

Facts About Maine.

The State of Maine has had a prohibitory law in continuous operation since 1858. This law prohibits the manufacture and sale in the State, of intoxicating liquor, except for medicinal, mechanical and manufacturing purposes.

Liquor for permitted purposes is sold by special authorized agents. This agency system has been found liable to abuse, and lax administration in relation to it sometimes interferes with the successful working of the prohibitory law.

Maine, being a part of the United States, is therefore unable to prohibit the importation by citizens, of liquor purchased in other parts of the country. This also interferes with the effectiveness of the prohibitory law.

The enforcement of the law is largely in the hands of officers elected by the citizens in different localities. It will readily be understood that in places where temperance sentiment is not strong, law enforcement by these elected officials will be weak.

ENDORSED BY THE PEOPLE.

The difficulties mentioned no doubt make it impossible to carry out the prohibitory law as effectively as a similar law could be carried out in a country constituted and governed as is the Dominion of Canada. The Maine law has not abolished drunkenness. It has however, been so far effective in this direction and so far a benefit to the people, as to merit and receive the cordial approval of a great majority of the citizens, many of whom have now had forty years' experience of it.

It is not going too far to say that the public opinion of the State unhesitatingly endorses the law and that there would be no hope of an attempt to secure its repeal. In the year 1884 a popular vote was taken upon the question of making prohibition not merely statutory but constitutional. To the electorate was submitted a proposal to embody the principle in the fundamental law of the State. The vote upon the prohibitory amendment stood as follows:—

For	70,783
Against	23,811

Majority for prohibition	46,972
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In the year 1895 the advocates of license secured the introduction into the State Legislature of a bill for re-submitting this question of constitutional prohibition to the people. A strong campaign was made in its favor, but the proposition was defeated in the legislature by a vote of 114 to 13.

DRUNKENNESS AND CRIME.

It is difficult to get exact statistics of the extent to which drunkenness prevails in any county or locality. Official documents show the number of commitments to jail, and in some cases the number of convictions made for the offence of drunkenness, in different states and

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provinces. There are also available police reports giving the number of arrests for drunkenness in different cities. There are no statistics showing the total number of arrests for drunkenness in different provinces and states.

Nor would such statistics indicate the relative extent of drunkenness in different places unless accompanied by statements showing the practice of the authorities in dealing with drunkenness. From evidence taken by the Royal Commission on the Liquor Traffic we learn that men are arrested for drunkenness in Maine who would scarcely be noticed in some other states or in Canada. For example, Police Judge Andrews of Augusta said "We are strict here in arresting men. If a man steps cross-legged he is taken care of." Mrs. Stevens of Portland, President Maine State W.C.T.U. said "Men and women both are arrested here under conditions that they would not be arrested under in a licensed state."

There is however, abundant evidence of the beneficial effect of the Maine law in relation to drunkenness. Ex Governor Dingley, now a member of the United States Congress, made some time ago the following statement:

In 1855 there were 10,000 persons (one out of every forty-five of the population) accustomed to get beastly drunk; there were 200 deaths from delirium tremens annually (equivalent to 300 now); there were 1,500 paupers (equivalent to 2,200 now) made thus by drink; there were 300 convicts in the State prison and jails (equivalent to 150 now); and intemperance was destroying a large proportion of the inhabitants and of the homes throughout the State. Now not one in 300 of the population is a drunkard—not one-sixth as many; the deaths from delirium tremens annually are not 50; and criminals and paupers (not including rum-sellers) are largely reduced, notwithstanding the great influx of foreigners and tramps.

We may judge of the beneficial effect of prohibition by the extent of serious crime of which there are reliable records, and much of which is known to be the result of intemperance. The Minority Report contains the following statement regarding this matter.

Maine's convict record is lower than that of any other state in the union, and much lower than that of Canada. And its tendency is steadily downward. The state prison report for 1892 says: "The number of convicts has not been so small for many years. The average this year is sixteen less than last year."

This low record would be still lower but that capital punishment was abolished in Maine many years ago, since which time, those who in most other states and in Canada would have been executed, are life convicts in the state prison. There are now forty of them. Deducting these, a comparison of the records of Canada and Maine shows that Maine has, in proportion to the population, little more than half as many convicts as Canada. Canada in 1892 had one convict for every 3,989 of population. Maine, in the same year, had one convict for every 6,959 of population.

ILLICIT LIQUOR SELLING

The most frequent violations of the prohibitory law are in some of the large cities where the authorities do not favor prohibition. Enforcement is most difficult in the cities of Portland, Lewiston, Bangor and Biddeford. Portland is a seaport and has the class of population peculiar to such places. Lewiston and Biddeford have large foreign populations. Bangor is headquarters of an extensive lumber business and contains a large population of sailors. Evidence given in regard to

even these places shows that the law must be an impediment to the traffic, as inconvenient tricks and subterfuges are frequently adopted by sellers and buyers to screen their lawlessness. The Deputy Marshall of Lewiston described the method of conducting the traffic there as follows:

They have no open bars here. They have bars here at the back of the store, but they have what they call strong rooms, with thick doors about six or seven inches thick, and bars on the door; they generally know their customers pretty well, and they open the door for them when they want a drink. They have a little hole to peep through, and if they know their man they will open the door for him and let him in, and then they will pull down the bars on the door. Sometimes the sheriff comes in to search, and while he is trying to force the strong door the man has time to take his liquor and spill it into the sink, and, of course, when the sheriff comes inside the room he does not find anything.

EVIDENCE OF ANTI-PROHIBITIONISTS.

That the law has done good, notwithstanding difficulties, is manifest even from the evidence of its opponents. The Royal Commission questioned eighty-eight witnesses in the State. Three-fourths of them unhesitatingly endorsed the prohibitory law as a benefit. Nearly everyone of those who did not favor the law admitted that it had done good in the State at large, and not one of them favored the abolishing of it in rural localities. Here are a few specimens of the statements of these opponents:

Mayor Staples of Biddeford—"One effect of the prohibition law has been to prevent the sale of liquor in small villages."

Mayor Beale of Bangor—"My knowledge of the rural districts so far as it goes is that the prohibitory law is enforced in them and that it works well."

Ex-Mayor Newell of Lewiston—"I think the prohibitory law so far as the county portion of the state is concerned is a success."

Mr. P. H. Brown of Portland—"I should say without hesitation that the law has done extremely well for our country towns."

OTHER EVIDENCE.

It would be impracticable to summarise in the limits of this leaflet the forcible case made out by the more than three-fourths of the witnesses who unhesitatingly and strongly testified to the beneficial effects of the prohibitory law. We can quote only a few expressive sentences:

Rt. Rev. Bishop Healey, R. C. "In our little villages and country places where public sentiment maintains the prohibition law it has done a great deal of good."

Rev. Matt. S. Hughes of Portland—"My church is the largest Methodist church in the city out of seven or eight. I do not know of a family in my church where there is a drunken son. It is estimated, so the committee tell me, that we have five hundred families in my parish and since I have been here, I have not been called into a home on account of liquor."

Sheriff Cram, of Cumberland—"You might go through ten of these towns in the northern part of this county and not be able to get one single pint of liquor, whereas in the little town of Baldwin (where I was born) before the law it was sold by barrels, hogsheads and puncheons."

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A. L. Bangs, of Augusta—"That the prohibitory law is a benefit to the state of Maine in every possible way you can speak of it, both in regard to its business and from a moral standpoint, there is not any question."

A volume might be filled with similar statements. All the Governors of the State, since prohibition was enacted, have in their official deliverances declared that the law was good. These are men who would know and who would not misrepresent. Here are some specimen utterances:

Gov. Daniel F. Davis, 1880—"The principle of prohibition has been so long the settled policy of the State, and has been found so useful and effective in suppressing the liquor traffic, that no party or class of men now dare assail it."

Governor Frederick Robie, 1887—"In a large part of the State, embracing more than three-fourths of our population, the liquor traffic is practically unknown."

Governor Joseph R. Bodwell, 1887—"In from three-fourths to four-fifths of the towns of the State, the law is well enforced and has practically abolished the sale of spirituous and malt liquors as a beverage."

Governor E. C. Burleigh, 1889—"Both by constitutional provision and by statutory enactments, Maine has permanently prohibited the manufacture and sale of alcoholic liquors, except for medicinal and mechanical purposes. Long experience has demonstrated the wisdom and advantages of this policy."

IT IS A SUCCESS.

A candid reading of all the evidence taken by the Royal Commission must convince an impartial enquirer that the opinion so forcibly expressed by the great majority of the witnesses examined is well founded. They testified unhesitatingly to the good that had been accomplished. Their statements fully justify the summing up made by the Minority Report in the following terms:

If a diminution of the sale of liquors, the lessening of the many evils which result from such sale, the strengthening of sentiment antagonistic to legalizing the traffic, and the clearly expressed will of the people favorable to prohibition may be regarded as proof of the success of the prohibition system, then your commissioner with all these facts before him, cannot avoid the conviction that the prohibitory law of Maine, despite defects and many infractions, has been, and is a marked success.

It has greatly reduced the consumption of liquors in the State; has created a strong public sentiment against both drinking and selling liquors; has banished drink shops from fully three-fourths of the State; has degraded the liquor traffic so that no person with any pretension to respectability thinks of engaging in it; has restricted illicit liquor selling more effectually than any other system has ever done; has been attended by peace, plenty and prosperity; and has commended itself to the favor of the vast majority of the people of the State as a beneficial law, markedly promotive of the public welfare.