

### Love the Brave and True.

We are utterly at a loss to conjecture why persons who have minds independent of the bible should be so averse to expressing themselves on the subject. We should be brave and fearless in honest convictions. Cowardice in these things has been and is retarding the progress of Freethought. It makes the few who are brave, powerless. We mean in this priest-ridden part of the country. But we are pleased to say that it is not the case everywhere; for we know that as people become enlightened on the subject they become more tolerant of the views of Freethinkers: and if we could only get them to read up on this subject, Freethought would soon be a popular sentiment and people would not be ashamed of it.

If I thought anybody could feel justified in slighting me on account of my unbelief, in other words, if I were ashamed of it, I would change my belief, for this I could do if I had neither bravery nor will power. We care not what others may say or think of us, so long as we find ourselves trying to do right. I love the society of honest-minded people, and as I have to associate with myself more than any one else, I try to avoid hypocrisy so that I may have a true and brave associate.

We must confess that we are ashamed of any people who are ashamed to have people know that they are Freethinkers. And on the other hand, we are proud of those who will boldly declare themselves. We feel that they can be trusted in everything that is possible for them ninety-nine times out of one hundred. There is nothing underhanded about them. We would not be afraid to trust them with any amount of money — would not be afraid that we would not get every dollar of it back. We are always advocating honesty, truthfulness; in fact everything which has a moral tendency; and when we prove to the world that we are trying to put into practice that which we conscientiously believe to be the only religion (if you choose to call it a religion) that has ever benefited the human race, we feel that if there is such a being as the Christians advocate, that we can please him more by acts of justice and benevolence than by all the faith we can possibly assume. We have no faith in the impossible nor the unreasonable, and we are not ashamed to own it, because the testimony the Christians bring up to substantiate their belief is entirely too doubtful. Our minds cannot accept it. When we are told not to express our unbelief, and hear people say, "Oh, don't say anything," how do we know that they are not of the same opinion as ourselves?

Oh, let us be sincere in these

things! Let us lay our hands upon our hearts and say we are not hypocrites; that we defraud no one that we are aware of; that we have charity to give and charity for the shortcomings of our fellow men. When we advocate and practice these noble sentiments, what downy pillows we lie on at night! We are better satisfied, honest, forsaken Infidels, than insincere church members. We hope they will all learn to value our views, and that we will all learn to discriminate between the really good and the really bad in everything. If we ever do this, we will, as the great Ingersoll says, "meet as man and man". And not until then will this great difference of opinion be settled.

I am very anxious to see the Liberal University completed, and sincerely think that all who are in a condition to aid in its completion should do so. I hope to be able to help some myself in the near future. The low price of cotton, I have no doubt, has precluded lots of able help. I know it has in my case. I think the Liberal University is the grandest institution that ever was on foot, and that the men and women who are working so earnestly for it deserve a great deal of praise, and that their names will be among the brightest on the pages of history in the years to come.

With best wishes for your untiring efforts for the cause I love so much, I am fraternally and sincerely yours,

MRS. R. A. BELL.

Waskom, Tex.

### Thoughts from Texas.

"Your best thoughts are valuable. Jot them down as best you can and send them to the TORCH OF REASON."

In compliance with this, I send the following.

Mr. M. W. Sevier spoke at the Freethinkers' Association on Sunday, the 27th. His subject was, "Since the First Century of the Christian Era there has been no True Church in Organized Form." He endeavored to sustain this contention by quoting texts from the New Testament and the statement of the fact that each of the numerous denominations into which the bible has divided the intellectual, moral and financial capital of the countries, claims that the others are not true churches in an organized form. They are nothing but denominations.

Each new theory based upon the unprovable teachings of the bible makes a hole in the armor of theology. Each hole lets in a beam from the torch of science, purifying and organizing human life, helping to eradicate faith, the product of ignorance, fear and credulity.

The Freethinkers' Association of Dallas, Texas, is a large one, led by men of culture, intelligence and

honest, earnest conviction. It is the purifying and organizing work of science; it is her protecting, "everlasting arm" that enables these men to meet and say aloud that they do not believe in the inspiration, damnation and redemption theory of the theologians (Episcopal).

The present bishop of Maryland said in a sermon preached in the city of Washington, D. C., "The sacrifice of Christ himself as an atonement was the thought of God before creation began."

The Episcopal creed says, "Jesus Christ, the only begotten son of God. Begotten of the father before all worlds; begotten, not made."

Was the sacrifice of this son as an atonement to propitiate the self-imposed wrath of the father, the father's thought before the son was begotten? What does logic say about it?

MRS. M. M. TURNER.

Dallas, Tex.

### A Talmage Tale Retailed.

"For many things I have admired Percy Shelley, the great English poet, but I deplore the fact that it seemed a great sweetness to him to dishonor God. The poem, 'Queen Mab', has in it the maligning of the deity. Shelley was impious enough to ask for Rowland Hill's Surrey Chapel that he might denounce the Christian religion. He was in great glee against God and the truth. But he visited Italy, and one day on the Mediterranean with two friends in a boat which was twenty-four feet long he was coming toward the shore when an hour's squall struck the water. A gentleman standing on shore through a glass saw many boats tossed in this squall, but all outrode the storm except one, in which Shelley and his two friends were sailing. They never came ashore, but the bodies of two of the occupants were washed up on the beach, one of them the poet. A funeral pyre was built on the seashore by some classic friends, and the two bodies were consumed. Poor Shelley! He would have no God while he lived, and I fear had no God when he died."

This absurd story is from Talmage's latest sermon. It is one which he years ago worked into a book called "The Pathway of Life", but which might better have been entitled, "Talmage's Repertory of Lies", and this one, like the others, has often enough been shown to be false to have such a reader as Talmage know it. Shelley must have been an awful vexation to poor God to make him take so much trouble to drown the godless poet. Possibly it is Shelley's shade which inspired what follows:

### RIDDEN OF GOD.

I'm ridded of God —  
That priests' imposition  
And mocker at sorrow;  
That maker of strife!  
I'm free in my strength—  
Oh, glad separation  
From phantoms and fakirs  
To find my true life!

Since ridded of God,  
My heart has ceased aching;  
I stand more than victor;  
I've vanquished the foe:  
I know my own strength,  
And fear of God breaking,  
Much lessens life's anguish,  
And halves the grave's woe.

Not driving by masters,  
But selfhood unfolding,  
Must make my life complete  
By nature's own laws;  
Thus being my own self,  
Not another's molding,  
I work my salvation  
In mankind's best cause.

JOHN PRESCOTT GUILD.

Lowell, Mass.

### Youth is Happy—Age Should be Happier.

In childhood the dew drops sparkle as diamonds, while for age they suggest red cough syrups. Man's careless, reckless life changes them from ornaments to medicines for broken down constitutions. Age should not change the merry warble of the groves' choristers to the wiewd "caw, caw" of the crow. Harmonies should not lose their melody nor pleasure its joys. Centuries do not dim the stars nor weaken the sun's rays.

Life is not a dull dream, a dead sleep, but an active reality. Covet wisdom, for it is leverage power. Waste not those youthful days, when ambition is struggling to reveal itself, when the noble desire is asking for an outward and enduring expression. We hear no moan more heavily burdened with sadness than age weeping over a mis-spent youth, filled with lost opportunities, empty of all those riches which youth alone can give to age. As the springs fill the sea, so should buoyant youth empty its treasures into hoary-headed age. As wisdom increases and the vision is extended, new beauties rush into sight, and life rises as on the wings of a bird. The youth is not moving away from happiness, but into deeper joys. The world is full of music, every wind is perfumed with a fragrance, and earth and sky painted and penciled with the most brilliant tints. With the years should come increased capacity to comprehend these unlimited sources of happiness. Dive as deep as man can, soar as high as he may, journey as far as his strength and years will permit, yet unfathomed joys lie beyond.

My young friends, neglect not the golden opportunities that lie around you. Feed your mind with noble thoughts, and the joys of youth will not wane with the years, but brighten with age.—[Ex.

If you desire assistance, attend the Liberal University, and we will