

80. Yes?—I do not see that there is really very much reason for doing that.

81. There is no reason?—No great reason.

82. Not if the timber is increasing in price?—It is simply a matter of economy as to whether it is not better to clear our timber lands for grazing and agriculture, and obtain our timber-supplies from countries that can produce more cheaply than we can.

83. You are aware that there is a timber-famine all over the world?—Yet there are vast areas not touched.

84. All advanced countries are going in for a system of afforestation?—They certainly are. As I understand, in pine countries like Norway and Sweden, and parts of America, the forests reproduce themselves—that is, if Oregon bush is closed up, in fifty years a new forest will grow up.

85. You think the mill should precede the settler in the case of bush lands?—I do think so. It is a waste of the resources of the country to burn timber if it can be profitably milled.

86. *Mr. Jennings.*] What is the output of your mill per day?—From 4,000 ft. to 5,000 ft. per day.

87. If a mill turned out 30,000 ft., would not that lessen the cost of the timber?—It should, undoubtedly.

88. Is that the greatest capacity of any mill down here?—No, there are mills that cut 6,000 ft. and 7,000 ft., and, I believe, 8,000 ft.—one or two of them—when working full-handed.

89. Have you any knowledge of the extent of bush country twenty-five or thirty miles from Invercargill?—Only what I have been through. There is a good deal of bush across the Waiau, but it is patchy, I think. The most of the bush on the east side of the Waiau is practically held, except the hilltops.

90. *Mr. Field.*] Do you think that the areas the Government has granted to millers are sufficient—800 acres of sparsely scattered bush?—I think, from a Southland point of view, they are quite sufficient.

91. If a miller cuts it out in six years?—I do not know of any case in which a miller has cut out in six years.

92. We have it in evidence from a dozen sources that it only takes six years to cut out 800 acres of sparsely covered timber land in the vicinity of Riverton?—I have no knowledge of any place where that has occurred.

93. You do not think six years is a sufficient time to cut?—I do not think it is sufficient. Providing the 800 acres is insufficient to last more than six years, the regulations do not confine you to 800 acres.

94. You mean you can get more than 800 acres straight away?—Certainly.

95. There seems to be some difficulty in getting more?—It is because there is no bush to be got. There was one extended area granted lately of, I think, about 2,000 acres.

96. You are an expert at this business: Have you any suggestion to make on the subject of sawmilling generally?—I think the existing regulations are reasonable and very fair. I do not see any reason to find fault with them. From a Southland point of view the regulations are quite sufficient.

97. You spoke of it costing 3s. 6d. to 4s. to put timber on trucks: what does that cover?—Bush-work, milling operations, trolleying to the siding, and loading on the truck.

98. You are a large miller?—I rank as a small one.

99. What does it cost you to put timber on the truck in view of everything—logging, hauling, cost of trams, horse-feed, insurance against accident, loss by conversion, sawing, yarding, depreciation of plant and buildings, fire risks, salaries, charges of various kinds, wages, interest on capital, bad debts—what do you consider is the cost?—I am engaged principally in cheap timber—white-pine. I used to look actively after the mill, but recently I have employed a contractor. I contract the mill, and I get my timber cut by contract.

100. What does it cost you to put it on the trucks?—White-pine costs an average of 4s. 9d. per hundred feet.

101. And other timbers?—Red-pine, rough timber, costs 6s. per hundred feet.

102. We have had a statement of the cost of milling from the Longwood Bush—about 8s. per hundred feet on the trucks. Do you think that is a fair estimate?—I would not like to say it is, because I do not know their circumstances; but I would say that in my bush, which is principally white-pine, it costs me about 4s. 9d. per hundred feet for white-pine—that is, timber from $\frac{3}{4}$ in. thickness to 1 in. thickness. I pay the contractor 6s. per hundred feet for the red-pine. In addition to that there is royalty to be considered.

103. Which is 6d.?—Yes, my man who runs the mill employs the men, and I pay him on the output.

104. Is your bush rough?—Level country; I have rough country, too.

105. Where you are milling now?—Some is level and some rough.

106. Can you say whether your conditions compare favourably with Longwood?—Longwood is rougher.

107. To whom do you sell your timber?—I sell it myself.

108. To whom?—Direct to the customers.

109. You do not care whether they are timber-merchants or not?—I do not sell to timber-merchants—direct to the consumer.

110. Even if you are selling white-pine?—White-pine principally.

111. What are you getting for your white-pine?—It is nearly all box-timber: the average price is about 5s. 6d. per hundred feet at the mill on trucks.

112. Then, to the customer in Dunedin?—That is to the customers in Dunedin; they pay rail.