

**Rolls; I have the honor to state that, in the absence of any properly constituted machinery for conducting such scrutiny, the object of the resolution might be carried out by the appointment of persons competent from their local knowledge to revise the claims to vote actually received, as also to add thereto the names of persons entitled to vote, but who may have omitted to prefer a claim. Such a scrutiny would, however, always be more or less open to suspicion from its secret character, as well as from the fact that there was no provision to ensure due diligence on the part of the scrutineer.**

Should his Excellency be disposed to make any such appointment in this Province, I would recommend that Mr. John Sharp, the Registrar of the Supreme Court and Clerk to the Resident Magistrate, be appointed. For many years, the making up of the Jury and Militia Lists, as well as the formation of the existing Electoral Rolls, has gone through his hands, and from the general knowledge he otherwise possesses with respect to the population and statistics of the Province, and the discretion and diligence which guides him in the performances of public duties, I believe him to be well fitted for such an office.

In consideration of the time, trouble, and expense incurred in acquiring the necessary information, I would also recommend that a sum of fifty pounds be allowed for the performance of the duties required.

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

E. W. STAFFORD,

Superintendent.

W. Gisborne, Esq.,  
Acting Colonial Secretary.

Superintendent's Office, Christchurch,  
February 8th, 1855.

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 22nd November, 1855, containing a copy of a Resolution of the House of Representatives on the subject of the Electoral Rolls of the Provinces.

I beg, in reply, to state that I am not prepared to recommend any means to carry the Resolution of the House of Representatives into effect. I would respectfully submit, that the question involved is one of great political importance, which ought to be dealt with by Act of the General Assembly, not by a resolution of the Lower House only: and any advice given to his Excellency ought to come from the Executive Council of the Colony, not from the Superintendents of Provinces.

His Excellency will therefore pardon me for most respectfully declining to make any report on the matter referred to.

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

JAMES EDWARD FITZGERALD,

Superintendent of Canterbury.

The Honorable  
the Colonial Secretary.

Superintendent's Office, Wellington,  
18th February, 1856.

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 22nd November last, transmitting by direction of his Excellency the Governor a copy of a Resolution passed by the House of Representatives relative to the apportionment of the Representation among the different Provinces, and requesting that I would report what means I would recommend to be adopted to carry out the object of such Resolution.

The resolution purposes, 1st; the appointment of fit and proper persons to scrutinize the Electoral Rolls of the several districts; 2nd; a return of the number of bona fide electors irrespective of the existing rolls; 3rd, the preparation of outline maps of the present electoral districts; and 4th, Comparative returns of Population, Revenue, Imports and Exports, and extent of acreage of the several Provinces.

1. As regards the appointment of Scrutineers of the existing roll, such a course would, I apprehend impose a very delicate responsibility on the Executive Government. The office would differ most materially from that of Revising Barristers in England, the latter merely constituting a tribunal to decide upon objections tendered by private individuals; while the duty of the Scrutineers proposed by the resolution would be that of raising objections, and then deciding on the objections raised by themselves, a duty of an inquisitorial character, and one which it may be questioned whether any Government acting under free institutions ought to be called upon to execute. The provisions for preparing the Electoral Roll now in force, impose the duty of objecting on the Elec-