

fifty-five years ago, was cut down fifteen years since and sawn into planks, and the timber was allowed to season. I got a small piece to make a memento of the occasion, but it was more like working up a piece of sappy cork than oak. I made a small frame of it, but within four years' time it was completely riddled with worm, and I threw it away. Therefore the question of climate should be carefully watched. Some of the Scotch fir that grows in Norway and Sweden, and also in England, is very inferior in quality when cut into timber.

15. *Mr. Adams.*] Are you sure that the oak you refer to was British oak?—Well, it seemed like American oak. I do not think it was English oak.

16. *Dr. Cockayne.*] Do you think it would be advisable to have made an accurate examination of our latest plantations to ascertain what relationship their wood bears to the wood of similar trees when grown in their native country?—I am sure the information would be very valuable.

17. With regard to growing timber close to the market, have you thought of the question of the price of the land required, and how that factor would bear on the ultimate cost of the timber, reckoning over the cycle of years involved the compound interest on the rental value of the land?—That would have to be considered. It might cost you more than the freight required to bring that timber into the country from some place where land is cheaper, but occasionally there should be an opportunity, all things being equal, of selecting some cheap land near the probable market. It might pay the State to acquire land at a higher figure for the sake of obtaining the necessary suitable climatic conditions under which to grow the trees. You must consider that factor in selecting the site.

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WILLIAM BROCK LEYLAND SWORN and examined. (No. 52.)

1. *The Chairman.*] You are a member of the firm of Leyland and O'Brien, sawmillers?—Yes, but we have not had a special meeting of sawmillers as to this question. I might mention that I was a member of the Timber Commission, and during that inquiry we had it in evidence that, whereas in the United States substitutes for timber were used more largely than in any other country in the world, the consumption of timber *per capita* had, over a period of twenty years, increased 94 per cent. as against an increase in the population of only 50 per cent.

2. Would not the increase respecting timber be largely accounted for by the demand for timber for paper-pulp?—I think not, because the bulk of the latter comes from Canada.

3. Do you think the time has arrived when, through timber getting too high in price, other materials will be substituted, and thus automatically obviate the demand for timber?—The price of timber is regulated by the cost of its production and placing on the market, plus royalties.

4. If the cost of timber goes higher and higher do you not think more building would be done in other permanent materials?—In the case of buildings finished in permanent materials, such as ferro-concrete, a lot of timber is used and afterwards wasted. More timber has been used in constructing our ferro-concrete wharves than was used in the wooden wharves. It is low-grade timber that is used.

5. Timber which can be grown cheaply?—Yes, not necessarily of a durable material.

6. *Dr. Cockayne.*] Is it possible that in the future there will be a greater demand for second- and third-class timber than in the past?—Yes. I do not think the demand for high-grade timber will decrease, but it will fluctuate according to the volume of trade and the money-market. As to the area where timber should be planted, at one time we looked to Te Kuiti for a large supply of timber. A large population has sprung up there, and timber will be required for the local population, and so I see no objection to planting in that district. By the time it grows the population will be there to use it. On the other hand, the importation of timber should be encouraged in view of the timber-famine that is inevitable in this country. I should allow the people living near the coast to use the imported timbers, while the inland population could take advantage of the supplies locally grown inland. Thus the transit problem will become a vanishing quantity. It is quite immaterial where it is planted so long as there is the supply.

7. *The Chairman.*] Do you think the export of white-pine should be prohibited in view of the demand for it here for butter-boxes?—I do not think I can speak with authority on that question, as we do not export timber.

8. Is there any other matter you wish to mention?—As to kauri, when the Government offer a bush for sale a time-limit is imposed in which the timber must be removed, and if an extension of time is required the miller has to pay 5 per cent. on the capital value for such extension. I suggest that a longer period should be granted, and the conditions as to holding the timber minimized. This would be in the interests of timber-conservation, as under the present system the miller is forced to cut it sooner than he requires to.

9. *Mr. Lethbridge.*] Would not that be in the interests of the large sawmiller as against the small man?—Possibly; but the smaller man cannot buy this timber in small lots, and we have to look at the general effect on forest-conservation and the timber-supply.

10. Supposing the United States prohibited the exportation of timber, where should we be if we have not enough local supplies?—We should be thrown back on Canada if they would give it to us, but they have increased the price.

11. *Mr. Clarke.*] That means that we must plant?—Yes, and if we are to conserve our own timber we must also import. I speak as a fairly large holder of New Zealand timbers. If you do not import you raise the value of timber we are holding. Timber rises in value as supplies get scarcer.

12. *Mr. Murdoch.*] Your contention is that in other countries timber is getting scarcer every day?—Yes, and some countries are getting very jealous of their reserve supplies, and not inclined to let them go out.