

tors themselves who it may be supposed, acting on that party antagonism which is the life of self-government, will always be ready and anxious (as is seen to be the case in older communities) to expunge from the Roll every vote improperly placed upon it.

It may be questioned whether the names of many voters have been placed on the Roll in New Zealand which were not in the first instance entitled to be upon it. Some may, no doubt, have since become disqualified by loss of qualification for the district in which they have registered, and the Roll may also be improperly swelled by the names of deceased persons remaining upon it. The purification of the Roll from either class can, I conceive, only be effected with propriety by private persons, for whose exertions every facility ought to be and indeed is afforded by the regulations in force for the framing of the Roll; but as regards claims avoided by death, the Registrars of the several Provinces might, for the information of the Government, be required to check the Rolls by reference to their Registers, and to report the names of parties believed to be dead, and the Justices of the Peace on the day of revising the Electoral Roll, might be instructed to strike off the names of all those to whose death the Registrar certified.

Statements have been circulated by the Press to the effect that the Roll of this Province is very incorrect, and statistics have been adduced to show that a stated number of voters in this or that district have become disqualified. I believe that it will prove that in many of the instances intended to be adduced in proof of these statements, probably in nearly all except the deaths, the parties have only changed their residence, in some cases to other Provinces, in others perhaps have left the Colony either temporally or permanently, but retaining the qualification in respect of which they were registered. None of these, however, his Excellency will recollect, are grounds of disqualification; death and loss of the property conferring the qualification (not to mention a few exceptional cases, such as commission of felony, etc., being the only causes for which a name once placed upon the roll can be removed.

I doubt also whether parties qualified by local knowledge could be found, willing to take upon themselves the proposed office of Scrutineers, and in any case it would, I conceive, involve a very considerable expense.

2. A Return of the number of *bona fide* Electors can be best effected in the course of taking the census in each Province; it has already been done in this.

3. The maps of the Electoral Districts can easily be prepared at the different land offices, by reference to the limits of the Electoral Districts as defined by Sir George Grey's Proclamation of the 5th March, 1853.

4. The comparative Returns of Population, &c., are, I presume, either in the offices of the General Government, or could be easily compiled from documents already transmitted to it by the several Provincial Governments.

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

J. E. FEATHERSTON,

Superintendent.

The Honorable
the Colonial Secretary.