

21. Do you find it suitable?—Not for manufacturing furniture.
22. For what purposes do you use it?—For drawers' sides and the bottoms of drawers, and also for dowels.
23. Have you had experience of it with regard to chairmaking?—Yes, it is very good for chairmaking.
24. Does its tough character recommend it?—Yes.
25. Does it take the stain well?—Yes, but it is not suitable for doing up into joinery in wide boards, such as table-tops.
26. Do you find any trouble in getting it in seasoned condition?—We always have to season it ourselves.
27. Do you find it shrinks at all, or to any great extent, if it is properly seasoned?—No, if it is well seasoned, and especially if it was cut at the proper time of the year. That is what I consider the trouble with the timber. I think that if our colonial woods were cut at the proper time of the year they would compare favourably with any other timber.
28. So you agree with the Southland sawmiller who told us that the beech cut in the winter-time was not so liable to warp and shrink?—That is so.
29. Seeing that we have very large areas of beech forest, which is regarded generally by builders as a useless timber, do you think it would be a good thing if the Forestry Department took the question in hand and tried to show that under proper treatment beech could be turned into a good marketable timber?—Yes, I do.
30. That would be far better than the timber being burnt on the ground?—Certainly.
31. *Mr. Hanan.*] Do you favour an export duty on kauri?—Yes.
32. Do you think it desirable that the duties should be removed from imported timber?—Not altogether.
33. Off what would you remove the duty—Oregon?—I would not remove the duty altogether. I certainly believe in a duty being placed on it—a certain duty. I also contend that if we require a timber for building purposes here, and it is of better quality for building than any colonial timber, we ought to allow it to come in here favourably.
34. What timber would you suggest should come in here favourably?—Oregon.
35. You would have a duty on Oregon, would you?—Not a prohibitive duty.
36. What would you suggest—that it should come in free in balk or in small sizes?—Of course, I am not conversant with that. That has more to do with the builder than myself. Builders always use certain sizes, and they would know. If the timber seasons well in the cut lengths without twisting I say it would be better to come in in that way.
37. Would you increase the duty on Oregon, or allow matters to remain as they are?—I should leave them as they are.
38. As to furniture made of New Zealand timber, have the prices gone up in the last five years?—Yes.
39. How much per cent. would you say?—About 10 per cent.
40. The cost of furniture has gone up about 10 per cent.?—The cost of furniture has gone up more than that (cost of production).
41. How much would you say in the last five years, speaking generally?—At the present time you can get furniture much cheaper in Christchurch than you could five years ago.
42. Of an inferior class, is it?—Yes.
43. But taking a certain class of furniture—a good class of furniture—what would you say the increase has been?—Now I think of it, I do not believe there has been any increase at all in the price of furniture (selling price).
44. That is, first-class furniture?—Middle-class or first-class.
45. Has the price of labour gone up in the last five years in your business?—No, labour has not gone up in the cabinetmaking business.
46. Is there any more machinery employed?—Yes.
47. That has not tended to bring down the price of furniture?—Yes, it has. It would, naturally.
48. That is, on the cheaper class of furniture?—It is essential now to use machinery for all classes of furniture. It is different from when I learnt my trade, and took everything out in the rough and trimmed it up.
49. Those doors that you spoke of, did you make them or your father?—My father made them. Although I am supposed to turn out a fair quality of work now, I do not think my father would have cared to turn out anything of the kind.
50. That applies to other things as well?—Generally speaking, in our line the youths have to go to the Technical Schools now to learn their trade.
51. That is due, I suppose, to the desire for cheapness—everything cheap?—Partly so. You do come across some people who want good furniture. I have private orders now for furniture that probably would be taken out of an English design-book.
52. You find, then, that the class of furniture being sold now is, generally speaking, much inferior to the class sold ten years ago?—Oh, yes! Mind you, there are men here capable of turning out work as good as the first class in England; but, generally speaking, it is not so.
53. There is more demand for inferior, cheap furniture?—Yes.
54. Can you tell us anything about the importation of furniture? Is it increasing in Christchurch? Is more coming in?—I do not know definitely. I have been told that it is. I have been told that the colonial workmanship is down very low in some people's estimation, and that they are buying imported furniture.
55. You do not know whether the imports are increasing or not?—No.
56. Is the industry in a good position, generally speaking?—Yes. Of course, for the last two months it has been down very much, but two or three months ago it was impossible to get cabinetmakers.