

in mind that it is sound economy that any exports should return the highest possible value for the benefit of the community, and in most cases where high prices are obtained for part of the output it enables the producer to sell the balance used within the country at a more reasonable price than would otherwise be the case. It is false economy to restrict an export and prevent it from being given its highest value. Generally the efforts of the Government have been in the direction of striving to obtain the highest prices for exports. Even the head of the Government has insisted on this time and again in respect to the meat, wool, butter and cheese sold to the Imperial Government. All economists must recognise the soundness of this policy, and we are amazed that any other policy should be pursued in regard to timber.

#### Timber and the Cost of Building.

"Just here it would be well to point out that it is too often erroneously supposed that timber is a very big factor in the cost of building. A case was recently brought under my notice where a residence at Palmerston North was contracted for. The price for a six-roomed house was £1175, an average of about £200 per room. As showing to what a small extent timber entered into this figure, I am informed that the cost of the timber delivered on the job ran out at £44 per room. The timber stipulated was chiefly of the higher grade.

"We have noticed that the Farmers' Union is making representations to the Government to remove restrictions on the export of their products, and we have taken the opportunity of communicating with them, endorsing their action, and asking them to support the extension of the principle to apply to timber as well as to their own products.

"When it became apparent to the sawmillers that something should be done to secure to the primary industries the maintenance of their supplies of timber, we gave all the assistance in our power towards regulating our industry to meet those requirements. I think we might claim that we did this to an extent not shown by any other industry, with the result that in no case in the Dominion are any of those industries hampered for the want of timber for the packing of their products.

#### Concerning Scientific Forestry.

"With respect to the recent reforms controlling the sale of standing timber, it is a deplorable fact that while the owner of the land may not sell the timber for milling purposes without the sanction of the Crown, no such sanction is required where it is intended to cut down the timber and destroy it. It is on such points as these that a progressive forestry policy could find ample scope for development.

"Speaking of the 'destruction of the forests,' this is a phrase too often used when referring to the legitimate working of the bush. In most cases it is no more applicable than to say that the harvesting of a crop of wheat is destroying that crop.

Viewed from another point, the legitimate milling of every acre of bush means the raising of a cottage, for from an acre of bush the quantity of timber needed for a cottage is obtained.

"Concerning scientific forestry, as enunciated by Sir Francis Bell, we must admit that we have much to learn, and in the matter of preserving the younger trees in forests where the matured trees are being removed it seems that immediate action should be taken by the Forestry Department to demonstrate that such operations could be carried out without unduly inflating the price of timber. The establishment of a State sawmill might be quite justified if it did nothing more than show the practicability of some of the methods that are outlined in publications that have come before us relating to forestry development in New Zealand. In any case it will be most instructive to those engaged in the timber industry if the State sawmills, which we may assume will be established in the Waipua kauri forest, are conducted on strictly commercial lines, and the results of their operations made available to those engaged in the industry.

"Touching the question of the life of the supplies of white pine for the dairy industry, it should be noted that since the regulations regarding its exports have been made, a butter box has been patented which would ensure the extension of the visible supplies for a period about seventeen times as long as was previously estimated.

"It goes without saying that the sawmillers are deeply interested in forestry, and it means the continuity of their industry. Our only anxiety is that it should be conducted on practical and economic lines." — "Times."

#### Sir Robt. Hadfield and Labour's Demands

Sir Robert Hadfield, chairman of the great Sheffield firm of steel makers, which employs 15,000 men, says, in the "Weekly Dispatch," of "Labour's Demands":—

"My own opinion is that there is nothing very extreme in the demands of Labour, as some employers seem to think. Nationalisation of all vital industries is, of course, a vast proposition, and I cannot agree about this, nor do I think Labour asks for it. Nationalisation of railways seems to be a commonsense way of settling some of the difficulties. I do not want to quote or represent my own works as a paragon for others to copy. But facts speak for themselves. Twenty-three years ago we introduced in Sheffield a 48-hours week, and I tried to persuade other employers to do the same. Very few would listen to such a scheme. We have made other concessions. The result of our policy has been harmony and pleasant relations all the time between employer and employee. The employer must take risks and make experiments that are likely to conduce to beneficial results all round. I am no prophet, but I believe that before the end of this year we shall see our way through this great crisis in human affairs."