

29. You advocate duty on imported Oregon?—I never mentioned such a thing. If you had asked me the question I would have said, Certainly not. I never expressed the opinion as to whether there should be a duty on Oregon or not.

30. We are told that rimu is not suitable for joinery-work. What is your experience?—Rimu is admirably adapted for many articles in furniture-manufacture.

31. Then, it does not twist about?—It is all nonsense to say that it twists more than other timber. Red-pine is like every other timber in the matter of twisting. Care should be taken as to the season of the year in which it is cut. Given that, with proper seasoning, and provided the rimu is of fair quality, it really will not twist any more than the majority of the imported timbers. It is equally as good as the majority of imported timbers. We have tested it thoroughly.

32. Do you find that it stands as well as kauri?—It stands better than kauri in many ways. I do not think that a piece of rimu is so liable to twist as kauri. It is certainly not so liable to shrink. One objection to kauri is that it is so subject to climatic influence. If you put it into an article, no matter how dry it may be, if it is subject to damp it swells, and swells very much. It is far more subject to that than rimu. Rimu is as good a timber as you can get to stand, and is as free from warping, twisting, and all such objections as other timbers.

33. Thank you, Mr. Chisholm, I am glad to get a testimonial for our West Coast timber?—I was not aware that you were from the West Coast, and what I have said is the result of my own experience.

34. *Mr. Barber.*] Have you any difficulty in getting timber for the furniture trade?—Yes, we have experienced considerable difficulty in getting kauri and rimu, especially rimu, owing to the immense quantities that are being exported to Australia. I have had some orders on the West Coast that have not been completed for many months, and I have been put to a great deal of inconvenience through it.

35. Do you think, if Oregon was allowed to be imported to take the place of kauri beams, and seeing that it is necessary to use kauri for building purposes, that it would assist the furniture trade throughout the colony by making their supplies more easily available?—It is quite evident that the mills in Auckland have not, so far as our experience in Dunedin goes, been able to supply the local demands. Whether this is through the export trade being of such importance to them that they ignore the local trade, or whether they are not in a position to furnish the requisite supplies, I cannot say.

36. *Mr. Ell.*] With regard to the cost of oak and walnut used in the higher-class furniture, what does that run out at per foot—that is, landed here?—It varies considerably. For instance, from Canada you can get it much cheaper than from the States, and lately the markets have been slackening somewhat. Plain oak and quartered oak differs a great deal in price. You would be safe in saying, from about 8d. to 11d. per foot—that is, with the duty.

37. What is the cost of rimu, per foot, for cabinetmaking purposes?—Rimu for cabinet-making purposes has to be special—that is, specially selected. Bear in mind it is not just ordinary building-timber, and consequently the prices ruling generally for good rimu for cabinet-making purposes are a little more expensive; and the size determines the price. It would be about 9s. on the West Coast. Then, there is freight. It costs us about 13s. 6d. landed in our yard.

38. That is about 1½d. per foot?—Yes.

39. There is no possibility of oak and walnut interfering with the local timber?—Absolutely none.

40. Both these timbers are absolutely necessary to the maintenance of a big industry?—Yes. It means that you have either to import the article already made or manufacture it here from the material.

41. It would place the manufacturer to better advantage if the duty were removed?—Much better.

42. You use rimu, and beech, and kauri in the manufacture of furniture?—Yes.

43. In view of the fact that this industry is a standard industry in New Zealand in supplying furniture for the homes of the people—and they are increasing in number—do you think it would be wise on the part of the Government to make some timber reserves so as to provide for the future need of this and similar industries?—I do think so. Referring to the district which the Chairman has mentioned—that is, the Catlin's district—I think, if it could be done, reserves should be created there. I feel grieved at the enormous waste of wealth that is going on in the destruction of timber. Good timber, valuable for all purposes, is being burned simply to have the use of the ground for cultivation.

44. Do you consider that a most wasteful policy?—I do.

45. With regard to beech and rimu, you stated, I think, in your evidence that if these were cut at the proper time of year, when the sap was down, that it would make them more useful and more valuable for your purposes?—Yes, I think that is where an injustice has been done to our timbers. It is almost criminal the waste there is at present. As to beech, especially, it is a timber the value of which up till recently has not been understood. It is much more valuable than we formerly believed. In my judgment our beech will come to be a most useful timber and valuable asset to the Dominion, if cut in the proper season.

46. That is, particularly for furniture-making and for chairmaking?—Not only that, but for anything that requires texture. So far as we are able to test it, it is almost equal to American ash and beech. It is of a very tough nature, so that for various purposes in connection with agricultural implements, for instance, it will become a most useful timber. It will stand a strain almost equal to ash or beech.

47. Seeing that much of this beech grows on a country which is not very valuable for other purposes, would it not be a wise thing to set aside some beech forests?—Yes, I think it would be,