

*Wyoming*

**WYOMING**

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*Crannell*

## WYOMING.

As so much has been said by the suffragists regarding Wyoming, and its exceptional condition as the star state in the union, I had the curiosity to look up Wyoming and this is what I find from reliable sources. Suffrage was granted to women in Wyoming in 1869, and in 1870 the United States took a census. In that year, one year after the suffrage had been granted to woman, the total population of the state of Wyoming was 9,118, and the number of females of all ages from childhood to old age was less than 2,000, and they were scattered over a territory of about 100,000 square miles, or one female, whether in infancy or old age, to every fifty square miles of territory! What is the condition to-day? It must be remembered that the state of Wyoming is more than twice as large as the state of New York, and that the last census report gives the total population, inclusive of Indians and cowboys, as 60,000.

Think of the population of the city of Troy scattered over more than twice the territory of New York state, and you have Wyoming as it stands to-day. It seems then, somewhat superfluous to state that "not one county of Wyoming has a poor-house." Four years ago Wyoming was admitted as a state. Thirty years ago it was a howling wilderness, with no population save the wandering Indians. The settlers were what all settlers of a new country are, some from the east and others from Europe, many of whom could not speak the English language, and the adventurers and tramps that usually flock into a new country. Aged and decrepit people are not taken to a new country, so that it is fair to presume that the people who settled Wyoming were strong and well as pioneers usually are, and to whom the question of existence means to work or starve.

One would be surprised if in the "twenty-five years of woman suffrage," or any other condition, there should be need of a poor-house, with the vast territory and the small population. The city of Albany has 100,000 inhabitants. There is only one poor-house for the city and county of Albany with a population three times as large as that of the whole state of Wyoming, and that is not filled except in very exceptional times. Then it is stated that the "jails are almost empty." Until a few years ago prisoners were sent to Joliet, Ill., when lynch-law did not get the start of justice.

Isn't it nonsense to seriously cite Wyoming with its four years existence as a state, and its 60,000 inhabitants, as a precedent for New York with its nearly three centuries behind its back, and its more than 6,000,000 inhabitants?

The *Colorado Springs Gazette* of March 12, 1893, says: "To any one who knows anything of recent Wyoming politics, the statement about 'peaceful and orderly elections, good government and a remarkable degree of civilization and public order,' is simply grotesque. According to the statements of all parties, politics in Wyoming are as corrupt as in any state in the union. It certainly cannot be held up as a model for other states in any respect, and the women who want to vote injure rather than help their cause by citing it as an example of what woman's suffrage will do to purify elections and secure good government."

A writer in the *New York Press*, says: "People who have lived in Wyoming tell me that gambling is allowed by law, morality is at its lowest ebb, and if there have been fewer hangings—legal hangings—it has been because lynching is more popular."

Mr. Blackwell, editor of the *Woman's Journal*, and husband of Lucy Stone, made an appeal to the republicans implying that women would vote for the party who secured them equal rights of suffrage. Let us look at Wyoming as an example, as Mr. Blackwell speaks of it as "Republican Wyoming, saved to Harrison by the heroic efforts of her women." What are the facts? Not the newspaper partisan statements, but the facts as they are recorded.

In 1890 Wyoming elected a republican governor by a majority of 1,726, in a total vote of 16,032, and chose a legislature which contained thirty-seven republicans and ten democrats. The result of the election November, 1892, was the choice of a legislature democratic by twenty-five to twenty-four, a democratic governor by a majority of 1,871, and a democratic congressman by a majority of 461, while there was a plurality of 953 for the Harrison electors. These changes were actually brought about by the votes of the women; and Gen. Thompson, who managed the democratic campaign in Wyoming, reported afterward that "the women's vote is the easiest thing in the world to get, and the easiest thing to keep, and the easiest thing to manipulate, of any element in politics."

Governor Waite of Colorado, who favors woman suffrage for political reasons, says: "In Wyoming and Washington, to my knowledge, no extraordinary progress has been made in the line of political reform that can be traced to female suffrage, and in Colorado sufficient time has not elapsed to speak understandingly of the result. Certainly there is little hope of the future, unless women, admitted to suffrage, acquaint themselves more thoroughly than men with political affairs."

Governor Crounse of Nebraska, says: "By way of comparison it may be remarked that the Nebraska laws relating to the sale of intoxicating liquors are far more thorough and far reaching, and are better observed than they are in the sister and adjoining state, Wyoming, where woman suffrage has obtained for a quarter of a century." He then quotes from the *Chicago Record* regarding Wyoming: "At the capital city of the state, gambling houses are abundant, and open saloons are as frequent as any other kind of stores, and the charge is made that not a single act of legislation aimed at the betterment of the human race has been passed through woman's influence." Governor Crounse adds, "Nebraska's sons are largely what their mothers have made them; and what their husbands have achieved has been with the advice and support of the wives, whose influence is felt in a thousand ways other than in the caucus, the convention, or at the polls."

It would be easy to fill pages with such statements as are given above. We give these merely to show that there are two sides to the question of whether equal suffrage is a success in Wyoming or not. But the statement as to territory and population will be enough in itself to show the utter nonsense of citing Wyoming as a precedent for New York.

MRS. W. WINSLOW CRANNELL.

ALBANY, N. Y., May, 1894.

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