

10. *Mr. Jenkins.*] Is that near Rotorua?—On the boundaries of the borough.
11. *The Chairman.*] It comes within the influence of the existing railway?—Yes.
12. Will you please confine yourself to what is likely to be influenced by the proposed railway?—Yes. I indicate on the map what may be described as tributary to the proposed Rotorua-Taupo Railway. Only 21 per cent., however, actually falls naturally to the railway. The balance has a fall towards the Rangitaiki Valley, but routes could be secured from that railway through the plantation area, generally up an adverse grade.
13. An adverse grade?—Yes, a grade not in favour of the load.
14. Are there any other plantation areas?—That is the only State Forest plantation in the area.
15. Can you tell the Committee anything about private plantations?—We are not much in touch with them, but I have a series of photographs of a plan of the areas.
16. But you cannot give any information as to areas?—I have no information as to other areas.
17. Have you any knowledge of the timbers?—Yes. That is a much bigger question, because it involves areas to the west of Taupo and right throughout the region.
18. Say up to within twenty miles on either side?—The twenty miles on the eastern side of the railway takes in practically no native timber of any importance; it would take in 70 or 80 million feet of native timber on the eastern side. That is a rough estimate.
19. What about the western side?—A very large quantity indeed is undoubtedly included, but for practical purposes it can hardly be described as accessible.
20. The Committee wishes information about that which would be accessible and likely to be brought to the railway if it were constructed?—The area of timber which I consider likely to be brought to the railway if it were constructed is comparatively small. It consists mainly of the timber at Tauri-Tutukau and the Paeroa Range.
21. What, roughly, are the areas?—I have gone more on quantities than areas. The Forest Service estimate is that 113 million feet are readily accessible on these two areas, Tauri-Tutukau and the Paeroa Range.
22. *Mr. Jenkins.*] Are they adjacent?—No, one is on one side of the Waikato and the other is on the other side. They are the principal areas. There are other small areas which might bring in even another 100 million feet. I did not prepare a plan along these lines.
23. *The Chairman.*] Do you know Maruia-Kirihunga?—No. It is held by the Railway Department. I have not been in any of that country. The Tongariro Co.'s line and to the east of the proposed line I know fairly well. In that connection there is a good deal of timber just outside the twenty-mile line.
24. Is that likely to be influenced by the railway running from Rotorua to Taupo?—It might, when the plantations finally come to maturity. I think that that timber will ultimately come down the Rangitaiki Valley.
25. By what method?—Possibly by rail.
26. Not by water?—No. The Matahina Tramways Co. has constructed fifteen miles of light railway in that direction now. It would require approximately another twenty-five or thirty miles to give access to this native forest. Incidentally, that would give access to the Kaingaroa plantations.
27. *Mr. Jenkins.*] That was anticipated when the line was being constructed?—That is quite possible, although it was not stated in the prospectus. The object of constructing the line was solely to tap the large area of timber at the end of the fifteen miles.
28. *The Chairman.*] Take the plantations planted with a view to the timber becoming available for use: have you any idea when that timber will begin to be usable?—Would it be possible to refer that question to my Head Office?
29. You can answer that you do not know?—I would prefer to do so. Some of it has only been planted now.
30. *Mr. Jenkins.*] Would any of it be usable within ten years?—Very little, except thinnings, and at present there is no market for thinnings. It is very hard to say what will happen to the thinnings. The mature timber will not be ready in ten years.
31. *The Chairman.*] Can you give the Committee any idea as to whether there would be sufficient timber when this railway would begin operations, if it were constructed, to warrant the construction of the line?—Timber alone—certainly not.
32. You do not think so?—Not timber alone. If the line were constructed for the railage of timber alone it would require to take a different route. It would not go to Lake Taupo, for instance. There is no timber within easy reach of the terminus at Taupo. If it were to be constructed to serve timber interests alone it would require to branch out to Waiotapu or along in that direction, and it would require to go into the Kaingaroa district and into the native forest in the Mokai district.
33. Your opinion is that for timber the line would not be suitable?—Not at present. There are afforestation areas that would be suitable ultimately—that is, forty or fifty years hence. Some of the areas are being planted now, and many of them are not yet planted. Around Taupo Township within a radius of ten miles the quantity is negligible. Perhaps I should say “five miles” instead of “ten miles” as the radius in which there is no timber. On the east there is practically none at all; at any rate, the quantity is very small.
34. *Mr. Jenkins.*] Do you say that of the 150,000 acres planted by the State Forest Department 21 per cent. is on a fall towards the railway?—Yes.
35. Can you give an idea of what was in the mind of the Department in regard to the removal of the timber when the planting was decided upon? Do you know what outlet was considered?—No, it was long before my time. The plantation work there was begun twenty-five or twenty-eight years ago.