

63. More than that. So that there is no reason why, when this railway is built, there should not be such tram-lines built in all directions?—That is so.

64. That is the ordinary forestry practice?—Yes. I know one case where timber is being brought twenty miles.

65. Can you tell us briefly the cost of planting timber in this area, compared with planting in other districts in New Zealand?—Planting is very cheaply done in pumice land. It would cost from £2 to £4 per acre; but in heavier land in the South Island it might run into double that; and in the North Island, in the clay soils, it would be perhaps 50 per cent. more than in the Rotorua district.

66. What is your idea of growth in this district?—It is more rapid than anywhere else in New Zealand for coniferous trees.

67. Or perhaps than in any other part of the world?—Yes, possibly.

68. And did I understand that your estimate was that when these plantations are yielding the annual yield will be 500,000,000 ft. of sawn timber and 200,000 cords of immature timber annually?—Yes, that is my estimate.

69. That is far more than is being cut by all the mills in New Zealand to-day?—Yes.

70. Do you suggest that that justifies the construction of the railway?—Yes.

71. Can you tell us how much of this country is actually planted at the present time?—Of the 300,000 acres, it is something in the region of 120,000 acres.

72. Now, is it your experience that the forests improve the quality of the country upon which they are grown?—Oh, yes, they do.

73. You have a fair acquaintance of the area to be served by the railway?—Yes.

74. Do you know of any useless land in that area?—I do not think there is any land there that could not be used for farming or tree-planting; you could get 100 per cent. utilization.

75. Do you know of any inaccessible country there, or is the country easy for roading?—Yes, it is easy for making roads.

76. You consider that timber and other produce could be brought out easily, owing to the contour of the country?—Yes.

77. As to the cost of roadmaking, have you any idea?—Just making the ordinary roads, it costs from 5s. to 10s. per chain, without metalling.

78. About utilization of thinnings: what do you think of them for fencing purposes?—They are quite good for temporary fencing, and they will last four or five years.

79. You think they would need to be creosoted?—Yes. They are quite good for droppers.

80. And for rails?—Yes, I have used them for rails, and they are quite serviceable.

81. And for scaffolding?—Yes, they could be used for that, but I have never used them for that myself. They are being used for mine-props.

82. What is your estimate as to the length of time that the native timbers will serve the Dominion—when will they be all cut out?—I believe that the State Forest Service estimate is something like twenty-five years.

83. And after that we shall have to depend upon planted forests?—And to some extent on New Zealand hardwood, like beech.

84. You consider that the railway will be necessary to develop these forests so that in the end they will give the maximum yield to the taxpayer?—Yes, I do.

85. *The Chairman.*] You consider that subsidiary tramways are necessary, and do you conclude that if this railway were constructed it would be necessary also to construct subsidiary tram-lines?—Yes.

86. I wish that point to be clearly understood, that in addition to the construction of the railway the witness considers it would be necessary to construct subsidiary tramways. Now, the next point: Have you any idea of the cost of constructing subsidiary tramways per mile?—Possibly about £1,000.

87. If I told you that the estimate given to the Commission was £3,000 per mile, would you think that would be right?—You could spend £3,000 per mile, but it all depends upon the class of country: that country is fairly level.

88. Would it cost that in new country?—I do not think in that country it would cost £3,000 per mile; I think it would be from £1,000 to £1,200 per mile.

89. Have you in your evidence considered the influence of the Taupo Totara Co.'s tramway-line in regard to the railway that would be built?—That serves quite a different area altogether. I do not think that that could compete with this particular line.

90. Of course you know that is a different view from what the company itself holds, and which it has given to the Commission?—Yes, I dare say.

91. You differ from their view?—Yes, they give a different view, but they also know that it means a considerable deviation from their present route.

92. Do you know that that company believes the time will come—and probably in the not-far-distant future—when that timber railway will have to be abandoned altogether owing to the cutting-out of the timber; that the question of sinking fund arose to wipe off the cost in a given time? You would think that possibly a railway being constructed would apply to that?—No, I do not think it would apply to that line on account of the timber cutting out; that would never apply in the case of the Rotorua-Taupo line.

93. Have you given any thought to the passenger traffic along the proposed line?—No, I have not.

*Mr. Hanson:* I do not disagree with anything Mr. Goudie has said, except the time for the utilization of the timber; Mr. Goudie said ten years, and we think he is optimistic in that estimate.

94. *The Chairman.*] What is your view?—We have to get a plant established and—