

RELIGION AS FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD

new definition of religion, as wide and far sweeping as is the crowning conception of science in its own sphere.

What, then, is religion? Our text gives us the clue. The Lord of Glory calls a mere man "Abraham, my friend." Two things alone have abiding reality, God and the soul of man. Matter, force, motion, energy, time, space, law, freedom, cause and effect, and the countless other terms which make up the vocabulary of science, are all meaningless, empty sounds apart from the thinking, personal spirit which uses them. Between these two realities, the soul of man and the spirit of God, there must be some relation, and man has been dimly conscious of it from earliest ages. That relation of man and God is religion. But God and man have each been thought of in such an incomplete and partial fashion that religion has failed to mean the full, grand thing it was meant to be. Never till the Christ came and showed what God was and what man might be did religion appear in something of its fulness of joy and power. Then the army of martyrs and saints rose up to dare and to die for the sake of Him who had