

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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DOCUMENTS

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THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

DURING ITS SESSION

A. D. 1846.



AUGUSTA:

WM. T. JOHNSON, PRINTER TO THE STATE.

1847.

TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE.

No. 16.

HOUSE.

P E T I T I O N .

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Maine in Legislature assembled.

To you, gentlemen, next to Divine Providence, we should look for protection and safety. Inasmuch as you have been appointed to legislate for the benefit and welfare of the State of Maine, which, we think, includes the whole population; and among these, one half we suppose are females, and a majority of the whole population may reasonably be supposed to be children. Now, gentlemen, we pray you to interpose your influence in behalf of the whole population, and *more especially* on account of those not directly represented in your honorable body, viz: women and children, and save us from the destructive influence of intemperance. Did you but realize the grief, fear and torment that await many families in this State on the arrival of a husband or father intoxicated, we think you would listen to this our earnest prayer to you for relief. We know there are a vast number of mothers within the State who have no other hope but in the reformation of their deluded husbands. Those poor mothers are cast down too low to petition, or even hope for relief; they are too broken hearted to think of better days; they have not the wherewith to clothe themselves; their children are half starved and half naked; they cannot send them to school, to meeting, or to any other place of mental improvement. Their lot is a hard one indeed. We will not pretend to describe the various steps that brought them down, but *rum* was the "*Alpha*,"

and will be the "*Omega*" of their misery, unless the powerful arm of government interpose in their behalf. Gentlemen, you all know of some cases of the kind which cannot be exaggerated by a description made on paper. O! how it pains the heart of a *mother* to know that he whom she has ever looked to for *protection* and *support* is senseless and prostrate in the gutter, or a raving maniac at a grog shop: and how our destinies are linked together; all of us have relations or acquaintances more or less involved in the general ruin that threatens to prostrate the best energies of the State, and utterly to annihilate thousands of families and their descendants for all time to come—*all of whom might be saved*; and *you, gentlemen, might save them!* We therefore pray you to abolish the *sale* and *use* of ardent spirits in this State by your votes! and make it a penal transgression to *sell* or *use* it as a *beverage*. The absolute necessity of industry, frugality and economy in this cold country calls loudly for such a reformation. The salvation of the *soul* calls still *louder* for such a reformation. The present policy of the nation, by which we shall doubtless be frequently involved in war with other nations, admonishes us, as a State, to abandon the use of that *maddening* stimulant.

Maine, like all other countries, will be wealthy and respected if she is temperate; if not, whole families of "*Maine folks*" may be seen ere long traveling in misery in a foreign land, as the Canadian is found here. Gentlemen, are you not interested, either personally or relatively, in this reform? Will fifty years pass by, and no poor, ragged, worthless *inebriate* stammer out his anathema on his ancestors by saying, "my father was a senator in '46," or "my uncle was a representative," or "my grandfather was a governor"? We beseech you again, in behalf of all living—and farther, in behalf of your children yet unborn, to stamp an *indelible* annihilation on the infernal trade. Let this "first summer session" crown themselves with unfading laurels; let the songs of all future time chant a requiem to their memory when they are blessed in heaven; let them forever enjoy the highest seat in the pantheon of eternal repose. Then grant our prayer. O! give the daughters of this State kind and sober husbands; give them dutiful and temperate

TEMPERANCE.

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sons, and fill their hearts with joy, and the blessing of millions of maids and mothers will pour upon you like a golden shower, and the "first summer session" be a lullaby of their cradle through all time to come.

LYDIA MERRILL,
JAMES MERRILL.

Whitefield, Lincoln Co., June 15, 1846.

STATE OF MAINE.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, June 23, 1846.

Ordered, That 300 copies of the foregoing Petition be printed for the use of the House.

SAMUEL BELCHER, *Clerk*.