

up to 20 ft., by 12 in. in width. For sizes beyond that the price rises 6d. per hundred feet, which makes Oregon a very expensive timber; so that the fear of its swamping the market has not been justified. I think our own timber-supplies should be conserved for our own use, if possible, as we consider that we have not more than from thirty-five to forty years' supply of timber in the Dominion according to our present rate of consumption. On the basis of an increased rate of consumption the position becomes more serious still. We are using up our supply and making no provision to take its place.

4. Are you not aware that the Government are planting certain areas?—Yes, something is being done, but in our opinion it is totally inadequate for the requirements of this country.

5. This Commission has to face the problem of growing timber in such a way that it will not cost £200 to produce £100 worth of timber. Have you any opinion to offer on that point?—I think there are many large blocks of waste land that are suitable for afforestation but not for any other purpose, and they should be dealt with in that way, and so made a valuable asset to the Dominion.

6. The cost of labour and the price of money make it a harder matter to grow timber economically in this country than in Europe?—I understand the difficulty. Have you considered the question of making it obligatory on the part of landowners to plant a certain area of their holding?

7. Whatever might be done in that respect in the future, I do not think the principle could be made retrospective. Settlers might be encouraged to plant trees on the remaining hilltops by the supply of trees at cost price. Would you support that proposal?—The benefit derived by the farming industry from tree-planting would compensate them for the loss of the small area that would be planted. The Government might encourage them to plant by imparting the necessary information as to the trees that should be used, or the seed that should be planted. But I would not urge that the farming industry should be subsidized by special grants or the remission of rates. I would oppose such a suggestion.

8. Is much foreign timber being imported into Wellington now?—Not very much. The only foreign timbers at all largely used here are Oregon pine and a few of the hardwoods for wharves and bridges.

9. Is much kauri used here?—No; we cannot get it.

10. I suppose you do not use the white-pine either?—No. I do not think my federation would urge that that timber should be conserved, for the reason that it grows on a class of land it does not pay to keep idle, and also in the forest it is mixed with other timbers like rimu, which you cannot mill without also destroying the white-pine.

11. Would your federation be in favour of means being adopted to prevent waste in the cutting of milling-timbers in our present forests?—The system followed in the Auckland Land District is the proper one, the timber being sold as it stands, and not allow the millers to cut the best only, destroying what they do not want.

12. When the Commission was at Taumarunui we inspected some automatic machinery for the utilization of the smaller pieces of timber which otherwise would be wasted, thus using up another 25 per cent. of the log. Have you seen that machinery?—No; but I have no doubt that if the work can be done economically it would help our timber-supplies to last out.

13. Have you had any experience in building in ferro-concrete?—As much as the average builder.

14. In that class of building you require a considerable amount of timber for moulds?—Yes.

15. I presume that timber used in that kind of construction need only be of a cheap and inferior class, a non-durable timber?—Certainly, as it could not be used more than twice. You can use the scantlings over and over again, but not the boards. An inferior class of timber would do.

15A. Such a timber as *Pinus insignis*?—Yes.

16. *Dr. Cockayne.*] Would not the knots spoil it?—It would scarcely do for the frame of a building where it has to bear a certain strain, but would probably answer for the timbering for ferro-concrete work. Going into that matter a little farther, as a rule where ferro-concrete is used we are pulling down the very small buildings and replacing them with large buildings. Therefore the timber required in connection with the larger building of ferro-concrete would be double the amount now used in the smaller building.

17. Of course, the larger building would have very much more accommodation?—Yes, in the case of business premises and offices. For dwellings I doubt if more accommodation is afforded in the new buildings, which are not very lofty.

18. If a small building is replaced by one in ferro-concrete in connection with which as much timber as there was in the smaller house is used, would not there be a *per capita* increase in the amount of timber consumed?—Possibly not, because an inferior class of timber would be used. In a ferro-concrete building the only timber that is used is round about the doors, frames, and windows, and the internal fittings, such as shelving and dado; but even in a ferro-concrete building people are doing away with all the timber they can in order to make the building fireproof.

19. How would the cost of a building in ferro-concrete compare with one in wood?—The ferro-concrete building would cost about 25 per cent. more than the other.

20. And the upkeep charges would be less?—Yes, both for maintenance and insurance.

21. The cost of painting would be very much less?—Yes, although even ferro-concrete buildings have to be attended to. They are not quite waterproof.

22. *Mr. Clarke.*] With regard to the last questions the inference is that in consequence of the new methods of construction less timber will be required, but is it not the fact that most of the ferro-concrete buildings are not dwellings, but stores and warehouses, where it would be