

1880.  
NEW ZEALAND.

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# THE LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEER, DUNEDIN

(CORRESPONDENCE EXPLAINING AND REBUTTING CHARGES BROUGHT AGAINST).

*Laid on the Table by the Hon. Mr. Oliver, with the leave of the House.*

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## No. 1.

Mr. CONYERS to the Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS.

Office of the Commissioner of Railways (Middle Island),  
Dunedin, 29th June, 1880.

SIR,—

I have the honor, at the request of Mr. Armstrong, to submit a letter which that gentleman has addressed to me with reference to the mode in which he has been dealt with in the report of the Civil Service Commission.

Without attempting to prejudice the merits of the matter, I cannot but sympathize with Mr. Armstrong.

Mr. Armstrong's statement, that the locomotive engineership of the Otago Railways was conferred upon him by the Provincial Government, unsought, is strictly true; and I am in a position to bear emphatic testimony to the ability, energy, and faithfulness which he has evinced in the discharge of his duties both under the Provincial and General Governments.

I sincerely trust that some means may be found to obviate, or at all events to mitigate, the disadvantages which the remarks contained in the newspaper version of the report of the Commission are undoubtedly calculated to entail upon him.

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works.  
Wellington.

I have, &c.,  
WM. CONYERS,  
Commissioner of Railways, M.I.

## Enclosure in No. 1.

Mr. ARMSTRONG to Mr. CONYERS.

SIR,—

Locomotive Engineer's Office, Dunedin, 28th June, 1880.

I have the honor to request that you will permit me to lodge, through you, this my protest against the very injurious and unfair manner in which the Civil Service Commission have treated me in the matter of their report upon railways.

A version of their report which was allowed to appear in the public papers—which has been thus scattered broadcast over the colony, and which can hardly have been disseminated save by the act or connivance of the Commission, and is, at all events, their production—speaks of me in a way which is calculated to blast my professional prospects for life.

Subsequent to the appearance of that version in the newspapers, a document, purporting to be a report of the Commission, was laid upon the table of the House. Having obtained access to this document, I compared it with the newspaper version, and I find that the most objectionable portion of the matter which affects myself has been eliminated from the former, and I am consequently placed in this position: while all the harm that can be done to me by those statements has been done, and I am made by the act of the Commission a marked man before the colony, they can, and probably will, shelter themselves by repudiating the newspaper version, and pointing to the garbled document as their true report. As, however, the newspaper version of the report will be read by hundreds who will never see the other, it is the one upon which I stand arraigned before the public, and I claim the right to deal with that in framing my protest.

Apart from the manipulation which the report has, as I have shown, undergone (to obviate, I suppose, the risk of its being contemptuously rejected by the House), I allege that the procedure of the Commission was unfair, because the adverse remarks upon me are based upon leading questions which