

13. We saw a paragraph this morning stating that bush contained a fifty-years supply of white-pine for the whole Dominion. Is that correct?—I do not think there is any bush in the North Island with fifty years' supply of timber in it. I read the paragraph, and thought it was a matter of "blow."

14. Can you tell us the price of Oregon pine here?—We are retailing Oregon at anything between £1 and £1 5s. a hundred feet.

15. From a timber-merchant's point of view is it a satisfactory timber to deal with?—It is a much superior timber to the timber that comes from our Main Trunk line, the latter being full of sugar, which is what a worm lives on. The Taranaki red-pine is very hearty timber, and when dried there is very little chance of the worm getting into it.

16. Do you think the time of the year the timber is cut has anything to do with its softness?—No. I have read of such being the case, but my experience of a lifetime indicates there is nothing in the contention. It would never do to close the mills so many months in the year, and only carry on operations at the time deemed proper for cutting the timber.

17. Has *Pinus insignis* ever been milled here?—No.

18. I suppose you know a good deal is used in Canterbury now?—So I hear, and also in the Bay of Islands. I have not much faith in *Pinus insignis* as a timber for building purposes. The reason our houses decay so quickly now I attribute to painting them too soon after erection. If the paint were kept off a house for two or three years and plenty of time allowed for evaporation the house would last one-third of the time longer. Fifty years ago I built a house in the Waikato of white-pine, and it was left unpainted for seven years on account of the difficulty of obtaining white-lead and oil. It was afterwards painted. I saw it eight years ago, and it was in splendid preservation. I never send out timber for joinery unless it has been in my yard two years for seasoning. The fault in the past has been that the timber is put into a house too soon after being cut.

19. *Mr. Lethbridge.*] You say the insects attack the wood for the sugar. Are you aware that the powellizing process is to put sugar into the wood?—No. I object to that process, because I think you injure the timber if you dry it too quickly. Timber must be dried naturally.

20. Do you object to powellized timber?—That is my view of it. Last month I sent away over 50,000 ft. of timber I have had in my yard over ten years, and the buyers are satisfied it will make good joinery. I have not the slightest doubt that it is the sugar in the wood that attracts the worm.

21. *Dr. Cockayne.*] Have you considered that the sugar contained in growing timbers differs at different seasons of the year?—The sap rises and falls, and no doubt sugar is contained in the sap, and there is a certain amount of rise and fall of the sap at different periods of the year; but it would be impossible to carry on this business so as to arrange to fell trees at certain times of the year only. I have never seen a comparison between timber felled in December and that felled in June. I think there is very little in the argument.

22. *Mr. Clarke.*] You agree that the duration of the timber-supply in Taranaki is very short?—Yes.

23. Do you consider it a matter of importance that some scheme of replanting should be carried out at an early date?—At my age I do not think that I should trouble much about the next generation. As soon as the timber is exhausted the generation affected will find a substitute, and they are doing so now. The day is not far distant when all the houses will be built of concrete, even to the doors and sashes. The joists will be of reinforced concrete, and the walls.

24. Do you consider that it would be better to provide the material we know all about rather than trust to a substitute that may not eventuate?—I think our land is better turning out butter than growing trees for a generation that may not want them.

25. Supposing we have land that is not suitable for growing butter-fat, would it not be better to plant those areas in timber?—I find that good timber grows on good land. At one time it was remarked in Auckland that the gum lands were miserable country to farm, but to-day that land is producing butter that is putting Taranaki in the shade. I hear people remark on the wholesale slaughter of timber in this country, and I should regret it also as a timber-dealer; but I do not, because as far as our trade is concerned we owe more to butter than we do to standing timber.

26. At the same time you must admit we must have timber for butter-boxes?—There are already half a dozen substitutes.

27. Mostly made of wood-pulp?—No.

---

WELLINGTON, THURSDAY, 15TH MAY, 1913.

KENNETH WARING DALRYMPLE sworn and examined. (No. 72.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your occupation?—I am a farmer, residing at Rangitikei.

2. What matter do wish to mention?—There is a large block of country from Turakina down to Rangitikei belonging to the Government, but at present leased to neighbouring land-owners. It is a part of the national endowment, but is practically one-third worthless now, and, with the exception of one man, the holders are willing to allow the Government to take and plant one-third of this block without asking for any reduction of their rent. The land is held on the condition that it can be resumed on twelve months' notice without compensation. The block consists of 8,000 acres. The part resumed would have to be planted with marram-grass first, and I suggest that the area along the coast should be taken in hand first in order