

1917.
NEW ZEALAND.

CHRISTCHURCH MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS, 1917,

HELD UNDER THE LOCAL ELECTIONS (PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION)
ACT, 1914

(REPORT BY G. HOGBEN, Esq., C.M.G., ON THE).

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave.

SIR,—

Department of Internal Affairs, Wellington, 18th August, 1917.

The last biennial general election of Councillors of the City of Christchurch being the first election held in New Zealand under a system of proportional representation, opportunity was taken to obtain from Mr. George Hogben, C.M.G., M.A., F.G.S., late Director of Education, who was specially engaged by the Christchurch City Council to act in the capacity of Assistant Returning Officer, a report on the working of the Local Elections (Proportional Representation) Act, 1914.

The report, which contains much valuable information and several suggestions for amendments of the Act, with a view to its working more smoothly, is attached hereto.

J. HISLOP, Under-Secretary.

The Hon. G. W. Russell, Minister of Internal Affairs.

CHRISTCHURCH MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS, APRIL, 1917.

SIR,—

Wellington, 4th July, 1917.

In reply to your request, I have the honour to report on the Christchurch municipal elections, 1917.

In accordance with the Local Elections (Proportional Representation) Act, 1914, and the Local Elections (Proportional Representation) Amendment Act, 1915, the Christchurch City Council and the other local authorities concerned adopted the provisions of the principal Act for the elections of 1917. Accordingly, the elections of sixteen City Councillors, of four members of the Lyttelton Harbour Board, and of seven members of the North Canterbury Hospital and Charitable Aid Board were held on the 25th April last on the principle of proportional representation. The election of the Mayor of the City of Christchurch was held on the same day, the poll being conducted for all four elections at the same places, and by the same staff; but, of course, the principle of proportional representation did not apply in the case of the mayoral election, and the method of marking the voting-papers was different.

The poll was, I believe, the heaviest on record for the City of Christchurch: 17,704 persons voted for the election of Mayor; 17,476 voting-papers were recorded for the election of City Councillors; 16,469 for the election of members of the Hospital Board; and 16,554 for the election of members of the Harbour Board.

The rough results of the mayoral election and of the counting of the first-preference votes in the other three elections were forwarded from the forty-six polling-booths by telephone or by special messenger, and were announced by the Returning Officer on the evening of the poll. On the following day the scrutiny of the rolls, as directed by sections 8 and 9 of the Local Elections and Polls Amendment Act, 1913, was conducted, and occupied nearly the whole day; so that the count of the votes (which could not be commenced until the completion of the scrutiny of the rolls) was practically not begun until the morning of Friday, the 27th April.