

Young - Friends' - Review.

"NEGLECT NOT THE GIFT THAT IS IN THEE."

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FROM "RABBI BEN EZRA."

ROBERT BROWNING.

Then, welcome each rebuff that turns life's
smoothness rough,

Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but
go !

Be our joys three parts pain ! strive and hold
cheap the strain ;

Learn, nor account the pang ; dare, never
grudge the throe !

For thence—a paradox which comforts while
it mocks—

Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail ;
What I aspired to be, and was not, comforts
me ;

A brute I might have been, but would not
sink i' the scale.

QUAKERISM EXCLUDES FOR-
MALITY.

The idea that the Spirit of God is ever active in the human soul as a present instructor in all matters of righteousness precludes a dependence upon any external or traditional rule of conduct. Friends early recognize the importance of disobeying the dictates of fashion, and the necessity of departing from many of the social customs of their times. But it was only in obedience to the dictations of their consciences that they did this.

It being the custom in the 17th century for people of wealth and rank to address each other using the plural pronoun "you," whereas they would address their servants or those of lower rank using the pronoun "thou,"—thus distinctively, by their mode of speech, indicating their idea of the inferiority of the poor and untitled,—and as in like manner the rich and the nobility would doff their hats in the presence of those they considered their peers, yet would keep them on in the presence of those they considered inferior. Friends obedient to the law of God in the heart, that in the dawn of Christian-

ity revealed to Peter the knowledge that God is no respecter of persons, felt it incumbent upon themselves to keep on their hats in the presence of the nobility, and to address them just as they addressed the common people.

Many a term of imprisonment in dark and filthy dungeons did our forefathers suffer for this, but they suffered for conscience sake and not because of any adherence to forms prescribed by man. It was not that they wished to appear different from other men, to be peculiar, or to adopt a uniformity of speech or apparel among themselves, but because God demanded of them a protest against the social customs of the day.

George Fox was most careful to place this matter upon its sure foundation, and he refused to give any advice to others as to what they should wear or how they should speak, except insofar as obedience to the Divine Voice within them should lead. When William Penn, arrayed in the ribbon-knots, rapier and richly adorned uniform of an admiral's son, began to question the propriety of wearing a sword at his side, he asked Geo. Fox whether it was proper for him as a convert to the new doctrine to wear such an implement of warfare. Fox did not answer, as would an apostle of formalism and show the inconsistency of a follower of the Prince of Peace wearing the symbol of war, but being a true Child of the Light he directed his questioner to the only source for instruction in such an emergency. Never was an answer more significant; never one more wisely chosen. "Wear it as long as thou can'st, William," he exclaimed, and in the answer William Penn found direction to follow no blind guide but to rely upon the revealed will of God for direction in matters pertaining to conduct. This one instance shows