

1880.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEFECTIVE RAILWAY WAGONS

(TELEGRAM FROM LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEER, CHRISTCHURCH, RELATIVE TO).

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

Mr. ALLISON D. SMITH to the Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS.

Christchurch, 23rd July, 1880.

I AM positively certain that wagon 1515 came from the South; but, as I stated in my letter dated May, I am not in a position to say positively by whom it was built. All Canterbury stock was numbered consecutively from 1 up to 1172, and I have correspondence in my office which shows that Mr. Armstrong is responsible for all stock from 1173 up to 1999. I have discovered, on inspection of store vouchers, that during the four months, October, 1878, to January, 1879, Mr. Armstrong purchased from Guthrie and Larnach, cut to the sizes used in wagon construction, £240 worth of a timber charged for as "hardwood," at the rate of 16s. per 100 feet; and on reference to schedule of prices I find the only timber quoted at that price is blue-gum. This fact, together with Inspector's report dated the 10th December, 1878, exactly corresponds with the class of timber complained of in these wagons, for there can now be no doubt that contractors supplied "stringy bark," and charged it at blue-gum prices; but, not liking to call it by its proper name or by a false name on the vouchers, they charged for "hardwood." Moreover, the ironwork in all the wagons complained of bears the English manufacturer's brand of 1878, so the wagons must have been built in New Zealand late in that year, or early in 1879.

ALLISON D. SMITH,
District Locomotive Superintendent.

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works.

