

four feet under the ground. He averaged the posts at ten feet each. It would take a post 24 inches in circumference to square six, and he believed a post eight inches in diameter could be squared six inches. He allowed \$20 a thousand for the inch stuff. He allowed sixty cents apiece for the corner posts, as they stood. He could not say what he could get those posts for in the market, but he thought he would have been able to get them last year for less than twenty-five cents apiece. The fence round the building was better than the generality of fences. The price he had put upon this fence was what he would have assessed it at. He did not know the gate and corner posts were solid cedar, but the estimates he made he considered were sufficient to cover the cost of cedar posts. He thought the workmanship and lumber of a boxed post would be as expensive as solid cedar posts. He had never valued a solid cedar post of the same dimensions as those outside, nor bought nor seen one before. He had not made any enquiry, and could not say what one of these cedar posts would cost in the rough in the market. If he had tendered against Mr. Percy for this job, he would have had to go far below twenty cents a yard to have obtained the contract. He did not know that benzine had been used in the work. One coat of paint would be worth one-third of 20 cents if properly done. The fence round the Governor's House was painted, having three coats, for under 10 cents a yard. Two coat work would cost from 12½ cents to 15 cents. It was on the third and fourth coats that painters made their money. For four coat work and sanding, 25 cents he believed was the usual, but it would depend on competition. He would not like to do it for that sum. Twenty-eight cents would be a fair price if raw linseed oil were used. He would have tendered for the painting of the fences, giving four coats and sanding, for 25 cents. Thirty cents for that work was a good deal more than Mr. Percy would have obtained had he tendered. He was aware that the master painters had had a code of prices since 1867, but they never adhered to them. He did not know what the prices were.

Hon. Mr. FRASER—Would you charge less than the ordinary trade prices?

Witness—I would not refer to the book for this information.

Mr. FRASER repeated his question.

Witness said he had been out of business for nearly six years, but he did a little last year for his son.

Mr. FRASER—Do you think the prices of the trade, eight cents for one coat, fifteen cents for two coats, twenty cents for three coats, and twenty-five cents for four coats of common colours per superficial yard, are too high?

Witness—I have nothing to do with those prices.

Mr. FRASER—Do you think these prices are too high?

Witness—I am not bound by the Union.

Mr. FRASER—Will you answer the question; do you think those prices are too high?

Witness—It would depend altogether upon the materials used.

Mr. FRASER—Would they be too high having reference to the material used by Mr. Percy?

Witness—I have already stated what my opinion is with regard to the prices of that work.

Mr. FRASER—Will you answer the question?

Witness—It depends upon competition.

Mr. FRASER—I require an answer to my question.

Witness—I am not here to tell you what Mr. Percy would do, but what I would do myself.

Mr. Fraser repeated the question several times afterwards, but was unable to elicit a direct reply.

In answer to Mr. Sinclair, witness said the quality of the work was sometimes deteriorated by competition, but this should not be so. When he tendered for work and lost the contract he never felt sorry, because he was sure that the person who offered to do it lower could not make anything out of it.

Mr. LAUDER read the contract of Mr. Percy, which specified that boiled linseed oil should be used in the painting of the fences.

Witness said he never heard before of boiled linseed oil being used for outside work. He thought it must be a mistake.

Mr. FRASER—You said 28 cents per yard, using raw linseed oil, would be a fair price for four coats and sanding. What do you consider would be a fair price when boiled linseed oil was used?

Witness—Thirty cents is too high. Boiled linseed oil is only a few cents per

gallon more than raw linseed oil.

Mr. FRASER—I want an answer to my question.

Witness—It would make about half a cent a yard difference.

Mr. TULLY said it was generally considered best to use boiled linseed oil on a vertical surface, and as they desired to make a good job of the work they included it in the contract.

The CHAIRMAN—I wish to test the witness as to his practical knowledge of the trade.

To Witness—What brands of white lead, the use of which you consider would constitute a good job.

Witness:—I consider that James' & Walker's leads are not equal to Blundell and Spence's.

The CHAIRMAN—That will do upon that point. Do you, as a practical painter, consider that raw oil is preferable to boiled oil?

Witness—Yes, in winter time.

The CHAIRMAN—If raw oil is used will not the paint creep?

Witness—Not in winter time.

The CHAIRMAN—What is the difference between raw and boiled linseed oil?

Witness mentioned several ingredients in the boiled oil which were not in the raw oil.

The CHAIRMAN said he was astonished that any practical man should not know that the only difference between the two oils was that one was boiled and the other was not.

The Committee adjourned at 11.5.