

RELIGION AS FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD

Friendship is the last, best form of the truest human love.

"*Friend* is a word of royal tone,
Friend is a *poem* all alone."

Our hearts instinctively turn to Christ when we read, "There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother," for when He Himself would convey the deepest thought of religion to His disciples, He said, "Henceforth I call you not servants, but friends," That, then, is the keynote of religion, its meaning and the secret of its power. Friendship with God! How simple it all becomes then, and how great! Edward Young says:

"A friend is worth all hazards we can run,
Poor is the friendless master of a world—
A world in purchase of a friend is gain."

If a true earthly friend can mean so much to us, what may not God, the Eternal One, in whom is centred all the power, the majesty and the beauty, all the tenderness and the sympathy of His universe—what may He not mean?

If, then, religion is Friendship with God, the great thing for us to know is not