

Scientific Wisdom.

TO FREETHOUGHT EDITORS, WRITERS AND LIBERAL SOCIETIES:—

Why do Christians so condemn Infidels; why do Infidels increase so slowly; and why do Freethought papers have so few subscribers?

Because the Freethought papers waste too much time and space in fighting Christianity, and devote too little to building up something better. Half of every Freethought paper should be devoted to teaching such practical lessons as the people need; to the solving of the causes of political, financial and social evils and diseases, and providing methods for abolishing them; also how we can secure the greatest amount of happiness in this life; why this is a vice, and why that is a virtue; what harm results from one, and what benefits from the other; how to promote beneficial industries, and abolish those detrimental to the general welfare. Whatever injures anyone, indirectly injures all, including ourselves; and we are all responsible for preventable evils. The people need teaching, to see that science and doing, not bible and faith, stop evils.

When every Freethought paper makes its fight on these lines, vying with every other to bring about the most happiness, justice and wise living, then Infidelity will become popular, Christianity will die of its own worthlessness, and the Freethought papers will have rapid increase of subscribers.

The Little Candle has set the example in a small way. Will you promote such scientific wisdom in your paper?

To realize our wisest dreams
And bring "the good time coming",
Our lights must shine along the line
And keep the hind ones learning.

If we teach happiness in this life, and how secured by our own doing, and Christians teach happiness in a future life, and rely on a god, not themselves, to bring about good, will not the people choose the real, and discard the unprovable? Let us try it.

A few little tracts like mine, if carefully written and thoroughly distributed, is all that is necessary to destroy Christianity, if the Freethought papers furnish the practical, scientific lessons which the people need to be taught.

TO THE PROMOTERS AND FRIENDS:—

I attempted Scientific Sunday Meetings in my home, but found that hunting up suitable lessons and making the meetings interesting and instructive for even a few attendants, used up too much of my time and strength, so that either the meetings or my tract work, or both, would become a failure thereby. Hence, I have given up the Sunday Scientific Meetings, and shall not ask Promoters to undertake such until the Freethought

papers provide suitable materials.

But The Little Candle provides suitable lessons for the Scientific Sunday School, so I shall continue that, and urge others to start such. First distribute "Little Candle" everywhere, to show what we mean by Sunday Scientific Lessons. Then if you cannot find any one that is capable and willing to start and carry on such a school, get some of the women to subscribe for "Little Candle", or do so yourself, then invite in a few friends with their children, and thus start a Sunday school for just a few at first, in your own homes. We have tried it, and like it. There were eight of us last Sunday—four adults and four little children. After we had read the Candle through, with discussion, we added some lessons appropriate for the little ones; then had some brief readings and discussions on Freethought subjects. Mr. and Mrs. Pike are an intelligent young couple, and were Baptists; but the tracts and the Scientific Sunday School have converted them, so they read Freethought papers, argue for it, and have distributed some of the tracts.

Why are so few distributing the tracts? All beliefs in supernatural powers are clogs to human development, for reliance on a god prevents self-reliance. I want to bury all religions, oceans deep, to give place to this world's affairs, and all the happiness influences attainable. But I have got to fight religion till the twelve tracts are written and their distribution well started, to do my share in making way for science. I have distributed three (about 45 of each) in Brooklyn; made some converts; the ministers are alarmed, and the fun has begun. Thus it is proved that the tracts are long enough and strong enough, and will turn the churches upside down if thoroughly distributed.

If I describe the how, briefly, perhaps it may be some guide to others who would really like to have a good, strong, progressive, Freethought, scientific society established right in their own midst, "realizing your wisest dreams of the good time coming."

When distributing the first tract, I simply stopped at each door, regardless of creeds, only offering a tract with smiling face and the simple statement, "I want everybody to read this, to set them to thinking. Will you read it?" Sometimes I added something about there being two sides to the question, and of course we can't all think alike; or answered whatever was said. Most invited me in, but I "hadn't time".

We heard that a few burned the tract after reading it, but it won't be so easy to forget what they read.

When I carried the second tract, I simply offered it good-humoredly, with the question, "Will you read

my second tract?" Four shook their heads sorrowfully, saying they "would rather not". I answered, smiling, "I don't urge anybody to, if they don't want to", and went along; or if they wanted to argue a little, I did that pleasantly. In one case the woman was blue about her employment, and I cheered her up, leaving her smiling. Some took the tract as if most afraid to read it, but others took it with a right good will, and a few praised the first. The Congregational minister preached a sermon against the first, then wrote and distributed an able tract against it, but introduced some ungentlemanly terms, resembling those used by politicians. We heard that two men threatened to have me arrested if I dared offer another at their door, but we could not find out who they were. I distributed the third just as I did the second, but passed by those that refused the second. Several refused the third, but the others accepted it with more interest on account of the minister's opposition, and all were polite. I found enough more who wanted a copy so I distributed as many as before, and came home joyful, for the tracts are doing the work just as I hoped they would, and I had several nice chats with nice people. I am going to distribute the Little Candle on my next trip.

My husband sounds folks a little first, to find out whether they are open to conviction, before giving his tracts, but I am making ten times the stir he is by distributing to everybody who will read them. I wish each one who has distributed any of the tracts would send me a letter, or write a short article for the Torch, telling how they do it and giving encouraging incidents. It will help others to do their share.

Most of the church members are women, and I think our women can do this work of opening their eyes to the follies of religion and starting the far more beneficial Sunday scientific teaching fully as well or better than the men. When the women go the men will follow. Several of my best helpers are women, and I want more of them. If you prefer to begin with a few tracts, send me five cents, with your address, and I will send you a variety package of twenty tracts. No matter what your opponents say, keep good-natured and self-reliant, and don't say too much. If you get puzzled and want my opinion, write to me briefly, for my time is too crowded for long letters. You do not need to talk much if any. All you want is to get the tracts read. They will be answer enough to all necessary questions by the time the twelve are completed. For more answers, tell them to read the Freethought papers and scientific books.

Remember if we do not keep the young people's busy brains employed in right directions, they will feed

on the chaff provided by evil mates and the churches; so we must push "Little Candle" and Scientific Sunday Schools, or we shall be responsible for the evil results from neglected opportunities.

Remember the tracts are to lead people to lose faith in religions and church teaching, because this is necessary before parents will allow their children or the masses to be taught scientific wisdom on Sundays, the only day they can have liberty for such instruction.

The tracts already published are, No. 1, "Can Sins be Forgiven?" No. 2, "Does Christianity or Science Promote Civilization?" No. 3, "Is Religion or Science More Reliable?" No. 4, "Evolution and Comparison of Religions."

Their price, ten cents for fifty copies, makes them the cheapest means for reaching many; and their small size win their being read by thousands who could not be induced to read a larger Freethought tract or paper. I have changed the titles so they are quite unlike those mentioned in the original plan or selected for the guide; but I am following the topics in the latter mainly. A new one will be introduced, however, between 4 and 5, and numbers 11 and 12 will be united. So when you order tracts do not follow the numbers in the guide. In all new undertakings we have to try different plans till we find one we can use successfully. The masses give up at the first failure; the few attain success by persevering, learning wisdom by experience. Don't underrate your abilities. I earnestly urge every one who reads this to help all he can. Don't think that I will not appreciate the little you might do. The ocean is made up of drops. Begin now, by giving a tract or a Little Candle to somebody who has never seen one.

ELIZA MOWRY BLIVEN.

Brooklyn, Conn.

Freethought in Youth.

EDITOR TORCH OF REASON:

The B. C. S. N. has not met for the last two weeks on account of the death of Raymond Wicklund, but we are going to commence our meetings again right away. I was down to Vale a few days ago and heard a woman preach. Mrs. Phelps and daughters have been holding revival meetings for about two weeks; they were preaching about the difference between the death beds of Paine and Voltaire and some of the Christians. She said the Christians died easy knowing that they would soon be with God, but Voltaire and Paine died wishing they were going to God. She has a little girl about ten years of age and it seemed like it was such a pity to see a little girl like that taught religion, for she seemed to be a smart little girl. I will close now hoping to see this in print, I remain yours for Freethought.

VIOLA JOHNSON.