

SUFFRAGE AND PROHIBITION

BY L. AMES BROWN

A SHORT time after President Wilson committed himself to suffrage as a State issue, I heard a thoughtful student of American politics declare that the turn he had detected of the suffrage movement "back to the States" presaged a similar tendency on the part of the Hobson movement. Certainly, if I could detect a disposition on the part of the electorate to relegate both prohibition and suffrage to the category of State issues, I should construe it as evidence of a more careful habit of thought on the part of the people generally, and attribute it in considerable measure to the conservative influence of the war as affecting American psychology. Such a tendency seems by no means improbable to persons who have noted other evidences of conservatism growing out of the war's influence.

Undoubtedly the idea that suffrage and prohibition are closely linked has persisted for a very long time. The first recorded instance I have found in which such a relationship was implied was the adoption by the National Brewers Congress in 1881 of a resolution condemning the suffrage movement. In the recent suffrage campaign in New Jersey the charge of liquor opposition cropped out in the speech of a suffragist at Montclair, New Jersey, who declared that the liquor interests of the State had raised a fund to finance the anti-suffrage fight. In the same month President Neil Bonner, of the National Retail Liquor Dealers Association, announced that he would vote against the suffrage amendment in Pennsylvania and predicted the defeat of the movement in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey, although he specified that "The liquor men have taken no official action against suffrage," and added, "So far as the liquor business is concerned, it has not been hurt by suffrage in the West."

Mr. Taft thus referred to the supposed connection between the suffrage and prohibition movements in a recent magazine article: "It is said that women will vote for prohi-

bition, and that, therefore, if they are given the vote we shall be rid of the saloon evil. To those of us who do not think that the saloon evil can be abolished, general prohibition, either national or State-wide, in States with large cities, and that the result of the effort would be worse than present conditions, this argument does not appeal. The lack of experience in affairs and the excess of emotion on the part of women in reaching their political decisions upon questions of this kind, are what would lower the average practical sense and self-restraint of the electorate in case they were admitted to it now."

The *Financial World* for September, 1907, said: "The opponents of the liquor industry have a powerful press, the church, and woman's organizations on their side."

Suffrage and anti-suffrage propagandists regard the relation between suffrage and prohibition as an almost forbidden topic, and both sides have been exceedingly chary of expressing their views. The prohibitionists have announced their unalterable determination not to meddle in any political affairs in which drink reform is not at issue.

Some time ago the chairman of the publicity department of one of the suffrage organizations wrote me in response to an inquiry I had made:

"You will find it difficult to get very far into the question of relationship between the suffrage movement and the prohibition movement by correspondence. The women differ quite widely in their views on this subject, and one thing which they have learned is that the expression of opinion one way or the other will be seized upon by the other side and used against suffrage. They are exceedingly chary of discussing the question."

Another woman, who is the leader of an important anti-suffrage organization, was kind enough to give her personal views very frankly and to aid me in locating certain published data on the attitude of women in prohibition elections, but she was careful to make the interview conditional upon my promise not to regard anything she said as official.

Mr. Taft's frank opposition to suffrage, expressed in a magazine article not long ago, when the suffrage campaigns in New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania were at their height, drew a long and critical reply from Mrs. Ida Husted Harper, head of the publicity department of the New York State Campaign Committee, which was published in a New

York newspaper. Mrs. Harper did not take any notice of Mr. Taft's reference to the supposed relation between suffrage and prohibition, which I have quoted heretofore, and when I wrote to her calling this omission to her attention she responded: "As we are in the midst of a campaign we are not confusing this with the prohibition issue."

These little excerpts are characteristic of a number of expressions I have received which establish the fact that both sides have made up their minds that it would be politically unwise for them to adopt a definite attitude with reference to the prohibition movement. Rather do they prefer to deal with local conditions in the States or smaller political divisions in which their campaigns are made. Thus, suffrage orators, in sections where anti-prohibition sentiment is predominant, have taken issue with liquor men who charged that suffrage would result in prohibition. Note the following excerpt from an anti-suffrage pamphlet on suffrage and prohibition:

In the recent campaign in Chicago, February, 1914, Miss Marion H. Drake, who was nominated for alderman in the First ward, was quoted in the newspapers as standing for "free lunch and saloons."

Mrs. Crystal Eastman Benedict, a prominent woman suffragist of Wisconsin, made, before the Manufacturers and Dealers' Club of Milwaukee, in addressing the assembled brewers, the statement: "Why all this hue and cry about woman suffrage injuring the brewing industry? Isn't it a little foolish?"

Mrs. O. H. P. Belmont, in an address, said she would welcome the support of the brewers, and praised Mrs. Benedict for her work among the representatives of that interest.

Mrs. Minnie Reynolds, for the National Suffrage Association, recently challenged anyone to find a word concerning prohibition among the pamphlets issued by the association.

Hugh Fox, Secretary of the United Brewers' Association, in a letter printed in the report of the hearing in December, 1913, before the Committee on Rules of the House on the resolution establishing a Committee on Woman Suffrage, said: "The United Brewers' Association states that the anti-suffragists have never received nor asked for contributions from them, although," he adds, "we have had appeals from the other side."

May Wright Sewall said, October 30, 1913, in Milwaukee, "Votes for women will no more prohibit drink than they will prohibit food."

Mrs. Grace Wilbur Trout, president of the Illinois Equal Suffrage Association and one of the leaders in the lobby at Springfield which brought about the enactment of the suffrage bill, said:

“ It is a great pleasure to remember that some of the firmest supporters of the suffrage measure in the Forty-Eighth General Assembly were some of the so-called ‘ wets.’ ”

So much for the traditional aspect of the belief that women would destroy the saloon as soon as they had the power to do so. Recently the belief has been challenged in many quarters, and statements have been circulated that women who have the ballot have not taken any strong stand as a class for prohibition, and that, so far as the fate of the prohibition movement is concerned, the balloting of women has had little effect. Not long ago, in a paper on prohibition in the *Atlantic Monthly*, I took occasion to point out that a number of Congressmen voted identically on the prohibition and suffrage resolutions at the last Congress, and to refer to the generally credited belief that the two movements are mutually helpful. It produced a vigorous protest from a thoughtful New England woman who declared that the facts relating to elections in which both issues had figured discredited the belief I had referred to. In February, 1915, the District of Columbia Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage caused to be inserted in the *Congressional Record* an interesting collection of facts relating to suffrage and prohibition elections, designed to show that woman suffrage has had little effect in bringing prohibition to the States which are now in the “ dry ” column.

This anti-suffrage statistician featured the attitude toward prohibition of California, a suffrage State. The opposition of California women to prohibition has apparently been of long standing, for it caused Eugene W. Chapin, former candidate of the Prohibition Party for President, to say, in 1914: “ The support expected by prohibitionists in California from women has not developed.” For instance, in San Francisco, at a local option election at which 46,665 women registered, the total vote for local prohibition was only 15,087. The conclusion drawn by the statistician from a study of returns from various California cities, including Los Angeles, Santa Monica, Pasadena and Redondo, is that the women stayed away from the polls and therefore did not make their influence felt in the California State elections. In 1914 the State of California rejected a prohibition amendment to the Constitution by an overwhelming majority, and decided in the same election that the liquor question should not be voted upon again for eight years.

It seems to me, however, that any generalities that may be based upon the California election as to the attitude of women voters toward prohibition are invalidated by peculiar local conditions. The condition in this respect is different in California from that in any other State in the Union. The women in California, when they vote on the prohibition issue, vote on a matter that affects the material welfare of practically everyone of them; for California is of course the largest wine producing State in the Union, and a large percentage of the families of the State are, in some measure, dependent upon the industry for support. So it is that in the various local option and State prohibition elections, California women have permitted the moral side of the issues presented to be obscured by their material interest in the outcome.

California seems to be the chief exhibit of the anti-suffragists who contend that women do not favor anti-liquor legislation. For the rest, the statistician points out that Colorado, which has been a suffrage State for twenty-two years, voted "wet" by 40,000 majority in 1912, and in 1914 voted "dry" by a majority of 11,572.

The anti-suffrage statistician closes her case against woman suffrage in the following paragraph:

It has been charged that the liquor interest defeated suffrage in the five States that rejected it November 3, 1914, yet the only two States that adopted it at the time were Montana and Nevada, two of the "wettest" States in the Union, and States where there never was any territory voted "dry," while North Dakota, a prohibition State; South Dakota, 68 per cent; Nebraska, 56 per cent, and Ohio, 52 per cent "dry," all defeated woman suffrage last year. The cities of Lincoln, Omaha, and Fremont, Nebraska—cities with large brewing and liquor interests—collectively gave a majority for woman suffrage, while the country districts of that State (in which are many "dry" counties) gave over 10,000 majority against it.

The charge of some anti-suffragists that the influence of the women voters has not been thrown on the side of prohibition is not upheld by a survey of the election results and conditions in the twelve suffrage States. It is true that California, because of local conditions, went overwhelmingly against prohibition in 1914, but in the same year four other suffrage States—Colorado, Washington, Oregon and Arizona—in which suffrage had been effective for twenty-two,

three, five and three years respectively, adopted prohibition. Kansas, which has been a prohibition State since 1880, adopted suffrage in 1912. In Idaho, where suffrage has been in effect nineteen years, strong temperance sentiment prevails, and the prohibition forces are hopeful of an early victory. Utah, which has been a suffrage State for nineteen years, is "about as near State-wide prohibition as any license or local option State in the Union," according to the current Anti-Saloon League Year Book, although it is true that the influence of women in Salt Lake City local option elections has not been exerted on the side of anti-liquor legislation. In Wyoming, the oldest suffrage State, local prohibition has made extensive advances, and the Anti-Saloon League Year Book announces that the State is now under prohibition, except in certain classes of incorporated municipalities. In Illinois, where the women have Presidential suffrage, 53 counties have local prohibition. Conditions in that State are described in the following excerpt from the last annual report of the Superintendent of the Illinois Anti-Saloon League:

The woman's suffrage bill, which could not have been passed without the almost unanimous support of the men who were elected by the help of the Anti-Saloon League, has proven to be the most valuable piece of temperance legislation the State has enacted. . . . The Illinois suffrage law demands that there be separate ballot boxes for the women inasmuch as they have only limited suffrage. This makes it possible to know just how the women vote on the wet and dry question. On account of the majorities found in the women's ballot boxes, 900 of the 1,150 saloons (outlawed a year ago by local elections) were closed.

Nevada, where only nine per cent of the people live under local prohibition, and Montana, which has practically no anti-liquor laws, both adopted suffrage in 1914.

It would seem, therefore, that the possession of the ballot by women is an asset of the prohibitionists in the bulk of the States where they are campaigning, with the exception of California; or, in other words, that to a considerable extent the sentiment for the two movements is co-extensive. The latter part of this supposition apparently is borne out by the fact that in 1914 the people of Ohio voted against suffrage at the same time that they voted against prohibition, and that in Missouri the adoption of a county unit law was prevented in the same vote which was registered against

woman suffrage. There are other means of verifying this conclusion.

The House of Representatives voted on the Hobson prohibition resolution December 24, 1914, and on the Mondell suffrage resolution January 12, 1915. A study of the two votes should furnish valuable information as to the relation of suffrage and prohibition, for a highly important factor in the profession of being a Congressman is skill in sounding public sentiment among one's constituency, or, in political phrase, "keeping one's ear to the ground." I doubt if at any time in the recent history of the Government, members of the House took more pains to attune their votes to the attitude of their constituencies than they did on the Hobson and Mondell roll calls.

The most impressive fact outstanding from a study of the two roll calls is that 106 members voted affirmatively on both resolutions. This shows conclusively that 106 Congressional districts were regarded by their representatives in Congress as being favorable to both movements, or at least as having compact minorities favorable to both. It is interesting to note that while 38 of the 67 Congressmen who represent the suffrage States voted for the Hobson resolution, only 32 of these Congressmen voted affirmatively on both the Hobson and the Mondell resolutions. The vote of the members from suffrage States was almost solid in favor of the Hobson resolution except in the case of California and Illinois, whose delegations number 38 members but who cast only 14 votes for the Hobson resolution. The following table sets forth an analysis of the vote of the suffrage States:

	For Mondell and Hobson resolutions.	For Hobson resolution.	Total State vote.
Wyoming	1	1	1
Colorado	3	4	4
Utah	0	0	2
Idaho	1	2	2
Washington	4	5	5
California	3	3	11
Oregon	3	3	3
Arizona	1	1	1
Kansas	6	6	8
Illinois	9	11	27
Nevada	0	0	1
Montana	1	2	2
	—	—	—
	32	38	67

The Hobson resolution received a heavy vote from the delegations of the States in which suffrage campaigns had been made recently and in which a strong minority sentiment for equal suffrage may be said to prevail. For instance, Michigan, where a suffrage campaign was made in 1912, cast nine of her thirteen votes for the Hobson resolution; Pennsylvania, where a vote on suffrage was taken November, 1915, cast twelve of her thirty-six votes for it; Missouri, where the suffrage campaign is being carried forward with considerable agitation, cast twelve of her sixteen votes for it; Iowa cast seven of her eleven votes for it; New Jersey and Massachusetts, where an unsuccessful suffrage campaign was in preparation, cast one vote each for it, while the New York vote was solidly against it. Of course the South, where the suffrage movement is not yet organized, gave its complete support to the Hobson resolution, while withholding it from the Mondell resolution.

Enmity against a common foe does not always result in an alliance between two crusaders, but it can not fail to produce a feeling of benevolent neutrality. This has been shown to be the case in respect of the attitude of the suffragist in the West. May we not expect, therefore, that prohibition advocates will find the progress of their agitation more easy of accomplishment in the East, now that suffragists have piled up such big minority votes in Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey, as was done in the October and November elections? Prohibition will have to fight the same liquor influence and many of the same organized political influences which opposed the suffrage amendments. The task may be even harder for the prohibitionists than it was for the suffragists, but it can not be doubted that some of the difficulties have been ameliorated by the suffrage campaigns.

L. AMES BROWN.

THE FUGITIVE

BY HERMANN HAGEDORN

Lights, lights and faces, wheels, and faint, far stars!
Tumult and shouts and ever the surging crowds
Struggling, with shrieks of laughter and wild horns,
Rattles and rustle of impertinent plumes,
Whistles and calls and perfume like strong poison.
Lights! In the streets the glare, and in the sky
Orgies of tumbling and upsoaring blaze,
Magnificently tawdry. Everywhere,
White lights to keep the ghosts away; bright lights,
To dazzle maidens, blind exultant youths,
Stir sleeping demons, make the ducats dance!
Lights for the dead, white lights for the white dead!

She stood, she turned. Between the shuffling crowds
Unsteadily a minute, back and forth
She swayed, and laughed with impudent red mouth
At one man's whistle and another's plume,
At one man's banter, and another's kiss,
Elbowing right and left till she stood clear.
She caught her breath. Her hat hung by one pin
Loosely in her dishevelled, heavy hair.
She drew back, took it off, and looked about.
The crowd was just the crowd. The boy was gone.
A block back somewhere some lightheaded thing
Had knocked his hat off, and for all she knew
Carried him off with her. He was fair game;
And there were other men with rolls to spend,
She said; and chewed her hatpins like a bit,
Glad for the minute to stand still, and watch
The wild midwinter madness surge and toss;
Glad to be silent, to be free, to breathe,
To fix her hair and subjugate her hat.
Lights, lights and faces! Without end, the crowd
Shuffled and jostled past her, blowing horns