

117. It covers the whole of the timber you buy?—No, there are two prices.

118. What are they?—6s. 9d. and 8s. 6d.

119. *Mr. Mander.*] You say that within the last year or two you have increased the price of jarrah 1s.?—I think it has gone up 1s. The Jarrah Company has raised it 1s. We simply go by their list.

120. And they put the price up on you first?—Yes, certainly. We simply charge their list price. We have practically nothing to do with it.

121. You had to pay 1s. extra for the jarrah, and consequently charged that extra?—Yes. If we are charged 1s. extra we have to charge that amount in addition.

122. Would a reduction of 2s. in the duty on jarrah reduce the price of rimu, do you think?—I could not say.

123. Would a builder get the whole of that 2s. if the duty were taken off jarrah?—There is not a great deal of jarrah used. It is only about 4 per cent. of the timber in a building.

124. But supposing the duty were taken off Oregon pine, do you think that would reduce the price of the building to that extent on all the timber used for building in Christchurch?—I could hardly say what effect it would have.

125. If it did reduce the price by 2s. on the market, would it also reduce the price of rimu to that extent?—Well, rimu could not be sold at that price.

126. Could the rimu-producers compete with Oregon if the duty was taken off and it was sold at 2s. less in Christchurch?—It could not compete. There would have to be a cheaper way of producing it than at present.

127. Do you not think that, if a merchant in Christchurch made a larger profit out of Oregon than out of rimu, he would force Oregon on the market?—I suppose it would be natural that he would sell the best-paying line.

128. *Mr. EU.*] Are you interested in sawmilling at all?—No.

129. You are purely a timber-merchant?—Yes. We have no interest whatever in any mill—we deal entirely through the agent.

130. You told us with regard to Oregon that it was mostly imported in large sizes and used for big buildings?—I should say so. It is very useful for big work.

131. And necessary?—Yes.

132. That being so you would not advocate any higher duty to exclude it from the market?—No, I do not think I would advocate a higher duty on it.

133. Now, with regard to jarrah, was there not an Australian company in operation here two years ago?—Yes.

134. Was the timber that was then being sold at the price competing with some of our local timbers—black-pine or any other timber?—Yes, it was certainly competing with black-pine.

135. Is it a fact that the Australian company was bought out by a local syndicate of merchants?—I could not say.

136. Is the present company a Christchurch company?—I do not know who it consists of. It is called by the same name—the Jarrah Timber Company.

137. You never heard there was a change of ownership of the yard in Moorhouse Avenue?—I heard there was an alteration taking place in the business. The manager here went north.

138. Who is the manager there now?—Mr. West.

139. A Christchurch man?—That is more than I can say.

140. Is it not a fact that after the change in management the price advanced?—I think it advanced.

141. You say the price went up 1s.?—I think it was something like that. I could not say unless I had the list here.

142. I understood you to say that jarrah had gone up 1s. within the last twelve months?—Yes, it went up, I think. We only get a buying discount.

143. That is since the change in the management has taken place?—I think that is so, but I could not say for certain.

144. *Mr. Field.*] Is Oregon being used for framing in the small buildings and cottages in Christchurch?—I think there is some of it being used.

145. Is it not a fact that rimu would be used if Oregon were not here?—Yes, I think rimu would come in.

146. Then Oregon is to that extent displacing red-pine?—To that extent, and also for scantlings.

147. Mr. Arnold asked you a question in which he apparently suggested that as a result of the sawmills being closed a number of men would be thrown out of employment. Would not other results take place besides? Would not the capital of the sawmiller be lost?—Certainly, if the mill were closed. It would depreciate very considerably if the mill were shut up.

148. He could not get anything for his trams?—That is a thing I do not know. The thing must be worth something.

149. But if milling is bad all over the colony it is no good trying to sell sawmilling machinery?—I suppose it would be on a falling market.

150. What about the timber on the ground? Would not that be burned and the land used for farming?—That is a thing I could not say. I really do not know which pays the best.

151. It would be a pity to see our valuable timber go up in smoke?—I understand a lot of it is burned, and if they could make money out of it by milling it you would think they would do so.

152. Then, you do not think it would be better to have the money spent in the colony instead of sending it to America?—Yes, I think we can do with all the money we can get here.

153. There is also the railway freight which would be lost. Would not that have a bad effect also?—Yes, it would lessen the revenue of the country.