

SESS. II.—1891.
NEW ZEALAND.

LOCOMOTIVE BOILERS ORDERED FROM ENGLAND

(FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO).

Laid on the Table by permission of the House, by the Hon. Mr. Seddon.

No. 1.

The Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS to Mr. W. B. PERCEVAL, M.H.R.

W. B. Perceval, Esq., M.H.R., Christchurch.

Wellington, 15th April, 1891.

THE Railway Commissioners reply they have ordered four renewal boilers from England at a cost of £1,800, and give as their reasons want of shop-accommodation and inability to get boilers done within time required. I am not satisfied that the reasons given are sufficient justification, and am asking further information. However, as you are aware, the Commissioners rule supreme.

R. J. SEDDON.

No. 2.

Mr. W. B. PERCEVAL, M.H.R., to the Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS.

SIR,—

Christchurch, 21st April, 1891.

Your wire in reply to my inquiries, whether there was any foundation for the report that boilers had been ordered from Home, in which you informed me four boilers had been ordered, calls for further comment. I have already telegraphed that great dissatisfaction is expressed at the action of the Railway Commissioners. This dissatisfaction is based on the assertion that the work can be done as well and cheaper than it can be supplied from Home. There are plenty of private shops in which the work can be well and quickly done. You are aware that Messrs. Scott Brothers, of this city, have already made several engines (Class D) including boilers, and, as far as I know, no fault has been found with the work. The Class J engines, for which the boilers are said to be ordered, are larger than Class D boilers, but the work is practically the same. All the marine engineers, too, have appliances suitable for making locomotive boilers.

As far as the railway workshops are concerned, I am informed there is no difficulty in making the boilers there. The shops (Addington, at any rate) are fitted with the best machinery, and there is plenty of room in which to do the work. The men also have performed similar work: An engine was made at Addington for the Dunedin Exhibition, the boiler of which is similar to the J class. There are also blocks at Addington for boiler-work. I can hardly believe that the Railway Commissioners would order work from Home which can be well and cheaply done here, and I shall be glad if you will give the Commissioners an opportunity of giving their view of the case. My information, although carefully collected, may be misleading. It is needless to point out that the private shops are slack of work at the present, and there would have been great competition for work of the kind if tenders had been called.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works, Wellington.

W. B. PERCEVAL.

P.S.—It is also reported that certain brake-work has been ordered from England which could be well made here. Samples were made at Addington which were sent away, it is asserted, as patterns.—W. B. P.

No. 3.

The Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS to Mr. W. B. PERCEVAL, M.H.R.

SIR,—

Public Works Office, Wellington, 1st May, 1891.

I have the honour, on behalf and in the absence of the Minister for Public Works, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st instant, in further reference to the locomotive renewal