

c—Since any considerable group of voters is able to ensure the election of its choice, the real leaders of such groups are encouraged to run for office.

### What Are Some of the Main Objections Raised Against Proportional Representation?

1. It is too complicated for the voters to understand.

The following was the percentage of spoiled ballots in some elections recently held under the Proportional Representation system:

| City             | Votes Cast | Votes Invalid from All Causes | % of Invalid Votes |
|------------------|------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Glasgow          | 124,107    | 2,750                         | 2.2%               |
| Edinburgh        | 24,747     | 486                           | 1.9%               |
| Kalamazoo, Mich. | 4,461      | 157                           | 3.5%               |
| Ashtabula, Ohio  | 3,334      | 362                           | 10%                |
| Calgary          |            |                               | 3%                 |

2. The method of counting the votes is too elaborate and the process takes too long.

The following comments from places where Proportional Representation has been tried may be taken as indicative of the feeling on the question:

a—Glasgow: The returning officer in one day counted no fewer than 124,000 votes, spread over seven electoral divisions of the city.

b—Calgary: It took 2½ times as long to count ballots as under the old system.

c—Kalamazoo: It took 6½ hours to count 4,461 ballots.

Even if two or three days were consumed in counting the ballots, there are still over 360 days left in the year for the Government to function. If Proportional Representation secured more representative government, would it not be time well spent?

Is the ordinary voter concerned with the actual work of counting the ballots? Is not this done by experts now? Could not the Proportional Representation method be carried on by experts also?

3. It divides the electorate into groups and fosters group feeling.

Is not group feeling more apt to be inflamed by lack of adequate representation?

### Where is Proportional Representation Being Used?

This method of voting is used, among other places, in Great Britain (for the election of certain M.P.'s representing Universities); Scotland (elections under Educational Act); Sligo, Ireland (Municipal); Belgium; Sweden; Poland; Tasmania; New South Wales; South Africa; Ashtabula, Ohio; Kalamazoo, Mich.; Calgary, Alta.; and some municipalities in British Columbia.

It is also used in many organizations, among which are: the Trades and Labor Council of Toronto; United Farmers of Alberta; Ottawa Branch of the Canadian Civil Service Association; and many others.

The Provincial Government of Manitoba is preparing to adopt this system, and some consideration has been given it by both the Dominion Government and the Government of the Province of Ontario.

### Could Proportional Representation be Applied at Present in Toronto?

Legislation permitting its use would first be necessary. It could then be used for the election of the Board of Control. It might also be used for the election of aldermen by wards, but as it allows voters to group, the present system of wards would not be necessary and larger divisions with 5 or 6 representatives from each would probably give better results.

## EFFECTIVE CITIZEN CO-OPERATION

WHAT IS EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS SHOULD BE EACH BODY'S BUSINESS

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### EFFECTIVE VOTING—Story No. 4

## The Hare System of Proportional Representation

OR

## The Transferable Vote

*It is the essence of Representative Government that every voter should be represented in the Representative Assembly.*

*If a considerable proportion of the electorate come to feel that they have no voice in the Government, the distance is short to that dangerous state of mind which regards political processes as futile and hopeless.*

## A Short Discussion of Proportional Representation—Suggested by Replies to Bulletin No. 74 —“Effective Voting—Story No. 1.”

### What is the Theory of Proportional Representation?

Its theory is that each considerable party or group of opinion should be represented in the Council or representative body in proportion to its voting strength—that majorities may rule and minorities be heard.

### How is This Theory Put Into Practice?

The method used is known as the **transferable vote**.

#### **How the Votes Are Recorded:**

When the ballot with the list of candidates for an office, such as the Board of Control, is presented, the elector, instead of marking “x” after his choice or choices, as at present, votes as follows:

a—By placing the figure 1 after his favorite candidate;

The voter may also:

b—Place the figure 2 opposite his second choice;

c—Place the figure 3 after his third choice, and so on, numbering as many candidates as he pleases in the order of his preference.

A candidate, to ensure election, need not poll a majority, but only a certain proportion of the votes cast, called a quota. This quota is the smallest number of votes required to ensure election. For example, if three representatives are to be elected, it would take one vote more than one-fourth of the votes cast to ensure the election of a candidate. The quota is found, therefore, by dividing the total number of votes cast by one more than the number of representatives to be elected and adding one.

Of course, Proportional Representation involves the grouping of voting districts (constituencies) so that there shall be at least three representatives for each area.

### How the Votes Are Counted and Transferred:

a—The first preference votes obtained by each candidate are noted;

b—The quota is ascertained;

c—Candidates who have obtained the quota or more are declared elected;

d—Surplus votes of those candidates who have received more than their quota are transferred, in strict proportions, to the unelected candidates indicated as the next preferences of the voters whose votes are transferred;

e—Any further candidates who may have received the quota are declared elected;

f—The candidates lowest on the poll are eliminated one after another, and the votes they received are transferred in accordance with the next choice of the electors. This process is continued until the required number of candidates have obtained a quota, or the number of candidates not eliminated is reduced to the number of seats vacant.

### How Does the Theory of Proportional Representation Work Out in Practice?

The following example of the results of the election (1919) of Aldermen and Councillors in Sligo, Ireland, may be taken as typical:

| Party                  | Votes Polled | Seats in Proportion to Votes | Seats Actually Obtained |
|------------------------|--------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Ratepayers' Ass'n..... | 823          | 8.94                         | 8                       |
| Sinn Fein.....         | 674          | 7.33                         | 7                       |
| Labor.....             | 432          | 4.70                         | 5                       |
| Independents.....      | 279          | 3.03                         | 4                       |

The following is the result—for the 76 contested seats (excluding universities)—of the recent parliamentary election held in Ireland, said election not being under Proportional Representation:

| Party            | Votes Polled | Seats in Proportion to Votes | Seats Actually Obtained |
|------------------|--------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Sinn Fein.....   | 495,760      | 37                           | 47                      |
| Unionist.....    | 289,223      | 22                           | 23                      |
| Nationalist..... | 226,345      | 17                           | 6                       |

### Do Not All Voters Obtain Representation Under Our Present System?

In the municipal elections in Toronto, January, 1919, where 4 members were to be chosen from 7 candidates, out of the total 122,963 votes cast for the Board of Control, 45,570 were cast for unsuccessful candidates. In other words, of the total votes polled at least 37% were not represented on the Board of Control.

Similarly, in voting for Aldermen:

| Ward | No. of Votes Cast | No. and Percentage Not Represented in Council | No. of Candidates |
|------|-------------------|---|-------------------|
| 1    | 14,753            | 4101, or 28%                                  | 5                 |
| 2    | 10,912            | 2932, or 27%                                  | 5                 |
| 3    | 8,138             | 1452, or 18%                                  | 4                 |
| 4    | 9,918             | 2476, or 25%                                  | 5                 |
| 5    | 15,544            | 5598, or 36%                                  | 7                 |
| 6    | 20,627            | 7179, or 35%                                  | 8                 |
| 7    | 6,387             | 2241, or 35%                                  | 5                 |
| 8    | 7,821             | 3093, or 39.6%                                | 7                 |

### What Are Some Other Characteristics of Proportional Representation?

a—Every vote cast is a “plumper” vote. This is obvious, since the first choice indicated by the voter is considered first. Thus the full weight of the vote is given to the favorite.

b—An increased number of candidates nominated for office does not mean an increased wastage of votes. At present votes cast for unsuccessful candidates do not count in the final result. Under Proportional Representation they are transferred and, therefore, not wasted.