

sterile conditions in his own work, and this was the point on which I based certain criticisms in the publication cited. It seems to me that this is the kind of work Dr. Smith "should have done and not left for some one else to do."

HOWARD S. REED

September 20, 1907

AN OFFICIAL LETTER ON "TEMPERANCE
PHYSIOLOGIES"

THE circular letter below was recently received by certain publishing firms in New York City. While it was intended for the *guidance* of publishers, it will certainly be suggestive to educators who are interested in freedom in science teaching. Some comment follows the letter.

DEAR SIRs:

It is probably well known to you that the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union, through the department of Scientific Temperance Instruction, Mrs. Mary H. Hunt, former superintendent, has been active in securing the publication of good school physiologies and their introduction into the schools, and that heretofore satisfactory books have borne the printed announcement that they had been endorsed, such endorsement being signed by Mrs. Mary H. Hunt, or by some member of the Advisory Board as appointee of the National W. C. T. U.

You are also probably aware of the fact that Mrs. Hunt and the W. C. T. U. have been repeatedly accused of receiving royalties on "endorsed" physiologies. Having been assured by Mrs. Hunt that no such royalties were received by her, we have for years unhesitatingly and unreservedly denied that any royalties were received by the W. C. T. U. or by any representative of the organization. If any one has received any royalties on endorsed physiologies, such receipt of monies was wholly unauthorized by the W. C. T. U., was positively against its policy, and was never reported to the W. C. T. U.

Since the death of Mrs. Hunt our organization has considered very carefully the present situation and has decided upon the following policy:

1. The National W. C. T. U. will continue to encourage the publication of new series of physiologies to replace weak or old series now in use, and urgently requests that all good series be revised frequently, that they may be kept up to date in all scientific and pedagogical points.

2. We shall encourage the direct relation of authors and publishers, exerting our influence to help publishers to find thoroughly competent authors and to help such authors to find good publishers.

3. We shall request publishers of school physiologies to publish a note in the preface of each book giving the name of some well-known specialist in physiology who has approved the book as to its scientific accuracy, especially concerning the latest deductions of science on the alcohol question, and that of some well-known educator who has approved the book as to its pedagogy.

Our world's and national superintendent of the Department of Scientific Temperance Instruction in Schools and Colleges and director of the Bureau of Scientific Temperance Investigation is Mrs. Edith Smith Davis, 2913 Brown St., Milwaukee, Wisconsin, a woman admirably fitted to lead this great department of our work. Mrs. Davis will have associated with her a number of well-known men in the scientific and educational world as counsellors of the department. Any scientists or educators acceptable to Mrs. Davis and her counsellors whose endorsement you may secure for your books will ensure the hearty cooperation of the National W. C. T. U. in the circulation of said books. Any physiology which fails to meet a high and satisfactory standard on the question of the effect of alcohol and narcotics on the human system will be publicly disapproved by the National W. C. T. U. and our local unions over the entire country will work against the introduction of such books into the schools.

We shall show no partiality between publishers of satisfactory text-books and will continue to do all we can to secure the teaching of physiology and hygiene in the schools, and to secure the introduction of good books.

Yours for the presentation of unbiased truth, on behalf of the General Officers of the National W. C. T. U.

This letter was signed by the president and secretary of the National W. C. T. U.

The letter has the following interesting points:

1. The question of royalties said to have been received is one of minor importance to scientific educators. Certainly no one ever believed that the W. C. T. U. as an organization could ever have descended to vote approval for accepting "royalties."

2. Scientific teachers are glad to know that publishers will be "encouraged to replace weak

or old books"; but they must wonder what society is charged with the duty of "encouraging" publishers to keep other books up to date. Should we not have a society expressly devoted to the stimulation of lazy authors and especially publishers? Any readers of the weekly lists of new books and new editions will readily see that the easy-going New York publishers need to be reminded that they must keep their books "up to date in all scientific and pedagogical points." Those of us who are interested in physiology and hygiene for schools are so altruistic that we want somebody to "encourage" the authors and publishers to keep other kinds of books up to date.

3. The note of approval by "some well-known specialist in physiology and some well-known educator" is a vast improvement over the former "endorsement" by a committee among whose members there were no well-known specialists in physiology or education. At first the change looks hopeful, for many books published with the old endorsement would never be approved by any well-known specialist in physiology who was also an expert in public school education. But any hopes of a new order of things which may be raised by paragraph 3 in the letter above are dissipated by the next paragraph, in which publishers are definitely informed that "any scientists or educators acceptable to Mrs. Davis and her counsellors" may be considered "well-known specialists in physiology" competent to write an approving preface for new text-books. This *may* work satisfactorily in practise; but before becoming too optimistic we want to see the list of specialists who might be "acceptable" to Mrs. Davis. How many members of the American Society of Physiologists, the American Society of Zoologists, and the American Society of Naturalists will be on the "acceptable" list, unless they first pledge themselves to views also "acceptable"? Will members of these societies be able without special instructions to judge concerning the "high and satisfactory standard" so that publishers may be sure of avoiding the financial loss and prestige which will follow "public disapproval"? It seems

clear that publishers must make some careful diplomatic moves before they venture to print a manuscript under the advice of "well-known specialists in physiology." They may save themselves a lot of trouble by first getting a list of the "acceptable" men of science of the first rank. It can not be long enough to be cumbersome for office use.

The letter above is worth reading carefully. It indicates that the old order of things in "temperance physiology" still attempts to continue. Probably most readers of this journal believe in "presentation of the unbiased truth" concerning alcohol and narcotics and as teachers would insist upon having books which tell the essential truth so far as it has been demonstrated; but few indeed must be the readers who do not recognize the brazen effrontery of the letter above. Between the lines it reads that our well-known specialists in physiology and our educators are such incompetents that their books and even their written approval of books by others must not be published before they have been adjudged sane, satisfactory and acceptable. Truly this is an interesting footnote to the most astounding chapter in the history of American education.

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THE TYPES OF THE NORTH AMERICAN GENERA OF BIRDS¹

Much of the chaos in generic nomenclature which has become intolerable to the systematist of to-day has been brought about by the failure of many writers to explain by what process they have determined the types of old polytypic genera. Had they been more explicit upon this subject we should have been able long ago to see the weaknesses in our codes and should have abandoned methods which were neither definite nor final in their operations.

The recent paper by Dr. J. A. Allen on the "Types of the North American Genera of

¹ *Bulletin American Museum Natural History*, Vol. XXIII., Article XVI., pp. 279-384, April, 1907.