

Have Women's Votes Helped Make States Dry?

Interesting Deductions Obtained from an Analytical Study of States That Have Adopted Prohibition in Some Form or Other

First, then, a woman will, or won't, depend on't;
If she will do't she will; and there an end on't.
AARON HILL.

HEREBY is pendent the whole problem of co-operation and co-ordination of the Votes-for-Women Movement and Prohibition. Whether women will or will not help to make the remaining wet States of the country dry, perhaps may be answered with more confidence if we know what women have already done in this respect.

Putting two and two together and attaining the sum of four has been a simple achievement since Thoth juggled numerals for the Egyptians, but the ancient god did not reckon with woman in his calculations, and, as the old almanac makers were wont to say, "all signs fail in wet weather," so, it may be, that all signs fail in wet States. Wasn't it Lamartine who remarked that "there is a woman at the beginning of all great things"? Well, at any rate, this statement is now questioned by certain gentlemen of the Anti-Saloon League who maintain that women, in seeking the franchise, should come out and make a strong fight against the Demon Rum and all his works, instead of carrying water on one shoulder and firewater on the other.

And the figures—what do they show?

They indicate that the women have not been at the beginning of this great thing of making many States dry.

With twenty-seven States and one Territory dry, partially dry, or pledged to be made dry, with twelve States and a Territory for woman suffrage, the interesting query arises: What States where the women vote are for prohibition and to what extent has the influence of the women made them dry?

With one exception, the seven dry States and one dry Territory in which women vote declared for woman suffrage before they declared for prohibition. Kansas adopted constitutional prohibition in 1881, and followed it in 1909 with a law passed by the Legislature prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors within the State for any use whatever, except for sacramental purposes, thus eliminating the so-called drug store saloons. But Kansas did not grant the franchise to women until 1912, so the women, in this instance at least, had no material part in making the State dry, but there is no knowing to what extent their moral powers of persuasion exerted an influence on the male voters.

But what have women done to make the other dry States dry?

First of all, let us see when these dry

States went dry, and when they voted to give women the franchise.

At the recent election four more States—South Dakota, Montana, Nebraska, and Michigan—were enrolled under the prohibition banner. In addition, Utah and Florida elected prohibition Governors and dry Legislatures, and in the Territory of Alaska prohibition was carried by a great majority, every town going dry.

Here is a list of the States under constitutional prohibition and statutory prohibition in which women vote, with the years in which the States went dry, on the left and the years in which they adopted woman suffrage on the right:

Dry Year.	Woman Suffrage Year.
1916..Alaska, constitutional prohibition..1913	
1914..Arizona, constitut'n'l prohibition..1912	
1914..Colorado, constitut'n'l prohibition..1893	
1915....Idaho, statutory prohibition....1896	
1881..Kansas, constitutional prohibition..1912	
1916..Montana, constitut'n'l prohibition..1914	
1914..Oregon, constitutional prohibition..1912	
1914..Washingt'n, statutory prohibition..1910	

Thus it will be seen that Alaska adopted woman suffrage three years before it became dry; Arizona, two years before; Colorado, twenty-one years before; Idaho, nineteen years before; Montana, two years before; Oregon, two years before; Washington, four years before. Wyoming is under license and municipal option in the incorporated towns and villages of the State, while unincorporated sections are under prohibition, brought about by legislative action in 1915. Women have voted in Wyoming since 1869, and, therefore, it was forty-six years after woman suffrage was adopted before the State went partly dry. Then there is Utah, which, at the last election, elected a Democratic-Prohibitionist Governor and a dry Legislature, which assures the repassage of the prohibition law in that State vetoed by Governor Spry two years ago. Women voted in Utah in 1896, and the State did not elect a dry Legislature until eighteen years afterward, and it will be twenty years afterward if the promised dry measure actually becomes a law.

By these figures it will be seen that it has taken an average of thirteen years and two and two-thirds months under woman suffrage for six States and one Territory to become dry by constitutional or statutory prohibition, for one State to become partly dry by local option, and for another State to be promised dry by legislative action. On the other hand, there is Kansas, which was dry thirty-one years before women had the franchise in that State.

Now, we have noted the States which became dry after women were granted the franchise, but thoroughly to analyze

the question we should also note the States which became dry without any help from the women's votes. Here they are:

	Dry Year.
Alabama, statutory prohibition.....	1915
Arkansas, statutory prohibition.....	1915
Florida, dry Governor and Legislature....	1916
Georgia, statutory prohibition.....	1907
Iowa, statutory prohibition.....	1915
Kansas, constitutional prohibition.....	1881
Maine, constitutional prohibition.....	1884
Michigan, constitutional prohibition.....	1916
Mississippi, statutory prohibition.....	1908
Nebraska, constitutional prohibition....	1916
New Mexico, local option.....	1913
North Carolina, statutory prohibition....	1908
North Dakota, constitutional prohibition..	1889
Oklahoma, constitutional prohibition....	1907
South Carolina, constitutional prohibition.	1915
South Dakota, constitutional prohibition..	1916
Tennessee, statutory prohibition.....	1909
Utah, dry Governor and Legislature.....	1916
Virginia, statutory prohibition.....	1914
West Virginia, constitutional prohibition..	1912

The Anti-Saloon League of America has been one of the most potent factors, if not the most potent, in turning the States to prohibition. The league was organized in 1893. By glancing at the list of States which became dry without the women's votes it will be observed that three States—Kansas, Maine, and North Dakota—were dry before the league was organized, one twelve years before, one nine years before, and the other four years before, so that neither the women nor the league can claim credit for these changes. The other seventeen States which became dry without the aid of women's votes and since the organization of the Anti-Saloon League will be found in the list just presented.

The average number of years in which these States became dry after the league began operations is twenty, which exceeds the time required for prohibition in those States where women voted by six years, nine and one-third months. But this is not a fair analysis, because in the time required to make the States dry where the votes of women and the efforts of the Anti-Saloon League were both operating, no lines can be drawn to show whether the women or the members of the league did the more good in the cause of prohibition.

Then there should be considered the efforts of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union with its 500,000 members in the United States. And there should be taken into account the moral effect which dry States have upon their neighboring wet States.

But to go back a moment to the figures we should, to give as complete an analysis as possible, consider the six States and one Territory which have become dry, the one partly dry State and the one State pledged to be made dry,

since women voted there. These States and this Territory have become dry after an average of twenty-two years since the Anti-Saloon League was organized. Thus it has taken two more years, on an average, to make dry States and a dry Territory of these wet States and wet Territory, with both the league in full operation and the women voting in those sections of the country, than it took to make the eighteen States dry when the league was working without the votes of women.

Now, if one were to follow the figures from a strictly mathematical standpoint, it would appear that the women in the States and the Territory just mentioned were a handicap rather than a help to the Anti-Saloon League in making wet States dry. But before any one accepts that conclusion he should remember that "all signs fail in wet States."

If you ask the Anti-Saloon League people for an explanation in regard to the figures, they will tell you that the women, in their anxiety to obtain the suffrage in the different States, have been too prone to use the political methods of certain of the old-time bosses. In other words, it is intimated that they have sought to conciliate all voting units and have not sought to antagonize any special unit. They have realized, it is said, that the liquor element is a powerful foe, and that when this element believes that the women will vote for prohibition, strong measures are taken to organize against any attempt to give the franchise to women.

Now, the league members argue that the women are weak in taking this position, and that they would show much more strength and gain many more supporters if they would boldly come out with prohibition as an issue. It is another case, the league people say, of Mr. Hughes and the concealment of his position in regard to the Hyphens. It is said that the women at their recent New York State convention dodged the prohibition issue.

The leaders of the National American Woman Suffrage Association freely admit that they are aiming toward complete suffrage and that they are not satisfied when they receive a limited franchise embracing liquor and school questions. They hold, however, that women are naturally against the liquor traffic and that the natural tendency of women is toward the good movements.

Outsiders, however—many of them women—have raised the question that there may be many bad women as well as many good women, and that by bestowing universal suffrage upon women the result will be only to extend the vote without purifying it.