

45 If you could get lengths of timber suitable from that district, would you take them?—I shall be very glad to get your address if you can supply me with anything in good lengths and sizes at 15s. a hundred—if you can do that I will give you an order.

46. In regard to seasoning, are you acquainted with any of the artificial methods that are adopted?—In my opinion, there is nothing better than to fall the tree and allow it to remain for a certain time before it is broken down. The trouble with us in Dunedin is that we cannot get seasoned timber. You book your order and it is sent down, and the timber is cut for you and sent along as soon as possible. You have to pay them for stacking and the sap.

47. There is no artificial method?—Not in any quantity.

48. *Mr. Leyland.*] With reference to the depression and the tightness of money, do you not think the falling-off of £4,000,000 which we had in our exports last year has something to do with the depression?—Yes, I should feel the pressure if I lost £4,000,000.

49. With reference to the increased cost of sawn timber, if you had evidence before you that the cost of production had also gone up very much, would you not agree that an increase in the cost would be justified?—I think the price of timber in Dunedin is fair compared with other centres. I expect that it should rise in price.

50. You have no real complaint against the increased cost?—In my opinion, the increased cost is justified. I would, however, ask this Commission to supply us with an alternative that would answer our requirements better.

51. Have you had some difficulty in getting kauri supplied?—Oh, yes! I wanted a line of about 200 ft. and I could not get it.

52. You are certain that the importation of Oregon should be encouraged, and not checked by the imposition of a duty?—Yes, it should be encouraged.

53. In reference to the building of that fence that was tendered for at less than cost-price, do you not think the timber-merchant would lose it. If a man tendered for less than cost-price he would get his timber from the timber-merchant?—I have nothing to do with that.

54. The timber-merchant would be entitled to make some allowance for bad debts?—My experience is that the timber-people in Dunedin are quite able to take care of themselves.

55. I think I gathered from your remarks in reference to the increased cost of cottage timber that it only occurred quite recently?—We pay for the stacking.

56. In the North we only supply the builder?—We may be misunderstood. If we were booking an order to a timber-merchant that would be booked to a miller in Southland, and that would be agreed with him, except I made special provision to stack the timber on the site, and for that I should be charged 1s. per hundred feet.

57. When put through the machine there is some provision. It is more expensive in proportion?—Oh, yes! but perhaps the biggest increase comes from the dressed material, and not the raw material.

58. You understand this $4\frac{1}{2}$ —that goes into the machine?—It does.

59. But if he has to take $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. to make your 4 in., how is he to be paid?—How was he paid for all those years?

60. You get more than 4 in. for your 4 in.; it covers 4 in. on the face?—Oh, no! we only get 4 in. face measurement, and we pay for $4\frac{1}{2}$ in.

61. I speak of the time they did not charge you for the $4\frac{1}{2}$ in.?—We got it for nothing.

62. Often that was cheap enough for you?—Yes.

63. *Mr. Clarke.*] Your evidence as to the proposal to get our red-pine from the North Island: can you tell me what would be the result to the small builder if he places a certain portion of his trade with one, and a certain portion with another? Would he not have a great difficulty in getting rimu from the people with whom he had placed the mouldings?—He would get it where he got the balance of the order.

64. The idea of getting the stuff here, there, and everywhere would not do?—No.

65. With regard to joinery, do you have to pay a high price for seasoned timber now?—If you were taking a job you would take it to the factories, but we know that the price has increased very much. It would be approved by the architect as seasoned timber.

66. With respect to the standard prices—it is quoted in your list at 13s. 6d.: do you not find that a large amount of the timbers in a large building here run above that, on account of extra lengths?—Oh, yes! and that applies more particularly in warehouses and factories.

67. So that would not represent the actual price in large works?—Oh, no! only in small stuff.

68. With regard to future supplies, is there any prospect here?—There is not. Dunedin and neighbourhood have been depleted long ago.

69. If foreign timbers were not easily available, do you think something should be done to secure the supplies locally?—Conserve to the fullest possible extent.

70. *Mr. Morris.*] I would like to ask if you have any knowledge of the milling of timber?—No.

71. There seems to be a prevailing opinion that our native timber is suitable for finishing-work, but not required for rough work?—I do say that you have here as good timber as you can get in any part of the world for finishing-work, but any imported timber such as Oregon would stand much better even for cottage-construction than red-pine, because you can always get it better-seasoned, and it is not liable to shrink. I do not anticipate that Oregon will take the place of the small sizes here. I only speak of where I use the smaller sizes.

72. Only a percentage of our native timber is fit for finishing purposes?—Yes.

73. Hard timber is generally rough and a great deal is not suitable for dressing purposes, and local millers could not possibly supply you with timber for finishing and building if they had no market for the rough timber?—Oh, yes! but I do not think that the importation of hardwood or Oregon in large sizes would interfere very much with local timber in smaller sizes.