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The Rise and Growth of the Gerrymander. By ELMER C. GRIFFITH.
(Chicago: Scott, Foresman & Co. 1907. Pp. 124.)

This volume is a dissertation submitted in candidacy for the degree of doctor of philosophy at Chicago University. Its aim is to ascertain the origin of the gerrymander in the United States, and to trace it in State legislation down to the year 1840. The earlier and, from an historical standpoint, most important part of the work is carefully done, and shows conclusively that the gerrymander did not originate in 1812 when the word itself came into use, but can be traced far back in colonial history. The latter part of the work seems to be less exact and gives an impression of incompleteness.

As defined by the author, a gerrymander is "the formation of election districts * * * with boundaries arranged for partisan advantage." In his discussion he also includes "districting with a view to reduce the legitimate representation of a populous city or county." This last sort of gerrymander is not treated exhaustively for the period set, viz: to 1840, and the two sorts are so distinct in kind that a separate treatment of each would have made the argument more clear; the value of the work as a whole would certainly have been increased had all early instances of rural discrimination against urban centers been gathered under one head.

Incidentally the author pays special attention to the oft repeated charge that Madison's district for the congressional election of 1789 was gerrymandered. This charge he shows to be substantially untrue. The reference on p. 109 to the Connecticut convention of 1902 seems unnecessary, especially as the constitution submitted made few changes in districting and was rejected at the polls that same year.

The author also shows how the earlier States strove to remedy the evils of gerrymandering by amendments to their constitutions; and how the gerrymander which was at first "considered a political, civil, and moral injustice" came later to be deemed "as a political stratum," which either party might use whenever the opportunity presented itself. He pays small attention to remedies for this evil; regulation through provisions in the constitution, election by general ticket, and some system of proportional representation, are mentioned as possibilities.

It is unfortunate that an index was not inserted for purposes of cross-reference, though this defect is in part remedied by a quite complete table of contents.

J. Q. DEALEY.