

The necessity also for a polling station at Haruru was clearly manifested at the last election of a member to serve in the House of Representatives, when, in consequence of a heavy north-easterly gale, boats attempting to reach Russell were compelled to return, several electors being thereby prevented from recording their votes. In one boat two electors, after a perilous voyage, did succeed in landing at Russell; but in another boat eleven electors, after four hours' pulling against wind and rain, were compelled to give up the attempt to reach the poll.

The Bay of Islands is a broad sheet of water which in boisterous weather is dangerous and at times utterly impossible to cross; I would therefore recommend that a polling station be appointed on its western as well as its eastern shore, and suggest Haruru as being the most central position.

I consider the requirements of the 7th section of "The Regulation of Elections Act, 1870," are sufficiently met in both these cases, for although twenty electors do not reside on the immediate spot, there are within a radius of five or six miles that number who would avail themselves of the opportunity afforded for polling at these places.

The absence of a polling station at Okaihau for provincial purposes would virtually disfranchise the electors of that settlement, who could scarcely be expected to undertake a journey of sixty miles for the purpose of recording their votes. The appointment also of a polling place at Haruru would give the electors residing on the western side of the Bay an opportunity of recording their votes without the necessity of crossing over to Russell; others, also, who at present are compelled to vote at Waimate would at times find it more convenient to vote at Haruru, at which place there is a house of accommodation for travellers. I trust, therefore, the recommendations I have made may meet the approval of the Government.

The only polling station which I consider might be abolished is that at Oruru; there are only twelve electors on the roll for that place, and the number polled at an election has always been small. It is only five miles distant from Mongonui, with a good connecting road, and there are no other polling stations in the district so closely stationed to each other.

I have, &c.,

EDWARD M. WILLIAMS.

The Under Secretary, Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington.

No. 11.

Major CLARE to Mr. H. T. KEMP, C.C.

SIR,—

Auckland, 27th March, 1877.

In connection with my report upon the inquiry conducted by me at Russell *re* London v. Williams, I take the liberty of requesting that you will be good enough to call the attention of the Hon. Dr. Pollen to a point wherein "The Registration of Electors Act, 1866," seems to require amendment.

During the inquiry it transpired that in the year 1874 the Revising Officer for the Mongonui and Bay of Islands Electoral District was, from untoward circumstances, unable to attend at Russell on the day appointed for holding his annual Court of Revision there. The Act mentioned does not supply any machinery for giving life to and sustaining the Court by opening and adjourning under such a contingency. On that occasion, the consequences followed that there was no Court held in the district for that year, no revision of the electoral roll, and upwards of three hundred claims to vote which had been duly registered remained unheard. About one hundred and fifty unopposed, and therefore presumably *bond fide* claimants were thus deprived of their right to be enrolled as voters owing to the defective condition of the law.

The safest and readiest remedy for correction of the defect pointed to would I think be to give the Revising Officer power to appoint the Magistrate's Clerk at the place where he is to hold his Court of Revision to be his deputy for the special purpose only of opening and adjourning the Court under like circumstances.

H. T. Kemp, Esq., Civil Commissioner, Auckland.

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM CLARE.

No. 12.

The UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department, to Major CLARE.

SIR,—

Native Office, Wellington, 6th April, 1877.

I have the honor, by direction of the Hon. the Native Minister, to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 24th and 27th ultimo, forwarding your report on the inquiry held by you into charges made by Mr. J. London against Mr. E. M. Williams, R.M.

In reply, Dr. Pollen desires me to thank you for your prompt attention in the matter of the inquiry, and to inform you that your letter and report, with the other papers relating to the inquiry, will be printed and laid before Parliament.

I have, &c.,

H. T. CLARKE,

Under Secretary.

Major Clare, Cambridge.