

5. How do you get the timber in?—By carting it from the railway-station.

6. Do you find that that is cheaper?—It is more convenient. We could get a siding. Our next-door neighbours, Broad and Small, got a siding, which costs them £60 a year. It costs us 4d. per hundred feet. We get it generally from 40,000 ft. to 60,000 ft. per month, and then you can get it put where you want it, whereas if you got it on a siding it would have to be handled, and every time you handle green timber it costs you 6d. per hundred feet. In this other forest now there is a much larger proportion of inferior timber than when we got it in the Seaward Bush. The consequence is that that has to be got rid of. There is much more second-class in it and much more of inferior quality. So far as the manufacture goes it is really difficult for us to get sufficient good stuff for manufacture out of the one mill. There is only about one-third of the cut of a mill that is suitable for our purpose. The consequence is that the remainder has to be got rid of in one way or another. We have been in the habit of getting it sent into our yards and retailing it out in small quantities, which means that we get nothing for it. For instance, a man wants 50 ft. of timber; it costs about 1s. 6d. to cart it, and you have got to do it. In a large order you can afford to do it, but in a small order like that it is a loss. The Sawmillers' Association allow us 12½ per cent. That is all the profit we get, and we have to take and stow it into our yards and recart it out in small quantities. Since we have got the mill further off we have been able to buy it a little cheaper, so that we have not as much loss in distributing it. The timber costs us on trucks at the siding at Waihoka from 7s. 6d. to 8s.—as much as 8s. 6d. for wider stuff; then it costs 2s. 3d. railage and 4d. cartage, so that there is really nothing in it. However, you are not charged extra for the good quality of stuff, and the consequence is that we get that for our own manufacturing purposes, which suits us, and it is what we make our living by.

7. Mostly profit on the best class of timber?—Yes.

8. *Mr. Hanan.*] Speaking as the owner of a woodware-factory, do you think it is desirable that there should be an increased duty on Oregon pine?—I would certainly say there should be no increased duty.

9. Do you think that Oregon pine should be allowed to come in free, speaking as a woodware-factory proprietor?—It would suit better if it were to come in free.

10. Why?—Simply because more of it would be used.

11. Will you tell us the main work for which you use Oregon?—There is a big variety of qualities in Oregon. We use a small quantity of it—and we would use more of it if it came in free—for inside doors and all internal fittings for buildings, joists for buildings, and various other works, except outside. We have used it outside, but it would want painting about once a year. It is not very suitable for that.

12. Would you use it in preference to New Zealand timber?—If it were the same price we certainly should.

13. You would prefer it?—Yes.

14. For all kinds of work except outside?—For joists and floors and that sort of thing it would do equally as well as New Zealand timber.

15. You make up window-sashes and doors?—Yes.

16. Has there been much increase in the price during the last seven or eight years?—Yes, there has been a fair increase, principally during the last four years—in fact, since they began to raise the kauri. Kauri has got to be used for them at the present time; it is the most suitable. We use our local timber occasionally, but it is much more expensive to work, and there is a prejudice against red-pine amongst local people for doors and sashes. It is liable to warp and break the glass of doors, and kauri is more suitable.

17. Do you manufacture furniture?—Yes.

18. Is there an increase in the cost during the last seven or eight years?—Very little—an increase of probably from 7½ to 10 per cent. during the last seven years.

19. Is the manufacture of furniture increasing or decreasing?—Up to about six months ago it increased; since then it has decreased.

20. Are your works working full time?—Full-handed we employ about sixty hands altogether; at the present time when things slacken off with us we simply shorten the hands, we do not work short time if we have a falling-off in any particular line.

21. *Mr. Field.*] The Seaward Bush was close at your doors here?—Within two miles of where we sit.

22. It is easy, then, to understand the timber going up from 6s. 9d. ten years ago to 10s. 6d. now?—Quite easy.

23. We have had it in evidence that the cost of production per hundred feet is over 8s. Do you know if that is a reasonable estimate?—I am not well acquainted with the production of timber. But it would be 8s., I suppose.

24. Where would that be from?—Longwood way.

25. On trucks at the siding?—I believe that is perfectly true. It depends upon the sort of timber it is. Some of ours costs more than that. If other witnesses said so I would not dispute it, because it is very difficult to get.

26. Do you think the price now is exorbitant?—Not a bit. It is less than anywhere else in New Zealand. The difficulty here has been that we were too near the mills; there is no room for middlemen here at all.

27. Do you know anything about the use of the beech growing up there for furniture purposes?—It has a very good appearance, seems to be nice and clear and very durable.

28. It would be particularly valuable for chairmaking?—Very good for that.

29. We learn that the duty in Australia has had the effect of killing the trade?—Yes, I have heard that; I cannot speak from experience; we have nothing of it in the bush that I have to do with.