

## LAWS OF FRIENDSHIP.\*

It is the author's purpose in this very readable and stimulating book to treat of friendship in a purely philosophical manner and to set forth the highest "conception of life and of religion as friendship." When the book is spoken of as philosophical it is by no means inferred that it is dry and prosy,—merely that it is a serious attempt by a gifted and able thinker to set forth friendship as the highest ideal of human life. One feels that to so designate friendship is to elevate it beyond our ordinary connotation of the word; but we may also confess that the term needs to be uplifted if it is to represent the very best of life's relations. Perhaps, too, we would prefer to cling to the more familiar ideas of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. But the author is concerned to show that the ideal relationship between man and man and between man and God is the same in kind, and his word friendship serves this purpose well.

In a beautifully simple, direct manner Dr. King expands the laws for "establishing the friendship" and then for "deepening the friendship." Some of the chapter headings are significant of the character of the book: "Breadth of Personality," "The Giving of the Self," "Paul's Sketch of the Friendly Life," "The Self-Forgetful Mood," etc. For a quiet hour or two this little book on Friendship will prove itself very attractive and will establish firmly a point of view which, as the author contends, is the basal fact of all real religious life.

## LITERARY NOTES.

The May *Contemporary* contains a varied and attractive table of contents. We mention as of much interest "The Opportunity of the King"; Second Chambers; Halley's Comet; Foreign Affairs; The Case of Russia against Finland; the case of Finland against Russia; The "Reviews of Books," as usual, is well done.

Among the leading articles in the *Nineteenth Century* and *After* for May will be found four articles on the Political Situation in Britain, contributed by well known public men; The Submerged half in India, England and Germany; compulsory Insurance against unemployment; and the Insufficiency of Official Statistics.

The *Fortnightly* for May has many articles of more than passing interest. Why Russia went to war with Japan; Ireland between Parties; the Bankruptcy of Liberalism; England's Peril; Invasion or Starvation; Shal Women Work; Imperial Scholarships; and a dozen others, all well calculated to keep up the reputation of this favorite magazine.

The June number of *Current Literature*, as might be expected devotes much space to the late King and his successor King George V. The articles are well written and fully illustrated, that on "The King of Great Britain as a Family Man" furnishing a number of interesting side lights on King George, as husband and father. Every department of the magazine is well sustained, and the illustrations throughout are numerous and illuminating. Address 134 West 29th Street, New York City.

\*The Laws of Friendship, Human and Divine, by Henry Churchill King; President of Oberlin College. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1908. \$1.25 net.

## PRINCIPAL PATRICK AND CHURCH.

By Rev. A. B. Dobson.

Dr. Patrick only begins to approach the subject when he announces: "The Historical Argument for the Union." He is much more careful about quoting Scripture than he and his friends were at London in 1906, when they claimed that all Scripture, all piety, all common sense, and all else worth considering, were on their side of the controversy. The Principal still looks fondly back at the Gospel of John, chapter 17, but merely remarks: "An argument which commends the support of the Greek and Roman Catholic churches . . . is not to be thrust light aside." The same remark would apply to other doctrines held by one or both of these churches. In future, therefore, we shall have to be very tender towards such doctrines as Papal infallibility, Transubstantiation, Purgatory, etc. A few years ago the writer asked Dr. Patrick and his friends several questions on this passage. Two of them will be appropriate here:

(1) Did not Christ Himself and His followers separate from the only organized church in the world of His day and form a new organization called the Christian Church?

(2) Must not therefore, all His utterances as well as those of the Apostles be interpreted consistently with their own action in forming a new organization? Unless Dr. Patrick can show that a new church was not organized by Christ and His apostles, we can "thrust lightly aside" all reference to our Lord's prayer as irrelevant. But the Doctor is really cruel to some of his own friends when he states: "The suggestion that the conditions prevailing in Canada to-day represent the conditions existing in N.T. times is ludicrously absurd." No one but Unionists have ever in this controversy made such a "ludicrously absurd" statement.

The next step in the historical argument is based on the opinion of the Presbyterian Fathers. Dr. Patrick doubtless knows the church history of all times. But what value is to be attached in this particular movement to the opinions of men who lived from 50 to 250 years ago in a country several thousands of miles away? Those worthy men, according to Dr. Patrick, declared for organic union in their own country, and then deliberately proceeded to tear their own church into a half dozen similar pieces. And Dr. Patrick quotes them as good authorities for organic union in Canada between dissimilar churches one of which was not in existence when most of the Fathers died. Let us however suppose the argument sound. Let us agree with the Principal that the opinions of these men of long ago should shame us of to-day into this proposed union. Let us agree with him that they had the proper instinct and believed in the Canadian union. What then? The admission will prove more than Principal Patrick will care to admit. For if any weight is to be attached to their views on this Union question, equal weight will have to be attached to certain other views of theirs. For example, they believed in the Canon of Scripture as stated in the Westminster Confession; they also believed in the plenary verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. Will Dr. Patrick quote their views as authoritative on these subjects? The Principal states that these men "never ceased to deplore the necessity of their separation." "Necessity" is a good word, but it is rather hard on Dr. Patrick's argument. The Fathers believed that separation was for them a "necessity" because they were sensible enough to perceive what the best conceivable is not always the best practicable. Mother words, they believed that, in their circumstances, separation was both a privilege and a duty, and they acted accordingly. What has this to do with the union of Methodism, Presbyterianism and Congregationalism in Canada to-day, except to condemn it? Unless, indeed, Dr. Patrick can show that the separate existence of these bodies is an unnecessary obstacle to the kingdom of Christ in this land. This is the task he set for himself, but the Fathers do not help his case. They recognized a "neces-

sity" in the nature of men and times and things which cannot be argued down. With some rhetorical flourish the Principal says: "Call Cunningham, Candlish, Guthrie, Rainy, call . . . and inquire as to the duty of the three churches concerned. Their answer would be swift. . . . You are one in doctrine and policy: you must unite." Dr. Patrick might also call Michael the Archangel, and he would be honest enough to declare that all this grandiloquence is no more an argument of this proposed Union than that similarity of language, government, nationality, conditions and aims is an argument for the union of Nova Scotia and Ontario, or even for the union of Canada and the United States.

Dr. Patrick's witnesses, if called, might possibly declare that Uniformity is a fine ideal, i.e., if we are to judge by the spectacle. Every one would probably admire such an aggregation from that standpoint much as he might deplore it from others. There are many things which would be very fine but which are not easy to obtain. The abolition of war, crime, poverty, etc., are grand things in the ideal. But it is not the ideal which is before the church as Principal Patrick assumes. It is the very practical question whether this particular Union is at this moment a proper act; whether the kingdom of God would be the better or the worse of it. This was the only question Principal Patrick had to prove and he has not yet touched it.

Fordwich, June 18, 1910.

## ENTER IN BY THE NARROW DOOR

Sir,—In conversation with a newspaper interviewer, a Toronto pastor, it is reported, was emphatic in his denial that a distinguished attendant at his church, now deceased, was an atheist or an agnostic. He "took issue with Christians on dogmatism, but he was one with them in practical Christianity. . . . He certainly believed in the nature of God, and in Christ as the founder of Christianity."

Is this enough? If so, there was little ground for the exclamation of the disciples, "Who can be saved?"—nor, I would say it reverently, for the Master's reply, "With men it is impossible." If a man can be saved by accepting "Jesus as the final and perfect revelation of God," what need was there that he should die the accursed death which is the penalty of sin? The man who teaches that any belief short of accepting Christ as what He claimed to be, the Saviour who came into the world and paid the full ransom for sin, and who does not, believing, accept Him as his Lord and God, as did Thomas Didymus, is not a Christian in the proper sense of the word. And the man—he be pastor or layman—who teaches a smoother doctrine than this, incurs a fearful responsibility.

ULSTER PAT.

On Sabbath morning, June 6th, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered in Knox Church, South London, by the pastor, the Rev. J. G. Stuart, B.A. The attendance was good though the day was wet and cold. The address was on the finished work of Christ, text "It is finished," of which an individual application was made. The service was impressive and profitable.

We cheerfully make room for the following, sent us by Mr. W. Sanderson, an Elder in the Congregation:—Please permit me to thank you for your kind reference to Springville Congregation (Rev. Dr. Marsh, Pastor) relative to their givings. Permit me however, to make a correction. The average giving per family, for all purposes, is \$38.47c.; the average giving per member for all purposes is \$13.56c. The secret of our success is not in a few large givers, but nearly every one gives something. Ours is not the stout man's lift, but everybody, young and old lifting.

Articles from the *Spectator*, the *Economist*, the *Outlook* and the *Saturday Review* upon the death of King Edward VII, the succession of King George V and the home and foreign political questions affected by the change of rulers in England make *The Living Age* for June, a notable number.