

29. When did the last shipment arrive?—We have not had any for six months.

30. You are aware that there are complaints from the West Coast in respect to the importation of Oregon affecting the sawmilling industry?—I know nothing of the matter with the exception of what I read in the newspaper.

31. Speaking from the standpoint of the local market, would you say that if there be a falling-off in the sawmilling trade on the West Coast it is due to any extent to the importation of Oregon?—In my opinion, it is not all due to the Oregon. Oregon must take a share, of course. The proportion of Oregon that has come into the place probably would have been replaced by rimu had there been no Oregon; but it is owing to the state of the money-market, I take it, that the falling-off has occurred. In our business, contracts have been held up owing to the money-market. We consider that a lot of our business has gone off owing to the state of the money-market.

32. Is not the quantity of Oregon compared with the quantity of West Coast timber used in Christchurch very small indeed?—I do not know. There seems to be a lot of Oregon about the place.

33. Since when has there been?—During the past twelve months.

34. And all you know of is one shipment that has come in during the last twelve months?—I have read of others. We have only had one, but I understand there have been other shipments come in.

35. What quantity did that ship bring, do you remember?—No. I believe it was about 800,000 ft., but I am not stating that authoritatively.

36. Do you know anything as regards the class of Oregon to which it belonged?—It seemed fair Oregon, as far as I know Oregon. Of course, we have always handled it more or less in small quantities.

37. Do you send much Oregon to country stations? Does it pay to do so?—No. We do not look upon Oregon as a very profitable timber. It is right down on bed-rock.

38. Then, what does find its way into the local market is utilised locally and does not go out into the country?—I understand that that is so. It is mostly large stuff, and therefore, I take it, it goes into big buildings for beams and so forth.

39. Now, as to duty: do you think that Oregon is at present handicapped sufficiently?—I am only giving my own opinion, but I think the duty is all right as it is. I do not think it would be wise to take it off or to increase it. I should say, leave things as they are.

40. Is there any agreement between the timber-merchants with regard to the price of jarrah?—Not that I know of.

41. There has been no alteration made in the price of jarrah in the local market within the last twelve months?—I understand there has been a slight rise.

42. When did that rise take place?—Probably about eight months ago.

43. Are you all charging the same price for jarrah?—Yes, I understand so.

44. Then, this rise was in consequence of an agreement come to between the timber-merchants?—I could not say that at all.

45. How did you come to increase your price for jarrah? Was it in consequence of any agreement or understanding or suggestion on the part of any other person in the trade?—It was mutually arranged by the timber-merchants that the price should be a certain figure, and it is not a bit too much. There is nothing much in it.

46. What was the reason for the increase taking place?—That I could not say.

47. Before you agree to an increase do you not know the reason why such increase should be made?—I was not at the meeting that regulated that matter.

48. Whatever the others do you fall in with—is that so?—Certainly, if it is reasonable.

49. But in this case can you say whether the increase in the price was reasonable?—I should say it was.

50. What were you selling jarrah at before this increase was made in the price?—£1 2s. a hundred.

51. What are you selling at now?—Twenty-three shillings.

52. As regards kauri, do you favour an export duty on kauri to keep it in the country?—I could hardly say; it is a matter I have never gone far into. I should think that is more a matter for the Government to decide. But there is no doubt kauri is a very good timber. It can scarcely be done without.

53. You are a member of the association. Can you tell us how many are in the association?—No.

54. Is there any fee payable to join the association?—Yes.

55. Do you know the amount of it?—Five guineas, I think.

56. Are all the timber-merchants in Christchurch in it?—I think there are some outside of it.

57. Do you know the reason why they will not join?—I have not the least idea.

58. Do they sell cheaper than you people?—I do not think so.

59. You are all the same?—I understand so. I have been told so. I have seen no price-list, so I could not state authoritatively.

60. With regard to jarrah, do you combine together for the importation of jarrah, or how is it brought in here?—It is taken in much the same way as Oregon, I think. If a man wants it he takes a portion of the cargo.

61. Can you tell us what quantity of Oregon you have sold in the last twelve months?—I should have to go into the books to state definitely, but, judging by the stack of timber as we got it and as it is at the present moment, I should think about 12,000 ft. to 14,000 ft.

62. Could you say what amount you sold for the twelve months previous to that?—None. Well, there might have been two or three hundred feet.

63. Have you any objection to giving the Commission the quantity of timber all round that you sold twelve months ago?—No, I do not know that I have; but to give figures like that I should require to go to the office.

64. Would you mind getting that information for us? I want the amount shown as sold in the last balance-sheet, as compared with that in the previous balance-sheet—the figures for all timbers, rimu and Oregon pine being particularised?—Yes.