

GREYMOUTH, TUESDAY, 25TH MARCH, 1913.

Mr. G. H. BOYD and Mr. EDMUND STRATFORD sworn and examined. (Nos. 27 and 28.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What association do you represent?—The Westland Timber-millers' Association, Westland. We have held a meeting, and decided to place our views on the subject before the Commission in writing. There is nothing we wish to add now. The white-pine question is the main one from the millers' point of view.

2. Have you any remarks or suggestions to make, Mr. Boyd, regarding the question of the administration of the Timber Regulations, as to whether the system could be improved?—As far as the supervision of the cutting is concerned?

3. Yes, and the administration generally, especially with respect to the dual control of the Commissioner of Crown Lands and the Warden?—We have not taken that point into consideration particularly. As you know, dual control is always difficult. Personally, I think it would be better if the matter were put under one control. But here we work under the mining laws also, and I do not really see how you are going to get away from the present system as far as this district is concerned.

4. It can be got away from. There are mining laws in force in the Auckland District, and there is no difficulty experienced there. Perhaps your association would like to go into the matter and forward the Commission an expression of opinion on the subject in writing?—I am quite sure our association would rather work under the Land Board, but we can go into the matter more fully and forward our views in writing.

5. It would strengthen the case if you could give specific instances of the way in which the control is at present conflicting, and where it entails loss both to the miller and the Crown?—I do not think we would have any difficulty about doing that.

6. Have you anything to add?—I do not think so. The waterside workers intend, I think, to address the Commission in writing, and to protest against any duty being imposed on silver-pine, as it would affect their earning-powers.

7. *Mr. Clarke.*] In your written statement you might include a suggestion as to what timbers the Sawmillers' Association consider would be suitable for their trade when our own timbers have been worked out; because we must assume, although you are sawmillers now, your successors will be timber-dealers in the future. Will you consider that?—We have gone into that point, but the information at our disposal on the subject was very limited. No experimental planting has taken place on the West Coast, and we think the Commission might look into the matter and arrange that some steps should be taken to provide for future timber-supplies in this district. We have here large plateaux that are absolutely bare, and that is where the silver-pine grows; it is a hardy wood. Possibly ground that would grow such timber would also grow some of the Australian hard woods. We have no frosts on the Coast.

8. *Dr. Cockayne.*] I think the *pakihi* land could be afforested, and it would be the best way to deal with it: what do you think?—Yes, it might do. There is a lot of land on the West Coast that can never be suitable for agriculture, and to plant it would be the best way to deal with it. But there are a lot of areas here that are not *pakihi* land.

9. *The Chairman.*] We have to consider the question of the compound interest on the value of the land mounting up all the time, and so swelling the initial cost that it might be found at the end, say, of a hundred years that it is costing £500 to produce £100 worth of timber. Have you considered that aspect?—Well, all the hard wood is going up in price in Australia all the time, and as far as cheap land is concerned you cannot get cheaper land than *pakihi*, because it is absolutely valueless.

NELSON, THURSDAY, 27TH MARCH, 1913.

JOHN POLLOCK sworn and examined. (No. 29.)

1. *The Chairman.*] During our investigations it has been suggested by some witnesses that the unrestricted roaming of deer through the climatic reserves will tend to the destruction of the young trees, and stop the regeneration of the forests. Are you prepared to give any evidence on the point?—I understand the deer do clear out the underscrub, and young trees in some cases, and everything within their reach.

2. What is your official position?—I presume I am here as chairman of the council of the acclimatization society. I have been all my life in this district, and spent some years in the field as a cadet surveyor.

3. Has it come under your notice that the deer are doing damage to the forests?—I do not think they are barking the trees, but they are certainly eating out all the underscrub and young trees.

4. Are they doing any damage to the settlers' orchards?—We have had complaints from settlers on the Moutere Hills, but, as far as we can ascertain, there is only one very small herd there of a dozen red deer; and the population is very small.

5. Are the deer generally distributed throughout the ranges here?—Yes, they are, pretty well, in this province.

6. Does your society allow the settlers to shoot the deer indiscriminately where they interfere with settlements?—We have no power to so allow them. The settlers can apply to the Minister of Internal Affairs for a permit. We received these complaints before the opening of the deer-stalking season, and we deferred dealing with them until the season closed, when probably the nuisance will have been abated by the season's shooting—the months of March and April.