

Young - Friends' - Review.

"NEGLECT NOT THE GIFT THAT IS IN THEE."

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SECURE.

The winds blow hard? What then?
He holds them in the hollow of His hand;
The furious blasts will sink when His command
Bids them be calm again.

The night is dark! What then?
To Him the darkness is as bright as day;
At His command the shades will flee away,
And all be light again.

The wave is deep! What then?
For Israel's host the waters upright stood;
And He whose power controlled that raging
flood
Still succors helpless men.

He knoweth all; the end
Is clear as the beginning to His eye;
Then walk in peace, secure, though storms roll
by,
He knoweth all, O friend.—S. S. Times.

EVOLUTION OF THE HEBREW CONCEPTION OF GOD.

IV.

As represented in the preceding paper, the faith of Israel in Jehovah frequently lapsed, especially after a defeat in battle, and then they would perform acts of homage to the gods of other nations. The practice of offering sacrifices was one of these acts of homage derived from other nations. In the early periods of Israel's history human sacrifice was not uncommon.

In the 22nd chapter of Genesis we find an account of Abraham's preparation for the sacrifice of his son, made, as he thought, in accordance with a demand of his God. In Judges xi., 29-40, we have the pathetic narrative of Jephtha's sacrificing his only child in the fulfillment of a vow which he supposed the Lord required of him. How pitiful is the narrative of the meeting of Jephtha and the beloved daughter that ran out to meet him, little thinking

how her glad welcome brought sorrow to his heart. "Alas! my daughter! thou has brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me; for I have opened my mouth unto the Lord and I cannot go back." Who has ever read the story without the longing that, in the end, somehow a way would have been made by which the sorrow-stricken father could have been released from the fulfillment of his obligation? Fighting under the leadership of Jehovah, as he thought he was, and faithful as he was in his service, the retribution of his rash vow seems a cruel requirement.

In II. Kings, iii, 27, we read that the King of Moab, defeated and utterly dispirited in battle, "took his eldest son that should have reigned in his stead and offered him for a burnt offering upon the wall." In the same book we read that Ahaz, King of Israel, overwhelmed by his enemies, sought to make atonement to Jehovah by the sacrifice of his son. So, too, Manasseh sacrificed his first-born, even at so late a period in Hebrew history as 700 B. C. Lastly Ezekiel brings down the history of the practice of this fearful rite as late as 550 B. C., for, speaking of the sins of Israel prevalent in his day, he says they took their sons and daughters and sacrificed them by "causing them to pass through fire."

Under the hypothesis that the Bible contains the history of the *development* of the Hebrew religion; that in it we have an example, and a remarkable one, of "the eternal search for God, taking on new and higher forms and phases, to keep step with the growing intelligence and civilization of man," we easily understand the records quoted in this article.

Abraham's readiness to sacrifice the