

83. You said that timber was being brought from Waikari to Rotorua by road: that is about sixty miles, is it not?—Between fifty and sixty miles.

84. Do you consider that if timber can be brought fifty miles satisfactorily by road there would be any great necessity for a railway to carry it?—You have put in one word “satisfactorily.” I say it is done: how much better will it be brought by rail?

85. There are twenty-seven lorries already running on the road: does not that suggest that road traffic may be suitable if the roads were improved?—No, sir, it will be too expensive; and also, the railway would be convenient to get goods away. There will be a loss on everything produced, in getting it out by road.

86. You stated that the Government had put it out that there was 100,000 ft. per acre of timber grown on certain land: do you consider that is anything like an average estimate for the timber in that district?—It depends upon the age of the timber.

87. I mean fully grown timber?—I think that is quite reasonable—that is, on a forty-year rotation, as I said. I do not subscribe to the statement that you can cut £500 worth of *Pinus insignis* off an acre in twenty years.

88. Do you know the percentage of waste from the tree in the log to the sawn timber?—No, I am not an expert.

89. I take it that there is between 25 and 30 per cent. waste—over a quarter: would you agree with that?—I should think it is probable, but my figures were from Cashmore’s royalty-book. I took the figures from that book, and the figures worked out at 123,000 ft. to the acre.

90. Do you know Mr. Seeley, who is engineer to the Taupo Totara Timber Co., and in the past a member of the staff of the Government service?—I have never met him, but I have heard of him.

91. He made an estimate of the timber at Maroa sold to the Government?—That was native bush.

92. It is reckoned to be good?—It is quite a different thing.

93. If he estimates that on that land, which is supposed to contain the very best bush, the amount of the timber would be something in the vicinity of 30,000 ft. per acre, what would you say?—But native bush is worked with as little as 10,000 ft. to the acre.

94. But this is four times greater than Maroa?—The figures have proved it—123,000 ft. to the acre out of that pine bush.

95. You consider there will be about 750,000,000 ft. of timber in about thirty years?—Some of it will come in before that time.

96. Have you any idea as to the quantity of timber now in the area, to be served by the railway?—Do you mean planted timber or native timber?

97. Timber now anywhere that could be sold—native timber as well?—The Commission reports that in the Mokai Valley there was 570,000,000 ft. The Department gave evidence that altogether there was 4,000,000,000 ft., and they produced a map, marked off in squares, showing the quantity of timber in the various sections.

98. The great enemy, you said, was fire, which destroys thousands of acres in the summer-time: is not that a very serious menace? May we not have a vast area of timber to-day and have millions of feet of it missing to-morrow, in the summer-time?—It is quite true. It is a serious menace, and must be guarded against by having the country settled, and by having the inflammable areas of scrub ploughed under.

99. You say you do not respect Government valuations?—No. I would not give you threepence for a Government valuation.

100. You said that 1,000 acres in the Waikato or in the Reporoa district would produce more than 10,000 acres of blue-papa land?—Yes, sir. It would maintain a larger and more vigorous population and produce more wealth than 10,000 acres of blue papa, carrying a man, a shepherd, and ten thousand sheep.

101. If blue-papa country would carry one cow to the acre this country would carry ten to the acre?—I say there is very little blue-papa country that will carry cows at all.

102. Well, take it in sheep?—No, but a good deal of Waikato country carries seven sheep to the acre.

103. You still maintain it would carry ten times as much as blue-papa country?—Yes, certainly.

104. *Mr. Makitanara.*] You referred to the Mokai country?—Yes.

105. Is it a fact that there is a company there and a railway operating there?—Yes, they are getting their own timber out, but they refuse to carry timber for anybody else.

106. There is a tram-line there [indicated on map]?—Yes, a superior tramway.