

31. Such as inside work?—Yes, that is so, and it is not suitable in exposed places, because it will not stand the weather.

32. So that you do not think the sawmillers have anything to fear from the importation of Oregon pine?—I do not know anything about that. I am not prepared to say what the effect will be on the sawmillers, but I think there is room for both timbers, and one is more suitable for the class of work it has to be used for.

33. And it is required by the public?—Yes, I think it undoubtedly is.

34. Seeing that rimu is used and so well adapted for finishing, cabinetmaking, and joinery work, and that kauri is also suited not only for joinery-work and for carriage-building and railway-car building, do you think it is desirable the country should retain by some means those timbers for the use of our own people?—I do. I think there should not be another bit of kauri allowed to go out of the Dominion, because I do not know of any other timber which can be used for so many purposes. I do not know of any other timber that would replace kauri.

35. You indorse the statement of the last witness that it is one of the best timbers in the world?—I do without any hesitation.

36. Now, with regard to rimu, seeing that we shall require it for our various industries which employ a large amount of labour, do you think it desirable we should make certain reservations to preserve the supply, and also prevent its exportation?—That is a big question, but I think, where large tracts of forest are destroyed simply for the purpose of settling the land, that it would be better to allow those tracts to remain until such time as the timber could be profitably placed on the market.

37. When I tell you that the operations of the Forestry Department of this country have only succeeded in planting 9,400 acres of land, and that the nearest time we can expect to draw on those forests is forty years from now, do you not think it desirable to retain possession of some of our rimu forests so as to preserve them till the planted trees are sufficiently matured?—Yes, I think it is desirable.

38. *Mr. Hanan.*] You have a Builders' Association here?—Yes.

39. What is the membership?—I could not say. I believe the president of the association will be giving evidence, and he will give all that information.

40. Is there much cutting in the building trade?—Yes, it is very keenly competed for.

41. Have the number of builders increased during the last three years in Christchurch?—I could not say. There are a great number of builders here.

42. And you find a falling-off?—Yes, there is not the amount of work that there was.

43. Have you ever tested the quality of wood underground so far as the preservation is concerned?—I have seen wood removed—kauri, totara, and black-pine.

44. What opinion have you formed in that connection?—I have seen kauri after being in the ground for between twenty-five and thirty years as good as it went in. It depends entirely on the class and quality of the timber. Of course, there are various grades in both totara and black-pine, and also kauri, but if you get the best of each they are, I think, equally durable.

45. Now, as to the effect of the water, have you had any experience in regard to rivers and streams in connection with protective works and bridge-making?—No, I have seen it used, but I have not had sufficient experience to be able to pass an opinion upon it.

46. Does it pay to build a house to let in Christchurch?—I do not know. I have not built any for letting purposes.

47. Have you much difficulty in obtaining kauri in Christchurch?—Yes, it is rather difficult. We have had several orders cancelled or delayed for a time. It is very difficult in Christchurch to get kauri from the mill.

48. What about the price?—It seems an excessive price.

49. You believe that we should let the timber from other countries come in here free?—The one particular timber, Oregon pine, in bulk, but I would not admit it in the small sizes.

50. Why?—Simply because by bringing it in in bulk we shall insure, I think, a better quality of timber; and it will make labour in New Zealand in cutting it up to the sizes required. If we brought it in in large pieces not less than 12 by 2 or 12 by 3 it would have the effect of not coming into direct competition with red-pine, because red-pine would be there in the specific sizes required. The Oregon pine would have to be cut into the different sizes, and, rather than go to the trouble of having the Oregon cut, they would use the red-pine.

51. Have you had any difficulty in obtaining good red-pine here?—There is not the same amount of good figured rimu in mixed lots that there was some years ago, but my opinion is that with all red-pine there is very little of it bad. There is the figured class of red-pine and also the milder dead colour that often passes as such, and if you examine it you will find the heart there just as you find it in the figured timber.

52. How does building in wood compare with building in brick in Christchurch?—I should say about 10 per cent. extra for brickwork.

53. Has building in brick increased in Christchurch?—Not to any appreciable extent.

54. You think it is just as profitable, from a permanent standpoint, to build in wood as in brick?—I do not know. I think the majority of people prefer wood. I think the feeling is that they think it is a better house and more wholesome.

55. But from the standpoint of repairs, depreciation, and the difficulty of getting good seasoned timber, is it not more profitable to build in brick?—I think you could get the timber all right—there is no difficulty about that.

56. You get all the timber from the timber-merchants here, do you?—No, a considerable amount of it comes through the timber-merchants from the bush, but they are direct orders obtained through the timber-merchants.

57. Would it not pay you to get it yourself direct without the middleman?—I do not know whether it would.