

and that it was not "convenient" to do so before the election. Whether the printing of the supplementary rolls and placing them for inspection is sufficient does not very clearly appear, but it seems that an individual notice to each person enrolled after the printing of the general roll is contemplated.

EXHIBITING NAMES OF PERSONS STRUCK OFF THE ROLL.

Section 59 enacts that the names of electors struck off rolls shall be publicly exhibited on a board outside the Registrar's office, and maintained there for a period of at least one month from the time of their being struck off. We do not think this provision applies to the case of persons erased from one roll and placed on another when a redivision takes place. The Registrar advertised the numbers attached to names he expunged from various rolls after printing thereof, and this was more than the statute required; but if such names were required by law to be exhibited on a board outside his office, he technically failed to observe the requirements of the law in this respect. The point is of no importance when considering the charge of corruption.

THE CHARGES GENERALLY.

We are of opinion that there is no evidence to support the charge of corrupt motive, which is the gravamen of the whole accusation, and we might end our report here were it not that the complainants say that the multitude of errors made show that they must have occurred wilfully, and that if there was no excuse for making so many errors, and that if they are of such a nature as would not be made by an honest and reasonably competent person, a presumption of corrupt motive arises, which the Registrar is required to rebut, or be condemned. We must therefore proceed to examine in some detail these charges. There is no evidence that Mr. King discriminated between the parties claiming enrolment; if he rejected many claims put in by the complainants' party, it is amply proved that he rejected as many put in by others. In the absence of proof of discrimination according to political party, the first and eighth charges appear to rebut each other.

CHARGE No. 1 (GREY LYNN): Omitting to transfer Names of Electors from the City Roll to the Grey Lynn Roll on the Subdivision of Districts.

The complainants produce a list containing originally some 309 names, which they say were not transferred as they should have been from the City roll to Grey Lynn upon the redivision of the districts. But they say that upon application 120 of these names were transferred to Grey Lynn before the election, leaving 189 names wrongly on the City roll. Some reductions were made in this number by the complainants having apparently taken the same names twice, and by other errors. The lists are not easy to examine, as they appear to be in no sort of order, either alphabetically or numerically.

Mr. Spedding says that he has found from examination of the rolls 195 names were of persons living in streets wholly in Grey Lynn, and 114 were living in streets partly in Grey Lynn and partly in the City. But it must be noticed that there are several quite different streets bearing the same name in both electorates, and some streets the locality of which, from an electoral-district point of view, can only be determined by a careful reference to the maps showing the districts and the gazetted description of their boundaries. It was apparent that the complainants had themselves been misled, and had made several mistakes in locating the persons whose names they supplied. On the whole it appears that about 140 people were wrongly left on the City roll instead of being transferred to Grey Lynn, and that a number were wrongly transferred to Grey Lynn who should have been left on the City roll. If any evidence had been offered that these transfers or omissions to transfer were caused in any way by party considerations, or affected the result of an election, it would have been a matter of very serious moment. There is not even a suggestion that the people wrongly left on the City roll were all, or mainly, supporters of any particular party, nor that those wrongly transferred to Grey Lynn were all, or mainly, supporters or opponents of Mr. Fowlds, or any other candidate. The fact that errors were made on both sides negatives the suggestion of fraud; and that the fact that there were more mistaken retentions on the City roll than mistaken transfers to Grey Lynn is quite consistent with the numerical proportions of the two rolls. We have described the methods pursued in the preparation of the new rolls, and need not again refer to the difficulties in the way of those who undertook the task of dividing the names on the old rolls among the new electorate. We were favourably impressed with the way in which Mr. Keven, the Registrar's chief clerk, gave his evidence. The fraud charged could not have been perpetrated without his knowledge and complicity, nor without the knowledge of many of the extra clerks employed in the office. Taken on the whole, although the number of errors under this particular heading seems to be large, yet when judged in comparison with the enormous mass of names to be dealt with—about forty thousand in all—and the peculiar difficulties of the work, the margin of error does not seem to be unreasonably excessive.

CHARGE No. 2 (GREY LYNN): Transferring a Number of Electors to Grey Lynn, and leaving the Same upon the City of Auckland Roll.

It appears that upon this list there are eighty-five names appearing on both the Grey Lynn and City of Auckland rolls. Only the first twelve cases were particularly inquired into, and they appeared to leave no doubt that an error had been made by the Registrar in each of these cases. The evidence as to the remainder of the cases was that, on a careful comparison of both rolls, all the names in the list appeared on each roll. The Registrar says that the causes of this blunder were want of skill on the part of his assistants, difficulty in allocating at once the person to the proper district, which would cause the matter to be left in suspense; and oversight in not erasing the name from one roll when passing the slip which had been written out for enrolment in the other district. There is no suggestion that there was any picking according to political party of these