

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.

**T**HOUGH 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

**C**HARLES 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.

**N**EXT 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

expensive clothes and displayed a diamond stick-pin. While sitting in the agents' room one day, the tailor 'phoned, saying that this man's suit which had been sent to him to press contained several one-hundred-dollar bills rolled up in the vest pocket. The tailor simply wanted to notify the agent that he had found the money. All the other officers in the room burst out laughing."

**T**HIS report of grafting among Federal prohibition agents can hardly be considered as news. Almost every one in and out of the Government service knows that such a condition exists. General Andrews admitted in his testimony at the recent hearing before the Senate Committee in Washington that 875 agents, or a very large proportion of the total number, had been dismissed for this reason. The important point to note, it seems to me, is that an agent can pile up a considerable fortune before he is caught, and then he is not prosecuted, but simply asked to resign. High officers of the Prohibition Unit have stated that the Government policy is not to bring any proceedings against a grafting agent or to have any publicity about it, but simply to require his leaving the service. Many of the ex-agents then make use of their experience by entering the bootlegging business themselves. Mr. Carslake mentioned an instance in which a rum truck was seized with an ex-prohibition director in command of it.

"Local police usually can't do anything about prohibition violations, even if they want to," said Mr. Carslake. "If they try to make unwanted arrests, they only cut off their own heads. People higher up won't stand for enforcement. A cop who is getting a salary of \$100 or so a month and who is keeping up a home and has a wife and several children dependent upon him finds it hard to withstand the argument of the bootlegger, which runs something as follows: 'You have to live as well as I do. I am doing my best to keep my family in funds. This is a bum law, anyway, which was slipped over on us. You have got a right to take care of your kids too, so why not take this twenty-five dollars or fifty dollars and lay off? We'll take care of you on our weekly pay-roll.'"

In going about Camden and other South New Jersey towns I noticed how openly liquor was being sold. In some barrooms they do not even bother to draw the shades. There can be little question but that the local officials know exactly what is going on. Policemen walk in front of and into these places, but nothing is done about it.

The prohibition agent not only has the financial temptation to resist, but he also

receives many threats of bodily harm; and he is quite well aware that in some cases he is dealing with desperate characters who would not hesitate to put him out of the way. "Several bootleggers told me," said Mr. Carslake, "that they would see to it that I died with my shoes on."

"What kind of men go into the Fed-



Charles L. Carslake

eral prohibition service?" I asked Mr. Carslake.

"Of course, you find some splendid men," he replied, "but in the main they are in the service to get as much out of it as they can. Some of them would steal anything from liquor to jewelry in making raids.

"It is so easy for a prohibition agent to make a great deal of money, and systems have been evolved which enable him to cover up his profits, so that it is very difficult to prove that he has actually made money from bootleg graft. It is usually arranged so that there is some excuse provided where he could have made this money in a legitimate way.

"With my record, I could easily have piled up a small fortune. It would not have been hard to get away with it. I could have bluffed it through and no one could have touched me. If I had done this, every one would have been on my side.

"There would be a good chance of enforcing this law to a reasonably high degree of efficiency if the Government would adopt the policy of locking a man up when it gets something on him. At the present time the moral fiber in this country seems to be very, very thin. With politics and the underworld hooked up together and so much underground influence working throughout the depart-

ment, I don't think there is a chance of the law being enforced. If officialdom were knocked out, I think it could be done. It would have to be put up to the local people, however. A good deal of the red tape would have to be done away with. Some of the directors of public safety and other local officers would have to be sent to jail. I don't think there would be much trouble in making a good showing in enforcement if it was gone at in earnest."

"Do you mean to say that an agent who wishes to enforce the law is hampered in his efforts?" I asked.

"Of course he is. If you tread on the toes of men higher up or their friends, you are immediately called off. At various times the entire force of agents would be stationed on guard duty at certain out-of-the-way places, and, although we had no proof of the fact that we were being put there to be kept out of the way for some large movement of liquor, we all felt sure that that was the reason. Whenever I would get particularly active in knocking off a few of the eighty or ninety beer trucks that pass over a certain road each night I would get a telegram ordering me to some other part of the State. About half my time was spent upon the trains, going from point to point, for no particular reason that I could figure out, except to keep me out of the way. Upon one occasion I was taken off the road, where I had been making a great many seizures, and placed on warehouse duty for five days. Every bootlegger in the State knew it, and when I happened to make an arrest while off duty the rum-runner said: 'I thought you were in the warehouse. What are you doing out here?' Sometimes I would get the same beer-truck driver as many as six or eight times. I have heard of trucks being released when it was claimed the samples taken from the trucks were near-beer, and not real beer. We all knew, though it would be difficult to prove, that somewhere along the line these samples of near-beer had been exchanged for the samples of high-powered beer seized."

As I was leaving Mr. Carslake he said: "I admit I am pretty sore; but can you blame me? The supposedly good people don't back us up. Some of them that pretend to be good live two kinds of lives—daytime lives of respectability and nighttime lives when they are not above breaking the law themselves. A little while ago I had with me a highly respected man who was strongly vouched for by the Federation of Churches, but he had his own arrangements for getting liquor and drank openly in the roadhouse we visited. It is a pretty discouraging proposition, I can tell you."



# Is Democracy Bankrupt?<sup>1</sup>

By CHARLES MAURRAS

Editor of "L'Action Française"

IS democracy bankrupt? This is evident for an increasing number of thinking Frenchmen, and soon it will be what I believe you call a truism with them. Do not attach too much importance to the electoral storm of 1924. Educated opinion, which is what we are concerned with, was astounded by it, as was popular opinion also. Anxious, though not really fearful, for their "rights," a million civil servants succeeded in upsetting four million electors; and, the mischief done, men begin to ask one another with concern how to be rid of a régime which could allow of such upheavals.

But we must come to an agreement about the terms we use, for it is a controversial matter. I can call democracy the government of goodness and beauty. I can say that democracy is identical with demophily. I can assert that it is a government designed and carried on for the good of the people. Strictly, the word democracy means government by the people; or, more accurately, the régime which gives the control of the state to the most numerous—that is, to the least cultured; that is, to the less well informed; that is, to those least able to choose and act with freedom and discernment. The mediocrity of such a government must be obvious before even it is tried. But France has made the experiment, and Frenchmen are becoming less and less satisfied with it.

They need only to look at some historical landmarks. We had in 1789 a national monarchy which governed in the most general interests of the country and whose foundation and strength depended on numerous powerful and well-instructed middle classes, the nurseries of civil servants, of political and judicial counselors. Nearly all Ministers of State came from their ranks, the remainder being supplied by the high and low Catholic clergy, the so-called noble class supplying chiefly the higher ranks of the services, but not exclusively. This régime exhibited certain titular and fiscal inequalities. It was to get rid of them that we have this equalitarian revolution, this democratic evolution. What have we gained by it? Some small, fleeting advantages which were on the way to fulfillment in the simple course of time—small holdings have increased in the last

thirty years much less than has been said—and we have lost tremendously.

A SEAFARING folk will understand our first catastrophe—the destruction of our navy. Before the Revolution Great Britain considered us as competitors and possible rivals at sea. After the tragedy which Waterloo decided the most ambitious of the French had to content themselves with second place. We now occupy the fifth. We have a fine colonial empire, but no ships to guard it! On the Continent the years 1792, 1814, 1815, 1870, 1914 stand for invasions not equally menacing yet humiliating and destructive, whatever the result was. Does it not seem to you that five invasions in five quarter-centuries is a good deal for one nation? No such misfortune has, it would seem, happened to Great Britain since the year of our Lord 1066. My friend Jacques Bainville points out in his "History of France" that the Germans, masters of Paris in 1814, calculated that nine centuries had elapsed since their eagles had flown over the heights of Montmartre. This appearance of the foreigner—or, as the Greeks were wont to say, the barbarian—on what our revolutionaries called "the sacred soil of the motherland" shows the disparity between what these last have promised and what the régime they invented has achieved.

In home affairs the same illusions. In 1785 we had the densest and most numerous population, taken absolutely, of all Continental and even insular European states. Our birth rate has declined and our population has steadily decreased for nearly a century; its decline dates from 1831. The rural population is thinning, and if the towns increase out of measure, neither the quantity of our production nor the quality of our method of production has improved in the democratic period. *Pari passu*, with the spread of democratic ideas, and especially since the Third Republic, our economic apparatus has depreciated because our economic life began to lose its vitality for want of guidance from above and initiative from below. The professional classes, especially in the provinces and the whole professional organization both town and country, were razed by the revolutionary movement; their partial building up again, undertaken after the storm, remained far below our needs.

I do not wish to speak abroad of the increase in crime, nor of the lowered morals, nor of the weakening of religious ties, nor of the various educational and judicial crises—subjects too painful, but which must be hinted at to explain the happy but expensive reaction which is taking place in the French mind.

This reaction has arisen in the intellectual classes—the academic, literary, philosophic, and scientific worlds. It flows from the work of the best French minds of the nineteenth century, whether Catholic or anti-Catholic. Maistre, Bonald, Balzac, Veuillot, Le Play, Auguste Comte, and Maurice Barrès have taken part in this movement. To-day it is spreading throughout the country. The Frenchman is beginning to consider what he has lost in Europe and what is wrong in his own house. A walk through Paris or Versailles reminds him that most of her reputation as a nation, her authority, her prestige, come from the relics of what he used to call Old France and which reveals herself daily, young, fresh, and new in the esteem of the entire world. The Frenchman feels that he is first and foremost an inheritor. An inheritor of what and of whom? Not of the democratic age, which was rich in brilliant talent and generous impulse, but which has left so few finished monuments or lasting works. We are the inheritors of the old régime.

AND if the inheritance has decreased or has been increasing too slowly we are beginning to get some idea of the causes. They may be reduced to two:

(1) We have lacked authority, stability, moral and material order in the state; and this through the fault of democracy. Whether parliamentary, plebiscitary, imperialist, or republican, the democratic state is based altogether on popular election; which is as much as to say that it walks upside down. And the head changes so frequently that it has no opportunity of applying the few just ideas that come to it in this uncomfortable position.

(2) We have lacked the necessary public, social, and civil liberty—freedom of religion, of the family, of the commune, of the province, of profession, of handicraft—because the natural tendency of democracy is to make all political life an affair between the individual and the state. Anglo-Saxon wisdom has

<sup>1</sup>An editorial on this subject appears elsewhere in this issue.