

member. North of Dufferin are the three constituencies in Grey county, with a total population of 59,051, an average of 19,683 for each constituency. Under the plan, following the ideas of Old Country Liberals, the two counties would be bulked, the single transferable vote applied, and three members returned, each representing, on an average, 24,772 population. Each elector in the two counties would vote for three men, and the successful candidates would represent the whole territory, instead of an individual portion.

For the most part, the interests of these counties are identical. Just now four U.F.O. members are returned, but it is difficult to figure what political advantage would accrue to any party under such a scheme. Already the voice of Dufferin has been heard: that it must retain its membership of one, and that county lines must remain inviolate. It would seem that ordinary election justice demands some change there, and it is argued that the wrench of abandoning isolation would be much less felt under P.R. than if the old-time system were applied.

Along the St. Lawrence.

Then, along the St. Lawrence several constituencies present difficulties similar to Dufferin, if county boundaries are not to be disturbed. Dundas, Grenville, Leeds and Brockville each have one member, though in the case of none of these constituencies does the population reach twenty thousand. The 1921 census figures are: Dundas, 17,309; Grenville, 18,644; Leeds, 17,048, and Brockville, 17,861. The total population for the four is 70,861, which, if the constituencies were bulked and the single transferable vote applied, would give an average of 23,620 for each of three members. But what a kick there would be from Conservatives, who are beginning to think this territory is more or less their own stamping ground.

Another possible rural grouping suitable for the single transferable vote would be the two Victorias, the two Durhams and the two Northumberlands. Not one of these ridings now has 20,000 people, while the total for the six is 87,602. With four members selected by P.R. each would represent an average of 21,900, which is low, even when two members are discarded.

Not Shattering Geography.

From these three examples it is seen how the problem of representation by population for rural Ontario may be solved without a shattering of geography, which necessarily must take place if the past ideas of redistribution are retained. At once objection will be taken that such changes would entail a checker-board system of elections, and on this ground alone a strong and perhaps convincing argument may be built up. The special Legislature committee of 1920 investigating P.R. did not go as far as the ideas here outlined, but the members of that committee were without the very necessary information provided by the 1921 census statistics. That committee thought that grouping in urban and rural centres was not desirable, and accordingly confined its recommendations to Hamilton and Ottawa.

Share Election Expenses.

If any consideration is given the regrouping arrangements as explained, another objection will be voiced, to the effect that the ridings are altogether too large in area. The claim will be advanced in behalf of the candidates that it would be impossible to cover such territories during a campaign, but in these days of Mr. Biggs' good roads such difficulties are more or less minimized. The argument is also heard that such bulking of rural ridings would tend to reduce excessive election expenses, because the candidates of each party would stand as joint candidates, and almost every legitimate expense