

134. But you are prepared to admit it may be right in the case of small sizes?—I never anticipated it would pay to import small sizes.

135. If you were satisfied that we were selling our building-rimu at a reasonable price, and the Oregon pine was to come in and spoil our trade, would you still be in favour of not protecting our timber industry, even although our policy is one of modified protection?—I would say, as long as you have sawmills in New Zealand there must be a proportion of good timber which would be utilised in large sizes, and, secondly, if cut up into smaller sizes would employ labour in doing so, and it is very much better to utilise the timber in that way than to pay the men in America for the cutting.

136. If, of course, the Oregon pine or any other timber did successfully compete with our red-pine it would mean the shutting-up of our mills, and a loss of capital and also a lot of timber lost and spoilt?—I do not think that would necessarily follow. That is a question of policy with the Government. They are not obliged to open up timber areas and burn the timber off.

137. But I am speaking of private land?—I should think it would be a great mistake for any private owner to fell his timber and burn it.

138. What would you do as a private owner?—If I had the Government at my back I would prevent the man doing that.

139. Supposing you were a poor man and had 600 acres covered with valuable timber, and you saw no chance of milling it profitably, and you had to get something out of the land, what would result?—Do you not think that a man in that position has a more valuable asset with native bush and good timber by conserving that timber for a few years than by felling the bush and burning it?

140. But if he had to hold it he could not put it in grass. I know a man who has been waiting twenty years to fell his timber, and now he will have to wait another twenty years, as far as he can see, and all he can do is to fell the timber and burn it?—I say more is the pity.

141. There are a good many in that position, where a mill has been put in and lost. It is a great pity that the timber should be destroyed, and also that the money should go out of the country and the workers be dismissed. Assuming that was so because imported timber was competing with our own, would it not be reasonable to have some measure of protection?—Yes, but I have no doubt that there will be sufficient intelligence in the House to meet an exigency of that kind. I never expected that the small quantities would be imported into New Zealand. It applies more to the junk timber.

142. You are aware that Oregon pine is being used in Auckland for all purposes?—I do not believe it will be used in Dunedin to that extent, and I am surprised at that, seeing the good quality of timber you have in the North Island.

143. Are you satisfied with the price of timber here?—Yes.

144. *Mr. Leyland.*] With reference to the cost of thick and thin timber, I have here a price-list, and I notice that the timber-merchants make a difference:  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. is 14s.; matched  $\frac{3}{4}$  in., 15s. 6d.; and  $\frac{3}{4}$  in., 17s., and so on; so that, although it is thinner, bearing in mind the extra cost to make it thinner and the extra loss in sawdust, the difference in price should be pretty nearly equal?—Are you a relation to a sawmiller?

145. I am a sawmiller?—I thought so.

146. You conveyed the impression that you paid the same proportion for half-inch as for inch timber?—I want to convey to this Commission that if you bought 100 ft. of timber you get 100 superficial feet, and that if you were to buy  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. you do not get 100 superficial feet, and that is where the sawmiller beats the builder every time.

147. And he charges you less for five-eighths than for inch?—Yes, of course he does.

HENRY VINCENT HADDOCK sworn and examined. (No. 25.)

1. *Hon. the Chairman.*] What are you?—Manager for John Murdoch and Co., timber-merchants.

2. Can you give the Commission any information in regard to the matters into which it is inquiring?—I have no statement to make. I was not aware that a statement was required.

3. *Mr. Arnold.*] What is the business of Murdoch and Co.?—Timber-merchants.

4. Are they interested in any sawmills?—Not directly. Mr. Massey, of course, is.

5. You have a sawmill in the city in connection with your yard, have you not?—Yes.

6. Does the timber come from Southland to be dressed, or is it re-dressed in your yards?—It comes just in the rough.

7. Now, you have heard the evidence given with regard to Oregon timber?—Yes.

8. What difference does it make to the mills such as yours, whether the timber is imported or whether it comes from Southland or the Wellington District?—In connection with imported Oregon, very little.

9. Is there much imported Oregon that goes through your mill that has to be recut?—There has been within the last two or three months more than there has been in the past. Of course, there is always a certain amount of Oregon which comes from "the other side" for beams and long lengths.

10. So that the amount of labour that is utilised by the importation of Oregon is increasing?—Well, slightly, but to a very small extent.

11. Do you think it likely that Oregon will be imported in large sizes, recut, and used in small sizes?—Yes, very likely. They generally come here in 14's and 12 by 12, and it is very rarely that we are asked for those sizes. They are generally cut to 12 by 3 and 12 by 4.

12. Did you hear a previous witness say that there was no local timber to compare with the hardwoods that are being imported?—No, I did not hear that.

13. Do you think that that is so?—No.