

Prohibition in Maine

The State of Maine has had a prohibitory law in continuous operation since 1857. This law prohibits the manufacture and sale in the State, of intoxicating liquor, except for medicinal, mechanical, and manufacturing purposes.

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. This vote upon the prohibitory amendment stood as follows:

For	70,783
Against	23,811

Majority for prohibition.... 46,972

Prosperous and Progressive

It would be easy to adduce overwhelming evidence that half a century of prohibition has made the people of Maine, which is not naturally a wealthy state, one of the most prosperous communities in the world. Practically every Governor of the State during these fifty years has declared his cordial endorsement of the law, and has testified to its value. Here are some extracts from a clear, strong statement made by Hon. Chas. E. Littlefield, member of Congress for the State of Maine:

"Maine has in her savings banks \$95.22 for every inhabitant; Illinois has only \$13.43; Kentucky none; Ohio \$10.71; Pennsylvania \$16.72; and, while the population of Maine since 1850 has

increased only 20 per cent., her valuation per capita has increased 252 per cent.

"From 1850 to 1890, the percentage of paupers increased in Illinois 176 per cent.; in Kentucky 173 per cent.; in Ohio 138 per cent., while in Maine the percentage of paupers has decreased 145 per cent.

"Massachusetts is nearer Maine in location, and, in social and moral conditions may be thought to be more nearly parallel. She is a local option state with license, as a rule, in her large cities. In 1898 she had 7,554 prisoners, or 33 for every 10,000 people, while Maine had 841, or 13 for every 10,000 people.

"Illinois paid internal revenue tax per capita \$3.36; Kentucky \$8.72; Ohio \$3.36; Pennsylvania \$2.30. Maine only \$0.04.

"To-day the temperance people all over the world are looking to Maine as the leading state in outlawing the liquor traffic."

Mr. H. N. Pringle, of Waterville, Me., Secretary of the Christian Civic League of Maine has compiled extensive and comparative statistics showing that Maine in prosperity and freedom from crime is entitled to a very high position. Some of the facts contained in it are summed up as follows in the Anti-Saloon Year Book:

Tables have been compiled showing: (1) the "Total Commitments," (2) "Commitments for Intoxication," and (3) "Commitments for Liquor-selling."

These figures show:

1. That the total commitments to the jails and prisons of the sixteen counties of Maine has decreased from 6,859 in 1897, to 4,483 in 1906; a straight decrease in total commitments within nine years of more than 34 per cent.

2. That the aggregate commitments for drunkenness in the whole state from 1897 to 1906, inclusive, show a