

## TEMPERANCE EDUCATION LAW.

Rev Drs Charles L. Morgan and A. H. Plumb have issued a defense of the proposed amendment to the temperance education law. They call attention to the fact that the state association of Congregational churches, at their last annual meeting in Greenfield, passed unanimously the following resolution:—

Rejoicing in the good that has been accomplished through the temperance education law of our state, we believe the time has come when that law should be so strengthened that it will insure a temperance education to every child in every public school in our commonwealth. We therefore instruct our temperance committee to do whatever they deem wise to secure that end.

This temperance committee, with representatives from 16 different churches and societies, have united to form the Massachusetts central committee for the promotion of scientific temperance instruction in public schools. Mrs Mary H. Hunt is secretary of the committee, and its chairman is Rev Dr Morgan. We quote:—

After the central committee had been organized the limit of time for presenting new business to the Legislature made it impossible to perfect the bill for the desired amendments before it was presented, because the secretary of the state board of education, whose help we needed in adapting it to the technique of the Massachusetts school system, was absent. Permission was granted, however, that all necessary changes might be made after Secretary Hill's return to his office, while the bill was still before the committee. During this interval the opponents of the movement launched their criticism upon the incomplete bill. Distortions of its provisions made it appear as if the penalty applied to teachers, which it does not do in any way. The perfected bill simply requires that the local school committee shall make a place in the course of study for three lessons a week for 10 weeks of the school year, for physiology and hygiene, which shall contain special instruction as to the nature and effects of alcoholic drinks and other narcotics, and shall provide graded text-books for the use

of pupils in this branch as they do in other studies, with the same tests for promotion, and with oral instruction in the first three primary years; and it puts a penalty or fine, of not less than \$25 upon school committees who neglect or refuse to comply with this act. No penalty is put upon the teacher. This bill introduces no new principle, it simply provides that a law requiring this study, which has been on the statute books of our state for 14 years, shall be enforced. It is not so many lessons on the effects of alcohol and other narcotics merely, which are required as some of the papers have claimed, but in the whole subject of physiology and hygiene. It is all physiology and hygiene, except one-fifth the space in the books for grammar grades, and all but 20 pages in the high school books.

The statement issued by Drs Morgan and Plumb is long and discursive. The following extract covers its essential points:—

It is urged in certain quarters that it is well enough to teach scientific temperance, but that the present law is sufficient. It would be if it were universally enforced. We are teaching anarchy to our children when we place laws upon the statute books and make no provision for their enforcement. That the bill calls for an affidavit showing that the requirements of the law have been complied with need alarm no conscientious school committee. Experience has shown that without such provision, and the attendant penalty, there will be neglect of the study. How can the "teacher be degraded" as the claim is made, by a penalty which does not touch him or her? It falls solely upon the school committee, who shall neglect or refuse to perform his duty. Nor has it ever been deemed a degradation to school committees that they are now subject to a penalty of \$100 for failure to provide certain sanitary provisions required by law. This penalty will never apply to a school officer who intends to obey the law.

law.  
The complaint is made that if the proposed bill becomes a law, great additional expense must be incurred by the purchase of necessary text-books. This assumption is unwarranted. In almost every locality where the present law is well carried out, books are already in use which satisfy every feature of the proposed statute. Millions of such books are now in the schools of this country. Their use has long since become the rule instead of the exception. The only new expense, therefore, will be in those schools where little or no provision is now made for temperance physiology, and where school authorities have hitherto been satisfied with ancient or imperfect material. It is cheaper to save the boy by purchasing the books that will teach him not to drink, than to arrest and punish him later for crime caused by drinking.

The text-book clause is very far from implying a text-book job. It is not drawn in the interest of any publisher. No publisher has had anything to do with the pending bill we advocate. There are at least 10 prominent school-book houses whose books fully comply with the suggested law, and which can be adopted only through the stern law of competition.