

Pro-Suffrage Resource Packet

Lesson 3: *Mainers Speak Up*

Recreating a historic women's suffrage debate

What's in this packet?

This packet is meant to give you some insight into how men and women in the women's suffrage movement tried to convince people that women should have the right to vote.

These are all PRIMARY SOURCES, meaning they were created in the time period that they talk about. It's as close as we can come to traveling back in time and talking to people who were alive during the women's suffrage movement.

Contents:

- "Vote Yes for Women's Suffrage" Ad
- Suffrage Map (can be used as a prop during Mrs. Jenks's speech)
- "Twelve Reasons Why Women Should Vote flyer
- Two political cartoons
- Pro-suffrage speech delivered in Maine, 1913 (Both the original article and a transcription).

Unless otherwise noted, these resources are from the collection of the Maine State Museum.

WOMEN'S LONG ROAD

MAINE STATE MUSEUM TEACHER MATERIALS



VOTE YES FOR WOMAN SUFFRAGE

— WHY? —

THE MAJORITY OF WOMEN WANT IT

The Antis say they don't but they offer no proof. The Suffragists say they do and they can prove it

A total number of 44,000 women of voting age, residents of Maine, wholly unselected and belonging to all classes, whom it has been possible for the Suffragists to visit in a house to house canvas within the limited time available, have been asked that question and

37,500 Or 85 Per Cent

have answered "YES" in writing. Their signatures are on file at Suffrage Campaign Headquarters.

As a result of a partial canvas of the state of New York, now in progress, over one million women, being more than a majority of all the women of voting age, have signed petitions asking the men of that state to give them the vote.

These are

Facts! Why Not Grant Their Request?

**SUFFRAGE
GRANTED:**

1869
Wyoming

1893
Colorado

1896
Utah

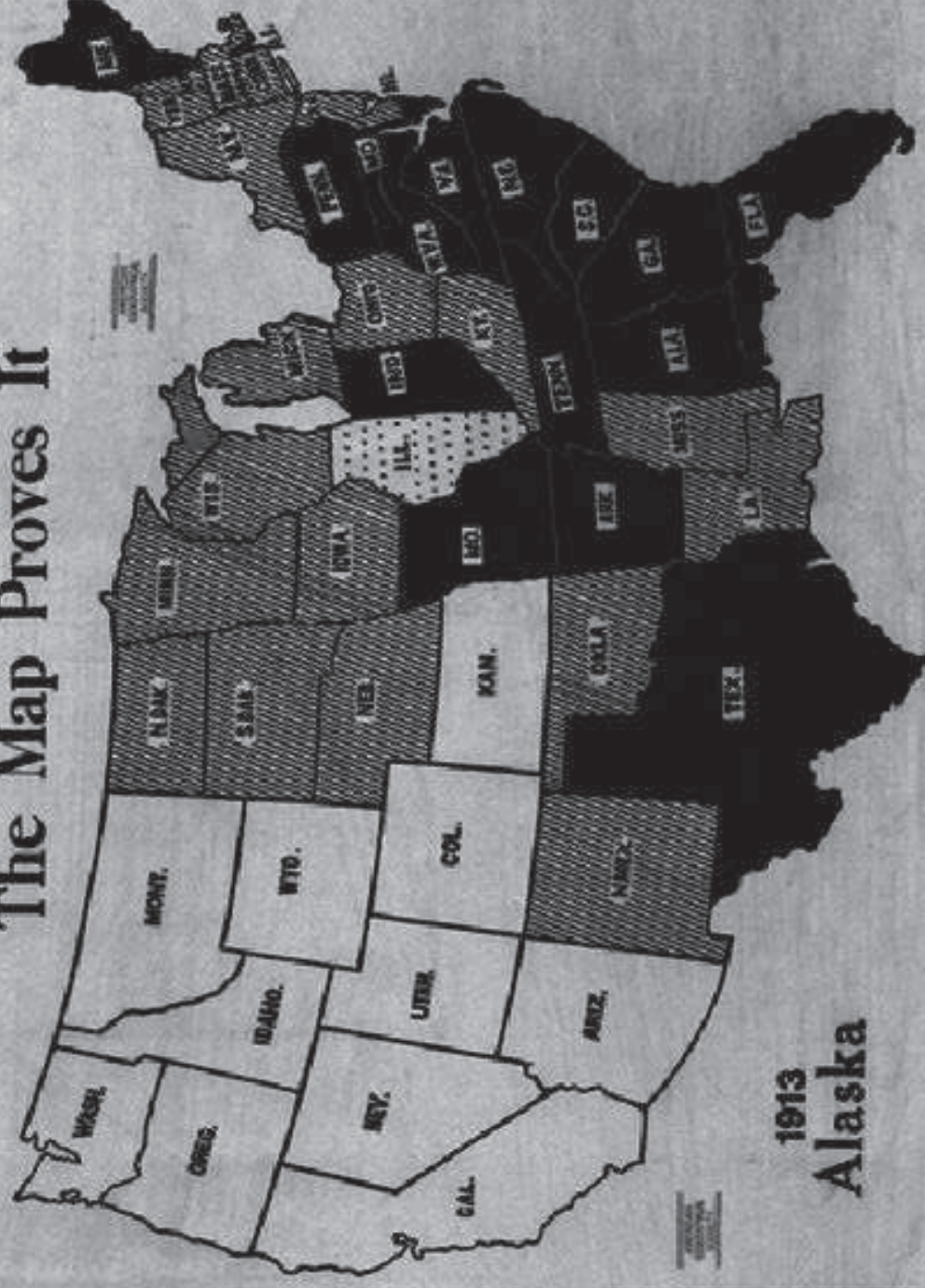
1896
Idaho

1910
Washington

1911
California

CYTOLOGICAL

The Map Proves It



1913
Alaska

**SUFFRAGE
GRANTED:**

1912
Oregon

1912
Arizona

1912
Kansas

1913
Illinois

1914
Montana

1914
Nevada

R. L. Stephens (1914)



W. D. Howland

THE ANTI-SUFFRAGISTS' IDEA OF A MAINE JURY

The women who **OPPOSE** Equal Suffrage point with horror to the possible event of a woman being obliged to serve on a jury with eleven men.

"Suppose they were locked up together over night!" they exclaim.

The **SUFFRAGISTS** are glad to say that they have not lost faith in the integrity and chivalry of the **MEN OF MAINE**.



"I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT THE PRICE OF EGGS!"

An opponent of Equal Suffrage, in a speech on June 11th., tried to show that Equal Suffrage did not reduce the cost of living. She was asked how she accounted for the fact that at the time eggs were selling for 68c in Maine the price was 23c in New Zealand where the women's vote prevents food speculation.

She replied "I know nothing about the price of eggs."

Right there she spilled the beans. She gave away in those few words the make-up of the Anti-Suffrage organization. They are the women who do not need to worry about the price of eggs and those who think it fashionable to pretend the same indifference.

But—the purchase of food-stuffs is a part of woman's special business and where women have the ballot as an aid to their business of the home you will never hear one say

"I know nothing about the price of eggs."

6294

Twelve Reasons Why Women Should Vote

1. **BECAUSE** those who obey the laws should help to choose those who make the laws.
2. **BECAUSE** laws affect women as much as men.
3. **BECAUSE** laws which affect **WOMEN** are now passed without consulting them.
4. **BECAUSE** laws affecting **CHILDREN** should include the woman's point of view as well as the man's.
5. **BECAUSE** laws affecting the **HOME** are voted on in every session of the Legislature.
6. **BECAUSE** women have experience which would be helpful to legislation.
7. **BECAUSE** to deprive women of the vote is to lower their position in common estimation.
8. **BECAUSE** having the vote would increase the sense of responsibility among women toward questions of public importance.
9. **BECAUSE** public spirited mothers make public spirited sons.
10. **BECAUSE** about 8,000,000 women in the United States are wage workers, and the conditions under which they work are controlled by law.
11. **BECAUSE** the objections against their having the vote are based on prejudice, not on reason.
12. **BECAUSE** to sum up all reasons in one—**IT IS FOR THE COMMON GOOD OF ALL.**

VOTES FOR WOMEN

Pro-suffrage speech delivered to Maine Legislature

Transcript of a 1913 newspaper article

Feb 12, 1913

ALLAN TALKS ON WOMAN SUFFRAGE

Portland Man Before Legislature Asks That Question Be Submitted to People.

AUGUSTA, Feb. 12. (Special to the Express-Advertiser.)—George H. Allan of Portland opened the discussion on the Woman Suffrage proposition, which was heard before the judiciary this afternoon, asking that the question of amending the State Constitution by striking out the word “male” in Section 1 of Article 2, be submitted to the people as in the case of the prohibitory law, good roads, time of elections, debt limit of cities, etc.

Mr. Allan stated that the suffragists were not asking the committee, or the Legislature even to grant the right of suffrage, but were simply asking that the question be referred to the voters of the State for their approval or disapproval.

Mr. Allan said: It will not be necessary for me in opening the discussion this afternoon to take the time of the committee in reading the resolve. It has already been printed under the joint rules and is now on the desk of every member. It may be well, however, briefly to state our position and some of the reasons for it, leaving to other speakers the privilege of filling in details.

This resolve provides for the submission of an amendment to our State constitution by striking out the word “male” in Section 1 of Article 2, together with certain other verbal changes necessary to bring the entire section into harmony with the principal amendment and is accompanied with the proper resolves submitting it to the people, the whole effect of which, if adopted, will be to give to every citizen of Maine, male or female, an opportunity to take part in making the laws to which they are held responsible. Heretofore this has been done by men alone. Woman has taken no part. For her, it has been only to obey.

Now, gentlemen, you will note that we do not ask this committee or this Legislature even, to grant us the right of suffrage. We feel that no committee would care to take that responsibility. We ask you simply to refer the question to the voters of our State for their approval or disapproval.

This course, gentlemen, is not unknown to you. Of late many questions have been submitted to the people for their decision: The location of our State capital, the prohibitory law, good roads, time of elections, debt limit of cities, for example.

Now, I would like to say, and I say it with full knowledge of what it involves, that some of these questions were not generally known to the voters until they read them on their ballot election day. On the contrary, with perhaps the exception of the prohibitory law, there has not been any body of men, for any purpose whatever, comparable in numbers with those now asking for this legislation.

Furthermore, I contend that the question of suffrage is as important to the welfare of our State as any I have mentioned. If then the Legislature has deemed it advisable to submit the question suggested here, why not that of suffrage as well? ,

Now gentlemen, do not for a moment think that suffrage is a divine right to be conferred only upon man. Suffrage has always been treated by our people as a matter of expediency. New England men did not gain the right without a struggle. The same arguments were then used against its extension to man as are now used against granting it to women. The leading men of our Country believed that the ballot in the hands of the masses would be utterly subversive of law and order, even government. But such you know was not the fact. Today women have taken a leaf from man's book and also demand the ballot.

Years ago it was given to the slave, low, degraded and ignorant. It is now enjoyed by the vicious, criminal and ignorant of all classes, a condition, of course, that we all regret, while the women of our own State are prohibited.

Gentlemen, is this right? Our women are of high moral character; without them church work would be a failure; our women are educated: 75 per cent of the graduates of our High Schools are women; women are also gaining in our colleges. It will not be long, if not already so, before women will be the better educated class. Our women are law-abiding, but a small per cent are criminal. They will add but little to the vicious and much to the good. Our women are disciplined. They come, not in riot or boisterous conduct, but in the strength of their own womanhood and in accordance with the laws that man has made, and ask for the privilege equal with man, to be allowed to express their ideas by the ballot and to become a factor in the moral and political world as true social progress intended they should. Does not their conduct, does not their education, does not their discipline entitle them at least to the privilege of having this question referred to the people of our State as has been done in other states?

Gentlemen, we claim this legislation in the name of social progress. Nine states have already granted full suffrage; states with a population of over ten millions people and over three million voters. A few weeks ago it passed the House of the Montana legislature with only two dissenting votes. In South Dakota the vote was two to one in its favor. In Nevada it passed the House with only three dissenting votes. In New York there were but live dissenting votes in the assembly and but two in the Senate.

We claim it because there is an enormous public sentiment on the subject. We claim it because there is a larger demand for woman suffrage than for any one other social reform. It is supported by all the great organizations of our State and Nation, the suffrage associations, the W. C. T. U., the labor unions and the grange with its 60,000 adherents in Maine. We claim it because woman's ballot will contribute much to the welfare of our State.

But above and beyond all we claim it in the name of fairness and justness. Women have to obey the law the same as man, but have no part in its making. Women are obliged to pay taxes the same as man, but have no share in their assessment. Women suffer from bad government the same as man does, but have no opportunity to change it. We claim it because.

“There's not a place in earth or heaven, There's not a task to mankind given, There's not a blessing or a woe, There's not a Whispered yes or no, There's not a life, or death or birth, That has a feather's weight or worth, Without a woman in it.”

Evening. Feb. 12, 1913

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Of This City, Who Opened Discussion
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