle. Of course, when they are standing idle it will add to the cost.

61. You stated there were about a thousand men employed in the industry in Southland: how many of them are members of your union?—Close on nine hundred.

62. Do you favour an export duty on white-pine?—Yes.

63. If the Government put a duty on white-pine it would not affect Southland only, but all the men who were at work cutting the 57,000,000 ft. exported last year?—We have a large farming community, and they will eventually want some preserved for butter-boxes.

64. Would you be surprised to know, with reference to Oregon pine, that in the North we have mills depending on the logs being towed from the coast. We have a hundred men employed; and, when log-supplies fail, through having the Oregon pine we have been able to keep them employed and pay more wages. If you knew that, would you be inclined to modify your opinions?—The importation of Oregon pine has given more of them work.

65. The work would have been stopped were it not for the Oregon pine?—Perhaps we have felt the effect of that down here, because our mills are slack, and on the West Coast the people suffer most, I understand.

66. But there are other reasons, such as the falling-off in our exports?—I realise it is the tightness of the money-market that has been the cause of the slackness to a great extent, but Oregon pine has some effect upon it.

67. *Mr. Clarke.*] With reference to the effect on your union of a continuous supply: you have been asked as to what would happen if the mills were stopped to provide for conservation in any way. Supposing the timber were cut down as rapidly as possible, what would happen when it was all down—where would your union stand then in relation to the sawmills?—They would have to follow up some other avenues of employment.

68. Would it not be in the interests of your union that some movement should be started to maintain a regular supply of timber whereby the Sawmill Workers' Union should be kept in existence for another 150 or 250 years, instead of at the most fifty years?—Yes, I suppose it would make it last longer; but in the meantime we have, as I say, a thousand men employed, with three thousand people dependent upon them, and, therefore, it is only right we should look after those we have here now.

69. Would you consider it right for this generation of sawmill-workers simply to take into account the sawmill-workers now, and not provide anything for the next generation?—When all the timber was cut out you could then take all the duty off Oregon pine.

70. *Mr. Morris.*] Can you tell us the amount the Government receive in the way of royalty and railway charges on timber carried over the railway-lines in this district?—No, I have no information; I think it is a good deal.

71. Do you not think it will average at least the amount of duty levied on Oregon timber now coming into the country?—I should think so.

72. Two shillings per hundred feet?—I should think there would be a considerable amount of revenue received from the railway charges and also for royalties. I do not know much about that question.