

The Outcome of the Republican Primaries in Pennsylvania¹

A Survey and an Interpretation of an Extraordinary Contest

By FULLERTON WALDO

ON Tuesday, May 18, at the Republican primaries in Pennsylvania, Representative William S. Vare was preferred for the Senatorial nomination over Governor Gifford Pinchot and Senator George Wharton Pepper; and John S. Fisher was chosen to be the party standard-bearer in the campaign for the Governorship over Edward E. Beidleman. Vare and Beidleman were the candidates of that organization which Elihu Root, at the Union League Club in Philadelphia, once called "a corrupt and criminal combination masquerading as Republicans;" so that the politically incorruptible and undefiled who deplore the victory of Mr. Vare in the Senatorial contest find their disappointment tempered by satisfaction in the defeat of Beidleman, his running mate, for the gubernatorial nomination.

The vote for Vare was about 600,000, as compared with about 500,000 for Pepper and more than 300,000 for Pinchot. Thus it is seen that if the Organization solidarity had been pitted against a house of reform undivided, Vare's plurality of almost 100,000 over Pepper and nearly 300,000 over Pinchot would have been transformed into a shortage of 200,000 votes, and Vare would have found himself in an overwhelmed minority.

On the other hand, Mr. Fisher became the party nominee for the Governorship after his rival, Mr. Beidleman, had received many floral tributes and much back-slapping as the presumable winner. Tardy returns from rural districts changed Beidleman's meager surplus into a deficit of about 15,000. The disconcerted manager of Beidleman says that he intends to challenge the figures; it is highly improbable that they will be sufficiently changed to alter the result, as it is also unlikely that the Senate "probe" into the cost of the primary candidacies will amount to anything.

Of Vare's total vote more than half came from Philadelphia, where he carried all but one ward. Outside of the city, which is also Philadelphia County, he carried but six counties in a total of 67. Mr. Vare, with his "machine-tooled" victory, thus finds himself with Philadel-



Keystone

William S. Vare

phia as his pocket borough and the State at large disconcertingly independent of his control.

ON the day after this momentous primary election, May 19, Senator Reed, of Pennsylvania, on the floor of the Senate ascribed the outcome to two causes. The first of these, he said, was the interjection of Governor Pinchot and his candidacy, dividing the so-called "dry" sentiment. The second cause, he declared, was "a wave of resentment against the Prohibition Law, which blinded many people to the real questions at issue. It was the one opportunity they thought they would have for an expression of their sentiment on the wet-and-dry question." In a feeling aside, he added: "I believe that question ought to be taken out of politics, at least out of the campaigns for choice of representatives in the Senate, by allowing the people of Pennsylvania to express their sentiments in a referendum on that subject, so that we may know what they

think, without having to try to read it through the dim glass of their choice of a particular candidate in a primary."

These statements of Senator Reed, illuminative as they are, invite comment. In the first place, it may fairly be asked by a dispassionate outsider whether Pinchot deservedly incurs censure for his refusal to withdraw from the field in favor of Pepper. The two men had been friends, hailing each other as "Dear George" and "Dear Gifford" in correspondence. One link between them was a shared admiration of Roosevelt; but that admiration has often been conceived and expressed by very different types of men. Pepper and Pinchot are temperamentally unlike. Pinchot is a crusader sometimes carried by the initial momentum of generous impulse to extremes that lend color to the charge of fanaticism; Pepper too is an idealist and a visionary, but he is also a Philadelphia lawyer. Pinchot by his effort for the conservation of the forest land of Nation and State has conferred a benefit on his own time and on posterity such as entitles him to be held in grateful remembrance. Pepper, an extremely able attorney and a devout Episcopal churchman, is a gentleman and scholar in politics whose occasional efforts to speak the language of the Organization stalwarts—as when at a ward meeting he said, "We shall spit in the bulldog's eye"—have only accentuated the difference between the kind of man he is and the kind that is a servile and a willing henchman of the feudal system which Vare inherited from Quay and Penrose.

Pepper and Pinchot are both aligned with what the Organization derides as the silk-stocking and highbrow element. It is the boast of Vare, on the other hand, that he came from the people, has stayed with the people, and will be one of the people to the end. His favorite campaign ditty averred that he "followed the plow and milked the cow." In the early days he owned pigs and collected city garbage for them; after that he took contracts, with his brothers, for street cleaning. He is proud of the fact that he is self-made. He holds himself accountable as a partisan of the strictest sect of the system whereby he rose—a

¹ See editorial comment.

system of orders obeyed, of dues assessed upon office-holders and of tribute collected, of rewards for the obedient and punishment for the refractory, of year-round goodness to the poor, of liberal "recognition" of those who work to get out the vote and watch at the polls.

VARE has been almost a cipher in his fourteen years in the House of Representatives at Washington. He has a record as an absentee when many important votes were taken. His boast has been his insignificant membership on the Appropriations Committee. He has followed the political principle of "addition, division, and silence." But in Philadelphia, where he was first a Councilman and then recorder of deeds, he came to power, and now that power is confirmed and made absolute by his succession to the throne vacated by those infinitely abler men, Matthew Stanley Quay and Boies Penrose.

Pepper, appointed by Sproul, thought his record at Washington entitled him to be returned to office as the result of a popular election. He announced himself a candidate last September.

Governor Pinchot entered the field against him last March, after calling a special session of the Legislature, which turned down several of the Governor's pet measures, such as the election reform and the liquor legislation bills.

A few days later Vare, seeing his shining opportunity, entered the arena against Pepper and Pinchot. He thought a platform advocating a modification of the Volstead Act to permit the use of light wines and beer was all the platform he needed. At the recent Senate investigation when he was requested to depart from a prepared written statement to answer questions concerning the probable effect of a modification he contented himself with saying that he was no lawyer; and plainly he required guidance in order to formulate logical answers to rational queries. He made the poorest possible impression as a witness; but those who have managed his successful campaign, thinking and acting for him as far as possible, are content to put before the people his party regularity and his moist philosophy, and do not care about the rest. Harry Mackay, City Treasurer of Philadelphia, as Vare campaign manager has been the Bunty or Tony Sarg who pulled the strings; and Vare has not made a move, nor said a word, nor signed on a dotted line, save at the behest of this astute politician, who turned every mistake of Pinchot or Pepper to the profit of his candidate, and saw his chance in the unfortunate division of the "reform" forces.

THE three candidates publicly declared the chief planks of their several platforms.

Pepper, calling Pinchot a trouble-maker, said that the primary offered "no opportunity to make any useful solution of the wet-and-dry problem," and did not range himself with either side on this issue. He made a strong point of his loyal support of the Administration of President Coolidge.



International

John S. Fisher

Pinchot said: "On the liquor issue I will stand, vote, and fight dry under any and all circumstances." He was "against the political gang in Philadelphia and in every other county in Pennsylvania." He cited Roosevelt's accolade, saying that the latter would have named him Secretary of State had he been elected in 1912, and declared that he was supported by the great majority of Pennsylvania women and by the 250,000 members of the United Mine Workers.

Vare in his statement confined himself to the issue raised by the Volstead Act, denounced it on the threadbare score of infringement of personal liberty, and concluded by saying, "I would advocate a law permitting the sale of light wines and beer."

No one who voted intelligently needed to be in doubt as to the stand of each of these candidates. One wet champion confronted two dry protagonists.

But when it came to the "show-down" at the polling-places in the primary, it is

perfectly certain that many wets voted for Pepper simply because these voters could not endure the thought of being represented in the Senate by Mr. Vare. Mr. Pepper had previously indicated that he would act upon the issue as the popular preference of Pennsylvanians suggested; if most of the people wanted a modification of the Volstead Act, he would favor it; if the majority went dry, he would side with the majority.

It is also certain that many wet votes were cast for Pinchot because of a personal regard for the man and approval of his policies and practices. Thus in the coal regions the miners in many instances voted for Pinchot and Beidleman, wet candidate for Governor.

As for the victory of Fisher over Beidleman in the contest for the gubernatorial nomination, it is significant to note that Fisher as a State Senator was chairman of the committee that investigated the Capitol scandal and vigorously pushed the prosecution. Under Governor Sproul, he was an excellent Commissioner of Banking. He won the staunch support of Joseph R. Grundy, head of the Manufacturers' Association and a very influential factor in Pennsylvania politics. Grundy and Pepper had a falling out, and Pepper had openly defied Grundy, so that the Grundy influence, used unreservedly in favor of Fisher as Governor, did not in the least aid Pepper's Senatorial candidacy.

Beidleman had openly declared himself against the Grundy influence. He said: "I am antagonistic to everything that spells Grundyism." His candidacy was seriously embarrassed by the fact that while he was Lieutenant-Governor he had accepted a \$5,000 check from Auditor-General Charles A. Snyder for appearing in a tax-collection case as his attorney. A curious circumstance is that the late Edwin H. Vare (brother of the Senatorial nominee) four years ago said that the acceptance of this money put him out of the running as a gubernatorial possibility. Yet on the present occasion William S. Vare accepted Beidleman as his running mate, and declared their political interests identical.

The eleventh hour upset in favor of Fisher after Beidleman had been crowned and hailed the victor is a heavy blow to Vare, since it shatters his hope of controlling the State as he controls Philadelphia. It is a blow to W. Harry Baker, chairman of the Republican State Committee, who had thrown the whole weight of his influence into Beidleman's candidacy and who could not afford the costly failure. With a Governor and a State administration under his thumb at

Harrisburg, Vare would have been czar of Pennsylvania, and he could reasonably expect, two years hence, to displace the other Senator from Pennsylvania, David Reed, of Pittsburgh, who has the powerful support of the Mellon interests. Vare intends to have himself made National Committeeman from Pennsylvania, in fulfillment of his design to play off both ends of the State against the middle and confirm his domination everywhere. But with Fisher instead of Beidleman at Harrisburg, he will find himself facing a high-minded and patriotic opponent whose mettle has been

proved and who at every turn will try to thwart this effort to fasten on the State at large boss rule and the evils of the system that obtains in Philadelphia.

THOUGH Vare's victory, as has been seen, is seriously qualified by the success of Fisher, it has already had country-wide and even international repercussions. The contest in Pennsylvania was being watched with intense anxiety by opponents of the Eighteenth Amendment all over the land, who were desirous of having a test vote taken as an index of popular sentiment and an in-

dication of the manner in which they should trim their own sails to catch the breeze whatever the trend might be. The wets have hailed the Vare nomination as proof that the people want "Volsteadism" modified, if not abolished. The dries are to some extent disheartened, even though, as has been indicated, the vote is not to be regarded simply as a wet-and-dry referendum. And certain European nations, already skeptical regarding our "experiment" with prohibition, will see in the Pennsylvania result the proof on a large scale of a popular counter-revolution against a restrictive edict.

Can a Prohibition Agent Be Honest?

By ERNEST W. MANDEVILLE

CHARLES L. CARSLAKE, who served the Government for three years as a prohibition agent, told me that he could easily have become a rich man during that period by accepting bribes.

In giving into this temptation Mr. Carslake said that he would have only been doing "the usual thing." But instead he lived on his \$2,000 a year salary and, as an experienced detective, gave his best efforts night and day toward the enforcement of the Eighteenth Amendment.

He succeeded in making a record for seizures of trucks illegally transporting bootleg liquor. He played no favorites. He tried his best to get at the big bootleg operators. He made arrests both during his hours of duty and during the hours in which he was supposed to rest. Rum-runners throughout the whole State of New Jersey feared him as an efficient enforcement officer who could not be bought off. In short, he did his duty.

With what result?

Notes that he was carrying in the bank could not be renewed. He was forced to mortgage his farm. Pressure was brought to bear upon him. Attempts were made to blacken his reputation. He realized that he was in danger of going through a long siege of financial difficulties. He called his children together and told them frankly what he was up against. "I know that I have not given you the luxuries and advantages you should have. I know that things will probably get worse as I go along. I can very easily change all that by going the easiest way and taking my rake-off along with most of the others. What shall I do?"

"No matter what happens, dad, we don't want you to do anything crooked."

Carslake continued to do his duty and

to live up to his oath of office—that is, he did so as long as he was allowed to continue in the Government's employ. He was soon eased out of the Federal service. Now as a Burlington County detective and as a private operative he continues to expose violations of the Prohibition Law, as well as other laws. Things still go pretty hard for him. A big, husky man, with splendid courage and a strong character, he stands up under it all—disillusioned, angry, and a bit discouraged, but still plugging along.

NEXT week I am going to tell you of another honest Federal prohibition agent who did his duty. This man paid the price of dismissal and abuse with a complete physical breakdown.

"Decent people don't realize what a Government officer who does his level best is up against," ex-Agent Carslake said to me. "We act as a bumper between decent folks and the underworld, and the underworld seems to have all the best of it as far as crack legal and financial assistance is concerned. The people don't back us up. A great majority of those who eat and go to bed at regular hours have not the slightest conception of what is going on in this underground liquor traffic. Individuals don't seem to care anything about it until they themselves are hit between the eyes. Then they wake up. It has to be personal. Ordinarily they are not at all concerned and pooh-pooh the importance of the whole matter. But when it hits their own family then they become red-headed. There is a prominent man down in this neck of the woods whom no one could get excited about the continued violations of the dry law. But when, after a large party given at his home, almost all the young people were drunk and his own daughter was insulted, then

he went on a rampage to get every bootlegger in the country locked up."

"Mr. Carslake, what temptations do Federal agents have to face?" I asked.

"An agent who is at all feared by the 'leggers can obtain from them as much money in two weeks as he would draw from the Government in an entire year. After I had made a reputation of spotting and knocking down booze trucks I was offered \$1,000 a week by the bootleggers if I would not interfere with their business. They also guaranteed to furnish me two trucks a week which I could seize so as to keep my record clean with the Federal authorities. From others I have been offered the lump sum of \$10,000 cash to let their trucks ride. A representative of another gang offered me \$500 a week while I was standing in a district attorney's office. It is nothing at all to be offered \$1,000 by the driver of a single truck captured. Even in raiding little wash-boiler stills in some old shack on a side of a hill, it is customary to be offered from \$250 to \$300 to say nothing.

"A Federal agent living on a \$2,000 salary and with no private income can't drive expensive cars of twice that cost and be on the level, and don't let anybody tell you that he can. Why do you suppose so many are anxious to get appointed as Federal agents at this small salary? I know agents who did not have anything more than the clothes on their backs when they came into the service and who have bought tens of thousands of dollars' worth of real estate, several expensive cars, and anything that an extravagant millionaire would wish.

"I remember an instance of a man who was taken on the force, flat broke. His clothes were all worn thin, and he hardly had enough money to buy a lunch. In a few days he appeared in