

Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick, signed by 33 members, and one from the General Assembly of the *Canada* Presbyterian Church, which claims a constituency of 226,000 church members, and it must not be forgotten that the Legislative Assembly of *Ontario* joined last year in the prayer of these petitions.

That the desire for legislative prohibition is not of a merely local or even Provincial character, is shown by the petitions coming from all the Provinces of the Dominion: there are from *Ontario* 633 petitions, with 302,090 signatures; from *Quebec* 103 petitions, with 14,038 signatures; from *New Brunswick* 92 petitions, with 16,335 signatures; from *Nova Scotia* 119 petitions, with 13,622 signatures; from *Prince Edward Island* 43 petitions, with 3,174 signatures; from *British Columbia* 2 petitions, (municipal) with 34 signatures; and from *Manitoba* 1 petition (Presbyterian Church), with 1 signature.

Your Committee regard the vast and annually increasing number of petitioners, and their unanimity in the statements and prayer of their several petitions, as indicating the immense and pressing importance of the subject to which they call the attention of the Senate, and the profound and wide-spread feeling of the need of such legislation as shall at once check, and eventually extirpate from our land, the vice of intemperance, which has so long been, and still is, a prolific source of crime and misery, disease and death, and a blight upon the fair prospects of our young Dominion.

The whole of the petitioners join in asserting that the vice of intemperance is fearfully prevalent and increasing, and that it results mainly from the facilities afforded by law to the traffic in intoxicating liquors. Your Committee have no means of testing the accuracy of the statement, but their own personal observation, and the fact brought to view in the official Returns of Customs and Excise, shewing the enormous quantity consumed in the Dominion, lead them to place full reliance on the assertion.

These Returns shew that for the year ending 30th June, 1873, the quantity of Intoxicating Liquors imported into *Canada* and entered for home consumption was 2,910,304 gallons, valued at \$2,075,089, and the quantity manufactured in addition thereto, after deducting exports, was 16,308,625 gallons, valued at \$9,785,154. They also shew that 121,762,347 lbs. of valuable grain, principally Indian corn, wheat, barley and rye, were used in this manufacture: these quantities and values are in excess of those of the preceding year.

The petitioners further assert that the traffic in intoxicating liquors is shewn, by the most careful inquiries, to be the cause of probably not less than three-fourths of the pauperism, immorality and crime found in this country; the evidence gathered by the Committee of the House of Commons and reported last year, is strongly corroborative of this assertion; but your Committee are of opinion that more full and extended official information on this very important branch of the subject than can possibly be procured by Parliamentary Committees during the time the Houses are in session, should be obtained by the Government and laid before Parliament.

A third assertion is made by the petitioners, viz., that the history of legislation upon the liquor traffic shews conclusively that the evils resulting from intemperance cannot be suppressed so long as the traffic is licensed and protected by law; this statement is proved by reference to the Statutes, both Imperial and Provincial; and the unquestionable increase of intemperance while license laws have been in force; these laws have indeed signally failed in their professed object of so curtailing and regulating the traffic as to repress that vice.

The petitioners, with one accord, pray for a law to prohibit the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors, evidently believing that such entire prohibition, and nothing short of it, will prove effective in removing, or in materially lessening the evils of which they complain; they do not assign their reasons for this belief, but they are doubtless based upon the failure of the licensing system, and on the experience of other countries where prohibitory laws have been enacted, as shown by the testimony to the beneficial effects which have resulted from such legislation, which was obtained and appended to their report last year, by the Committee of the House of Commons.

As it has already been officially announced in Parliament that the prayer of these