

known as "the gerrymander." Gerrymandering is the art of arranging the boundaries of constituencies by the party in power in such a way as to give it an undue advantage over its opponents. The suspicion of gerrymandering nearly always attaches to Redistribution Bills.

As it makes no difference whether a member is elected by a large majority or a small one, so—in addition to gerrymandering—there arises another temptation to the party organizations: to switch some votes from a constituency where the party is very strong to a nearby constituency where it is weak. Unfortunately there is never much difficulty in getting venal voters who will allow themselves to be used in this way. In the United States they are called 'Colonizers' and in Great Britain 'Swallow Voters', because they migrate from one constituency to another at certain fixed periods. This form of corruption is encouraged by our single-member system which gives the whole of the representation to the party that secures a majority of the votes; and in many instances the representation of a constituency has been determined, not by the wisest and best electors, but by the most corrupt and least intelligent.

Sufficient evidence can be produced to show that such corruption is not unknown in this country. Earl Grey, Ex-Governor-General of Canada, wrote, while on his death-bed, to the London "Times" on April 3rd last, and said: "In Canada the necessity of the two contending political parties to obtain an electoral majority in every district is a corrupting influence which poisons the life of the people from the Atlantic to the Pacific."

Foolishness of the System.

In forming a Parliament we do not want to have certain square miles of land represented, we want to have the brains of the citizens represented. Do we have that? Do we tap

the brains of the people?

We take a geographical area, say a small city, and we say to all the voters in that city—liberal, conservative, labour, capital and the rest—we say to them all "Try to get together on some common ground and elect a man to represent all of you in Parliament."

Now the common ground, the common understanding, of all the voters in a city is bound to be extremely limited. Take two professional men, their education has been along similar lines, their environment is much the same and therefore their field of common understanding will be relatively large. Add a labourer and the field of common understanding shrinks for the reason that his outlook upon society is different. Add a grocer, a clergyman, a huckster, a woman and the field of common understanding has shrunk to a pin-point. About the only thing they can agree upon is the necessity for a new post-office or something of that kind; and, outside the straight party platform, that is about the only thing candidates dare to express an opinion upon. Any man who takes an active and aggressive part in public affairs makes many enemies; a candidate, therefore, if he hopes to be elected must see to it that he confines himself to generalities and so offend as few as possible of the various groups that make up the whole motley crowd.

By the single-member system, then, we neither tap the brain of the community nor do we give the slightest encouragement to the elected representative to give to the country the best that is in him. This is one of the reasons why our politics have not progressed very far beyond that variety known as the 'parish pump.'

It is not possible in this article to do more than indicate one or two of the evils of our present system of election but enough has been said to justify a plea for reform. The next article will show how the change may be brought about.

THE ENUMERATORS.

Continued from front page (73).

Other Corrupt Acts and Irregularities.

The purpose of this letter is to bring to the attention of persons who take an interest in public discussion to some of the workings of the special legislation passed by the Borden Government to retain power. While the foregoing requests for information do not deal with OTHER IRREGULARITIES AND CORRUPT ACTS such irregularities and corrupt acts SHOULD NOT BE OVERLOOKED. A record should be made of them so that they may be exposed in due course.

The following inquiries and suggestions may be useful as a guide for action and can be taken locally in all the provinces to obtain redress for wrongs committed:

1. Several men whose names were on the Ontario voters' list of 1917, but not on 1916, were given a certificate by the enumerator and voted, and their ballots put in the box with the regular ballots of bona fide voters. In this Province and in some other Eastern Provinces the lists of 1916 were the basis.

This is in direct violation of section 32 and subsection 2 of 65A of the Act, which subsection applies to Ontario. Other subsections of this section apply to other provinces and the same general remarks prevail generally. These sections are very clear, and in addition to the clauses 284-5 and 6 as to procedure to obtain redress, see sections 249 and 250. For this offence both the enumerator and the deputy returning officer are liable.

2. In some instances enumerators granted certificates to names of persons not on the Ontario 1916 lists, but on the 1917 list, and their ballots were put in an envelope and the envelope put in the ballot box.

Unless the attention of the deputy returning

officer was specially directed to the fact that these persons were not on the Ontario list of 1916, he would appear not to be liable, but the enumerator would be liable.

3. Persons who were not residents and not on the list as they resided in another county were permitted to vote.

The onus for allowing this would be on the deputy returning officer, and he certainly would be liable.

4. Stepmothers were allowed to vote.

Section 33A does not give any such right, and the enumerator who put such names on the list is liable, and the deputy and others who may have aided and abetted in having the vote recorded are liable.

5. One man voted as the agent of his brother who is at the front.

It would appear that this man was guilty of personation, under section 272 of the Act. He and the deputy returning officer would be liable.

6. Some women voted whose sons had enlisted, but had been discharged, but had not been overseas.

Section 33A which gives the qualifications of female voters does not provide for the right which was exercised by these persons. If the enumerator put the names on the list he is liable and if the deputy returning officer had his attention drawn to the fact, and he allowed them to vote without being sworn, he is liable. Please note the words "without Canada" in section 33A.

7. Farmers' sons who had just turned twenty-one, and were not on any list were granted a certificate, and polled their votes.

By sections 32 and 65A they had no right to receive any such certificate, and the enumerator