

Young - Friends' - Review.

"NEGLECT NOT THE GIFT THAT IS IN THEE."

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THE MAYFLOWERS.

[The trailing arbutus, or Mayflower, grows abundantly in the vicinity of Plymouth, and was the first flower that greeted the Pilgrims after their fearful winter.]

Sad Mayflower ! watched by winter stars,
And nursed by winter gales,
With petals of the sleeted spars,
And leaves of frozen sails !

What had she in those dreary hours,
Within her ice-rimmed bay,
In common with the wild-wood flowers,
The first sweet smiles of May ?

Yet " God be praised ! " the pilgrim said,
Who saw the blossoms peer
Above the brown leaves, dry and dead,
" Behold our Mayflower here ! "

" God wills it ; here our rest shall be,
Our years of wandering o'er,
For us the Mayflower of the sea,
Shall spread her sails no more. "

O sacred flowers of faith and hope,
As sweetly now as then
Ye bloom on many a birchen slope,
In many a pine-dark glen.

Behind the sea-wall's rugged length,
Unchanged, your leaves unfold,
Like love behind the manly strength
Of the brave hearts of old.

So live the fathers in their sons,
Their sturdy faith be ours,
And ours the love that overruns
Its rocky strength with flowers.

The pilgrim's wild and wintry day,
Its shadow round us draws ;
The Mayflower of his stormy bay,
Our Freedom's struggling cause.

Warmer suns ere long shall bring
To life the frozen clod ;
Through dead leaves of hope shall spring
Fresh the flowers of God !

—[WHITTIER.

MODERN SKEPTICISM.

" Why is it," we hear many ask, " that skepticism is so prevalent in this enlightened age ? "

And may we call this a really enlightened age ? It is true our scientists and philosophers have made many discoveries of inestimable value, and have unravelled hundreds of the mysteries of past centuries ; but we fathom one mystery only to plunge into others still more intricate and obscure. Are there not mysteries beyond mysteries which man can never solve ? Sooner or later we become conscious of the unanswered Why, and it were far better to sleep in the inner self, as children sleep, than to awaken in the blackness of the knowledge that these mysteries are shown only to attract and mock us. This state of mental somnambulism is bad, but the ever restless striving after the unattainable, the delusion that it exists and may be reached by human hands is immeasurably worse. We are shrouded, indeed, in mysteries ; mysteries upon which we can speculate, but in regard to which we can never feel that we have arrived at the true solution. Now it is only natural that a thoughtful person should, upon becoming conscious of this, seek to solve them for himself.

Should we express opinions differing from universally established theories, they are often precipitately pronounced skeptical. It is better to weigh every consideration carefully, even to risk the possibility of doubting the truth, than to accept, unquestioningly, any theory without seeking to understand it for ourselves. But why not accept the theory which wiser heads have already established ? Simply because it is unnatural. The instigators of these theories did not accept the solutions of their predecessors. Why ? Because they were no