

and there specify, the day selected being the earliest at which in the returning officer's opinion the return of the missing ballot boxes can be secured, and the ballot boxes received shall continue to be stored and safeguarded in the same way as in the interval between their receipt by the returning officer and the day first fixed for the examination of the ballots. 5

Missing ballot boxes to be obtained.

"(7) If the examination of the ballots is postponed, the returning officer shall take steps to insure that, at the time fixed by the adjournment, either the missing ballot boxes have been received or there are then present the deputy returning officers who acted at the polling stations in question, and such other witnesses as are necessary adequately to explain the non-arrival of the boxes. 10

If not count to proceed.

"(8) If, at the time and place fixed by the adjournment, it is established to the satisfaction of the returning officer that the boxes have been lost or destroyed, the examination of the ballots shall proceed as if the polls in question had not been opened, but otherwise the examination of the ballots shall be further adjourned. 15 20

Adjournment of count.

"(9) No adjournment of the examination of the ballots shall exceed seven days, and no more than three adjournments shall be made. After three adjournments, the examination of the ballots shall be proceeded with as if the loss or destruction of the ballot boxes had been established. 25

Opening ballot boxes.

"(10) When all the ballot boxes have been received or accounted for, the ballot boxes received shall be opened successively in any order which may be convenient, and their contents examined. The opening of the boxes and the examination of the contents shall be so carried out that the candidates and their agents may satisfy themselves that each box has been properly sealed at the poll and by the returning officer, and as to the condition in which the papers contained in each are found. The envelopes containing the counted and rejected ballots and those containing the statement of the poll shall be laid aside separately unopened, and the envelopes containing the poll books and other papers relating to the poll shall be forthwith placed in mail bags provided for the purpose, each of which shall, when full, be closed and sealed with sealing wax by the returning officer. 30 35 40

Irregularities of papers.

"(11) If the condition of the papers contained in any ballot box is irregular, the fact shall be recorded, and the proceedings may either be adjourned and deputy returning officers and others called to give evidence as to any such irregularity (subject to the same conditions in all respects as if the ballot box had not been received), or may be proceeded with without further enquiry or subject to such further later enquiry as the returning officer may decide to be necessary in the circumstances, but if any such 45 50