

25. Do you deal at all in kauri?—Yes, we use a good deal of kauri for the manufacturing business—for making doors and suchlike.

26. Have you any difficulty in getting kauri?—I have to give an order a long way ahead to get it.

27. But you can get it in all sizes?—Yes.

28. Do you manufacture all the doors that you require yourselves?—Yes.

29. You do not import any?—No.

30. Do you know of any doors being imported?—Well, I heard there were some doors imported, but I cannot speak from my own personal knowledge. I think they came from Canada.

31. Do you think those imported doors are likely to come into competition with the local article?—So far they have not come into competition with them.

32. Do you know anything of doors being imported from Sweden?—No, I have not heard of any.

33. Do you know there is a great amount of feeling at the present time with regard to the importation of Oregon pine?—Yes, I have seen a lot of letters in the paper.

34. Do you deal in it yourself?—Yes, we use Baltic deal and Oregon.

35. To any great extent?—I suppose we would use 100 ft. of Baltic deal in a month.

36. Is that trade increasing?—Well, I could not say. We used to get it in monthly instalments across from Melbourne, but it is hard to say whether it is increasing, because we are getting it in bulk now, although I suppose we had the same amount in the previous twelve months.

37. Do you think it is likely to interfere very much with the local building trade?—I do not think so. We must have Baltic deal for sashes, for which red-pine would not do.

38. Do you say no New Zealand timbers will do for sash-work?—Kauri would do, but it is very seldom used—people seem to go in for Baltic deal.

39. You do not know much about Oregon?—No, not a great deal. In the last six months perhaps a million feet came in direct.

40. Is it not a fact that the importation of Oregon is increasing very considerably?—Well, it is not increasing a great deal down this way.

41. But if it can be shown that it is increasing throughout New Zealand, and at the present moment there are a number of mills closed down and between six hundred and a thousand millers or employees thrown out of work, do you think the putting of a duty on Oregon would be for the welfare of the State?—If it is going to keep our population employed there should be a certain duty put on it. They should be protected first.

42. If a duty is placed on Oregon sufficient to keep it almost out of the market and these mill hands employed, what effect would it have upon the building trade?—I do not think it would have any effect on the building trade—it would simply mean that more of the local article would be used in place of Oregon.

43. Would not the result be that the price of the timber from the mills here would be raised considerably?—No, I do not think so, because Oregon does not compete with the red-pine now.

44. You think it would still be necessary to import Oregon?—You must get Oregon for certain purposes. You really cannot get heavy red-pine 30 ft. or 40 ft. long.

45. Can you get it in smaller lengths—14 ft. to 18 ft.?—Yes, any amount of small stuff, say, up to 12 by 12.

46. You do not know anything, I suppose, about the rapidity with which the New Zealand bush lands are being worked out?—No, I could not say anything about that. I know they are getting less, because I used to live in Southland many years ago, and now I can see a big difference.

47. How long have you been in the trade?—About twenty-four years.

48. You find a greater difficulty in getting big timbers than you did twenty years ago?—Yes.

49. If Oregon is entirely kept out of our market those timbers would be worked out very much more rapidly?—That is so.

50. Have you thought what the effect will be when we have to import the whole of our timbers?—No, I cannot say that I have. I do not expect it will come about in my time, and I am not bothering about it.

51. If it could be shown, however, that at the present rate the whole of our bush lands are likely to be worked out in fifty or sixty years, do you think that we should assist the importation of other timbers?—Yes, we should conserve our own timbers.

52. But you would not conserve the timbers that are now matured and ready for cutting, and which will depreciate from being permitted to stand too long?—No, because if the timber is taken off you can get the use of the land afterwards.

53. And that question has to be taken into consideration?—Yes, I should think so.

54. With regard to Oregon, you do not recommend that the present duty should be taken off?—As a timber-merchant I am not particular whether it is taken off or not.

55. But for the welfare of the country?—I should like to see it put on to keep the Oregon out.

56. Do you know anything about the rents of houses here?—No, I cannot say I do.

57. You do not know whether they are increasing or not?—No, I cannot say.

58. How many hands do you employ?—About fifty.

59. How many did you employ ten years ago?—I could not say exactly, but less than we do now.

60. Say, 10 per cent. less?—Yes, fully 10 per cent. less. I should think 20 per cent. less ten years ago.

61. Now, to what extent has your output increased?—I could not say offhand. I do not know that to-day it is any further ahead than ten years ago, because things are a bit quiet. In the interval it has increased, but now it is dropping off again.