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Proportional Representation, or the Hare-Spence System of Election.

A Description of the Method by which it is Proposed in Future to Elect the Officers of the Civil Service Association of Ottawa. — A Somewhat Intricate, but Interesting and Effective Innovation.

The objects of Proportional Representation in the political field have been recently defined as follows:

(1) To destroy the political monopoly exercised by the "party machine," with its accompaniments of disfranchisement, misrepresentation, plutocratic rule, gerrymandering, bribery, lying, crookedness, party bitterness and kindred political evils. (2) To substitute therefor a just and proportional representation of all the electors, thereby making every vote effective, giving in the legislatures a true reflection of public opinion, and permitting the election of the best men.

In the civil service case its adoption would be by way of offset to the preponderating influence which a candidate from a large department would have as compared with a small one.

There are several different systems of Proportional Representation, but the one that is making the greatest progress is that known as the Hare-Spence system, which is used to elect the Tasmanian Parliament, the South African Senate, and the City Councils of Johannesburg and Pretoria. It has also the great merit of being adapted to the election of a single officer, such as a mayor.

There are two distinct and different uses of the Hare-Spence system: First, to elect a single officer; secondly, to elect several representatives at the same time.

Electing Single Officers.

Dealing first with the election of single officers, we find that the or-

inary system has two disadvantages, namely: (1) It has the tendency to discourage the making of more than two nominations; (2) When more than two nominations are made, the election may so result that the highest candidate has only a minority of the votes cast, thus making it necessary to hold a second or third election if the rules require a clear majority.

The Hare-Spence method of election is free from these defects. It encourages freedom of nomination, and gives always a clear majority at one balloting, no matter how many candidates may be running.

Where there are only two candidates, the ordinary system of course is used. But let us take a case where there are four candidates, A, B, C and D, in the running.

Each voter is instructed to mark his ballot for all the candidates in the order of his preference, with the figures 1, 2, 3, etc. To explain this more fully, take the case of a voter who wants D to be elected, and who thought B the least desirable of the candidates, and who preferred A to C. That voter would mark his ballot thus:

A	2
B	4
C	3
D	1

The voter could, of course, simply put no mark at all against B, which would equally well indicate a fourth place.