

GOD

FRIENDSHIP THE COKE OF RELIGION

come to open to them the gates of knowledge, that knowledge of God and man which is eternal life. But here, as elsewhere, man had to be educated before he could grasp in its fulness the wonderful upward step which the race took in Jesus the Christ. Twenty centuries of education have been needed before we are ready to realize in something of its fulness what Christ meant to the world, and what the religious life of which He is the centre means.

In fellowship with God and man in Jesus Christ a great word has slowly gathered content among men; a word which sums up every phase of our relation with God and man as fully and as perfectly as evolution and God sum up the partial conceptions and the disjointed facts of science. That great word is Friendship. In its highest meaning it is the richest, greatest word in human speech. It speaks of the perfect blending of soul with soul, wherein all selfishness and unworthiness are crowded out, and nothing remains but a perfect union of life with life. It is an even greater word than love, for about that word has gathered much that is selfish, much that is merely sentimental.