

**A Plan for the Evolution of Free-thought and Wisdom.**

—To the Editors of the Freethought papers:

The Freethinkers should labor less to destroy Christianity, and do much more to build up something a great deal better than Christianity; then the latter will crumble and fall of its own worthlessness.

I differ from the great English Freethinker, Mr. Foote, who recommends close adherence to one idea. We are seekers after all truths. Every question which affects the nation or the individual, has a right and a wrong, and our forces should study out and teach the right solution of all important questions or the scientific religion fails to fill the place it should, of evolving the highest type of citizens, and the fullest all-round development of the individual. I've lived in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, where almost everybody believed in orthodox Christianity (if they did not practice it.) I have seen how temperance, hygiene, science, and political reforms are hampered by their faith in prayer, the bible, its plan of salvation, its God, so that there is scarcely any advancement. All kinds of plans, societies, meetings, for any kind of improvement, educational or reformatory, are submerged by the belief that church-work is more important, and all spare time must be devoted exclusively to that. They will not read books and papers or attend lectures on any such subjects, believing it is the devil tempting them astray. There must be millions of well-intentioned people thus held in bondage. If they were all set free from their belief without foundation and led into such knowledge that their spare time would be devoted to promoting scientific morality, health, and the general welfare in the numerous needed practical ways, what a marvelous change for the better would soon be seen all along the line!

The Christian Endeavor already binds some millions of young people, by a pledge to give so much of their time and means to church-meetings, prayer, bible-reading and evangelizing work, that they have no time nor strength left for any scientific, hygienic, or political study, social reform, or any kind of educational development after leaving school, except in the line of christian theology. They give part of their spare time to that, but I think to most of them it is a rather distasteful duty, from which many seek relief by plunging into frivolities and vices.

A scientific religion would open to the young all the wonders and beauties of the universe, the practical uses of nature's exhaustless stores, the scientific reasons for mortality, temperance, industry, and justice, the work of the noble and brave teachers, reformers, gen-

uses, and persevering workers recorded in history and biography; and would lead the young, step by step, to realize there is so much that they want to learn and do that they will themselves turn from frivolity and vices, because it wastes their precious time, and injures themselves and their friends.

Give to the young, glimpses into the vast store house of arts, science, literature, philosophy, philanthropy history and biography, of all ages and nations, to awaken an unquenchable desire to know more and to do something worth doing. Surely within the vast realm of man's achievements in the past and the multitude of present occupations, there can be found something adapted to each young person's nature, capable of inciting them into a busy worthy life. But if the young are first led into church bondage, and made to believe that orthodox salvation is the "the one thing needful," how many of them can afterwards be won into scientific religion early enough to make of their lives all it might be? To give them a chance to start right, the parents might first be led to doubt the christian religion, and see that this scientific religion would be productive of better results, and that something practically beneficial should take the place of prayer-meetings and sermons.

But the parents and the masses of the people are of only ordinary intellect, and their training from earliest childhood has made their belief in christianity, its bible, its gods, and future life, a part of their brain, whether they try to live it or not. Our question is, how can we start these to doubting, and how, most quickly lead them into understanding why God, bible, prayer, and future life, are all untrue, and that there are better, stronger incentives to morality, prosperity, and happiness? Then the way would be open for Sunday scientific schools, and lectures and the press to do the rest. Lead them to believe that this life is all there is, and nature's forces and materials always have been, eternal like time and space; and show that evolution, not creation, has brought about what is; that there can be no god back of nature, and prayer, orthodoxy, and the bible falls worthless. But at the same time they must be led to see that to get the most out of this life (the most happiness, prosperity, and length of life,) requires knowledge of natural laws and strict obedience thereto. This will make them moral.

Christianity teaches that God forgives sins. So the believer, depending on forgiveness, sins. He regards as sins what God forbids, but thinks he, himself, surely is not to be cursed, so if he repeats by and by God will forgive.

As long as a man believes in a

god, all powerful, all wise, an answerer to prayer, the man considers his own doings of very little importance and lacks self-confidence; his god is responsible for everything, and will do everything needed. What incentives has the believer, except to join the church, and then gratify self as far as he dares and escape damnation? His list of sins are in the bible, hence he don't regard as sins, many which the scientist knows are such. If he studied physiology more, and the bible less, he would know more, and be better.

Nature never forgives sins; so the scientist knowing that for every sin he must suffer and does not dare to sin. What are sins? Doing everything that brings harm to ourselves or to others. Whatever harms another, re-acts on the doer, whether he did the wrong by direct act, or by example or word led the other into harmful practices; for we are social dependent creatures, and no one can suffer or do evil without injury to each member, the doer, the tempter, and the innocent included.

A scientific religion will teach how vices are contrary to Nature's laws, and what harm results. Hence this will make people more moral than christianity, because we see there is no escaping the results or punishments, except to learn and obey Nature's laws and not sin. Sins and their punishments must be investigated, listed, and taught. Every disease is the result of sins. Insanity, intemperance, poverty, crimes, all miseries, are other results.

Let the scientists trace the results back to their causes, and teach the relations clearly, and they will bring all people to believing in scientific morality, and to doing vigorous work stopping the causes.

When sickness, death, or any misfortune comes, the christian regards it as a "mysterious dispensation of Providence" "to wean them from the vanities of this life, and draw them nearer to God," instead of the result of their own ignorance and disregard of natural laws, which they must learn and obey to avoid other similar evils.

The Scientists must face the social evil. The fallacies of the free-love doctrines ought to be exposed to save the young and surface-thinkers from being led astray. The home needs two heads; the father to earn their living, and the mother to make the home what it should be, so that all shall be tidy, comfortable, healthy and happy; this, with bringing up her children worthily, is enough work for any woman, especially if she is to read enough to be a fit guide and companion. If the mother must earn their living, the children and home must be neglected. By free-love the men cast off all home responsibility, and may spend their

time and money seducing as many women as they can. It must breed libertines and harlots, and a multitude of harmful results.

A well ordered home and properly trained children dependent on him, are a man's greatest incentives to labor and virtue. His maintenance and respect and her hopes for her children are the woman's incentives and joy.

With free-love in place of marriage, every man has full liberty to change as often as he finds a more attractive woman, or whenever his woman will not submit to all his wishes. Beguilements and deception would flourish, and jealousies lead to quarrels, suicides, insanity, and murders. If free-love prevailed, what incentives would women have to a worthy life or to have and rear children properly, if she must wear herself out supporting herself and children on meagre pay, or by gratifying men's passions, especially if the men foster liquor saloon and brothel temptations to ruin everywhere, and churches preach "a sin-cursed world," "wives obey your husbands," "forgiveness and happiness in another life!"

We need laws making man's responsibility for his family greater, and securing to wives greater protection for themselves, and control of their children, but this is to be brought about by woman suffrage, and hygienic education of women, and not by the insidious infernal fallacies of free-love. Every man prefers a woman that will allow no other man's advances; then every man should be so worthy that one woman shall be kept healthy and happy, and have full confidence in him.

The bringing up and teaching of children is mainly done by women, in the home and schools. Then to develop strong, wise men for the future, these women must first have opportunity to learn what they must teach the young people. Would free-love liberty, or home maintenance best favor this?

Scientific religion must overthrow free-love as well as christianity, and teach happiness here is dependent on morality.

Now I want to propose one way in which, it seems to me, this "good time coming" might be hastened. I propose sending this plan to several of the editors of Liberal papers to see if any of them can be induced to undertake carrying it out, or incited to invent something better.

Mrs. Mary L. Hunt's work for hygiene and scientific temperance in the schools is the most practical, far-reaching, philanthropic work I know of. That should be forwarded by all helps possible! Can not other scientific studies be more largely taught in our common schools, and compulsory attendance of all children be more fully se-