

107. Can you tell us of any countries which have laws of that kind?—That was the old law of Prussia, and I think it was so in Germany. They have very strict regulations there, and I have not the slightest doubt but that that is one of them. In the eastern counties district in England that law obtained there. Late in the summer the timbers were marked, a ring being placed round all those trees that were to be cut, and then they were left. Anything that we wanted to cut before we had to get permission to do so.

108. With regard to the cost of building in brick, would you not say that the fact that you can build at only a slightly increased cost—you said 12 to 14 per cent.—that that would always be an effective check on timber going to an unreasonable price?—I do not think so. You will always require a certain amount of timber in building, and you only save the walling-timbers. Then you have to have better timber for your plates, and you must have totara or matai floor-plates in brick walling.

109. But the millers and timber-merchants could not be expected to get more than a certain price for their timber if people could build more cheaply in brick?—I cannot see that it would make as great a difference as that.

110. *Mr. Leyland.*] With reference to imposing a duty on the small sizes of Oregon pine and admitting the large sizes free, where would you suggest we should draw the line between the large sizes and the small? It has been suggested that framing-sizes should be the small sizes, and that the large sizes should be those used in the construction of big buildings?—Yes, the lengths should have something to do with it if you limit the length to, say, 18 ft., and call that scantling.

111. You would not limit the length as well as the size in imposing a duty?—Yes.

112. Supposing you wanted an 18 by 12, as you often want, if all the other beams were Oregon you might also like that to be Oregon?—If you wanted a beam that size you ought to get red-pine.

113. An area of 6 in. by 4 in. is 24 in., and that is getting on to a large size for house-building. Would you approve of a sectional area of 30 in.?—A sectional area is rather a bad system, because you may get a sectional area and a man may import a beam and get it in free. All he would have to do would be to cut it up into these sectional areas, and very little sawing would do it. Supposing you took 6 in. by 6 in., that would be 36 in., and a 36 in. sectional area represents a fairly good beam. I would include that in the small sizes. To keep it entirely on framing sizes, I would not allow anything to come in over 6 in. If I wanted to put a duty on scantling I would say 6 in. deep and 6 in. wide, 4 by 2, 5 by 2, and 6 by 2, with no greater measure than 6 in. any way.

114. The object of imposing a duty on the small sizes is to keep the labour in this country for cutting it up?—If you give a larger area, a man could import a beam and put a saw-cut through it just once and practically get it in free. He would then get two areas and two beams. If you keep it to the depth he cannot get it in; it would not pay him to cut his beam up three or four times.

115. You mentioned the matter of battens for steel ceilings. It is the custom in Auckland for architects to insist that all battens for steel ceilings must be of Oregon?—Yes.

116. That means a tremendous amount of cutting?—Yes.

117. That would all have to be done out of the large sizes?—Yes.

118. And there would be plenty of work for the sawmiller there?—Yes, it would run into a good lot.

119. In comparing the value of houses, is it not very difficult to convey an adequate idea to a number of men like ourselves unless we had some plans and specifications? Mr. Field has told you that he built a five-roomed house for £250, and, to show you the difference, I might say I have just put up a seven-roomed house that cost me £1,000?—Yes, you add to the cost of a house without increasing its size.

120. Supposing railway freight is 4s. per hundred, and the timber is not carried, it is not a dead loss, because it costs the country all but 2½ per cent. in expenses of the 4s. to do it?—Yes, pretty well.

121. So that the only loss is 2½ per cent.?—Yes, it is not all dead loss.

122. In reference to the money going out of the country, we are able to substitute Oregon pine for kauri exported, and we are able to get for the kauri possibly 9s. per hundred feet more than we pay for Oregon pine, so that instead of the money going out of the country we make a profit of 9s. per hundred feet. Is it not a fact that money is coming into the country?—Yes.

123. *Mr. Clarke.*] In view of what you state with regard to reciprocity, if we refuse to admit foreign timber without a heavy duty, and we want to send our timbers abroad, do you not think as a community we should immediately take some steps, in view of our declining forests, to insure a permanent timber-supply for the Dominion?—Certainly.

124. *Mr. Morris.*] I am not going into the economical side of the question like my friend Mr. Clarke. I hold this: that if we get ten shillings' worth of somebody else's property and send half-a-crown's worth out we are on the wrong side of the ledger. You spoke about seasoned timber—have you any knowledge in connection with the felling of rimu and the cutting of it up?—Yes.

125. Does not decay set in in the log?—It should be sawn up and seasoned in the stacks. You cannot keep it in the log, because the rot that sets in is very rapidly coming on, penetrating to the heart, and that is traceable to the acid in the sap. What you have got to do is to saw it up, cut away the soft sap, and season it in scantlings.

126. That would involve an extra cost?—Of course, your capital is lying idle all the time, but they ought to have plenty to do in the summer months if they were cutting it from the logs into scantlings. In any case, everybody would be in the same boat.

127. It would increase the cost of timber?—Certainly, but it would at the same time increase the quality.

128. Do you not consider rough heart of rimu first-class timber for ordinary cottage-building purposes?—It is too good for that.