

36. From your remark regarding the Rangitaiki Valley I thought that possibly that had been considered to be the ultimate outlet for the timber?—That is undoubtedly the natural outlet, because easy grades could be taken all the way down. At the same time that would not serve the Waiotapu plantation, which is the oldest plantation we have, and which falls towards the present railway.

37. Is that within easy reach of the present railway at Rotorua?—No, it is eighteen miles distance by road. It is comparatively easily reached.

38. Assuming some of these forests are twenty miles off, I suggest it would be easy to build a tram-line to Rotorua to serve them?—Yes, that could be done.

39. I understand from previous evidence that there are 20 million feet of timber at Tauri-Tutukau?—I was speaking of board timber; I was not taking the log measurement. There is from 25 to 30 per cent. reduction in the log measurement. Some of the previous witnesses may have been taking the log measurement.

40. You have been speaking of two forests?—Yes. One is comparatively small. The estimate we have—and I think it is fairly reliable—is 10 million feet of timber in the Paeroa Range.

41. *Mr. Kyle.*] Did you hear the evidence given by Mr. Galvin?—Yes.

42. Do you know anything about the land from an agricultural development point of view?—I would not care to venture very far along that line. It is more a matter for the Lands Department and the Agricultural Department. I have not looked at the matter with that aspect in view.

43. You consider yourself an expert in forestry?—Yes.

44. And you would not expect an officer in the Lands and Survey Department to offer his opinion against that of an officer in the Forestry Department on matters relating to afforestation?—Not on timber questions.

45. And you adopt that attitude in regard to agricultural matters?—Quite so.

46. From a timber point of view do you consider this line should be built?—From a timber point of view purely I should not think it could ever be expected to pay. For many years it certainly could not be expected to draw very much timber. There are very large areas to the west of Lake Taupo, which timber could be railed if it was contemplated bringing it across the lake and out by that route. If the demand in the north warranted it that might be considered, but as it does not warrant it, the extraction of the timber in that direction seems to me to be impracticable. I do not think it was ever contemplated, and I do not think it is even now contemplated, taking up the holding of the Tongariro Land and Timber Co.

47. That is on the western side of the lake?—Yes.

48. On the eastern side, from Rotorua to Taupo, what acreage is there at present in State or private forests?—There are 217,340 acres for State plantation.

49. What do you think is the ultimate destination of the timber already planted?—The major portion, I should say, would go down the Rangitaiki Valley, which runs up the western side of the Urewera country. The plantation is coloured green on the map, and I am indicating it. The watershed is marked purple, and lies between the Taupo basin and the Rangitaiki.

50. In your opinion, with the maturing of these forests is it imperative that a railway should be put in?—I think so. It depends a good deal on the use that can be made of the railway. The timber might be taken down the Rangitaiki River to the railway at Edgecumbe or to the coast. As the timber would have to be loaded on to motor-trucks or tramway-wagons of some description to get it to a suitable point of the river for floating, which would be somewhere near the north-eastern corner of the plantation, it would probably pay to extract it by rail to the East Coast Main Trunk Railway.

51. Taking into account a railway and a road such as you have heard described during the course of the evidence, would you think it possible to carry all that timber which is maturing by road, or would you prefer it to be carried by rail?—I should think it would be impracticable to carry the whole of that timber by road. At any rate, it would be extremely difficult to use a road for it all.

52. If you were asked for your opinion, you would say that a railway is preferable to the road?—A tramway or a railway; but a railway, by all means, if possible, is preferable for timber purposes. But I do not say that the construction of a standard railway would be warranted. Although a timber railway is usually of standard gauge, the structure is very light.

53. Have you any idea of the difference in the cost of construction?—Many of the bush railways are constructed at £1,000 a mile, and in that country it should be easily possible to construct a timber railway at that cost, because of the easy formation of the land.

54. Have you any idea of what a standard railway would cost?—No, I have not.

55. You prefer to keep to your own subject?—Yes.

56. *The Chairman.*] When you stated in reply to Mr. Kyle that a tramway or a railway would be preferable to a road, you were referring to the Rangitaiki Valley?—Yes. The country is different in the hills, but it is easy there.

57. Regarding the Rotorua-Taupo Railway, the construction of which has been stopped, and the resumption of which is the subject of the petition we are considering, do you consider that a railway would be better there for the work to be done than would be a road?—Not a railway.

58. What do you think would be better?—A tramway might be better.

59. When you speak of a tramway what do you mean?—I mean a bush tramway.

60. Something similar to that of the Taupo Totara Co.?—Yes.

61. Or even lighter than that?—Yes. There is a constant load going over it at all times of the year, and a light railway of that description will carry an enormous quantity of timber.

62. You think that it would be sufficient there?—Yes, for purely timber purposes, for the Kaingaroa plantation.

63. What about the Rotorua-Taupo area: have you any suggestion in regard to the extraction of the timber along the proposed Rotorua-Taupo line? Would you suggest the same thing, or some-