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LAWS OF FRIENDSHIP,  
HUMAN AND DIVINE**

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Haverford Library Lectures. The Laws of Friendship, Human and Divine by Henry Churchill King

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**HENRY CHURCHILL KING**

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**Haberford Library Lectures**

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**The Laws of Friendship  
Human and Divine**

BY

**HENRY CHURCHILL KING**

PRESIDENT OF OBERLIN COLLEGE

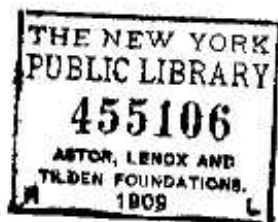
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## PREFACE

One questions his right to speak on this holy theme at all. One should have lived and suffered and achieved much to have earned that right. I can only own the presumption and speak as I must.

In attempting to discuss the laws of friendship, human and divine, before a Haverford College audience, in that region of Friends, where Haverford's own Professor Jones had already written on *Social Law in the Spiritual World*, and so near to the place where Dr. Trumbull wrote his *Friendship, the Master Passion*, I might well have seemed in superlative degree to be bringing coals to Newcastle. And yet, I felt that perhaps the attempt was not less worth making on these accounts. The greatest questions are never new; we can hardly hope for more, in any case, than the individual outlook; and it seemed as if it might not be without interest to see how the central contention of the Friends is viewed by one quite destitute of either Friend ancestry or Friend environment, but brought up, nevertheless, on the "doctrine of benevolence."

My own pupils know, too, how prone I am to quote Dr. Edward Everett Hale's

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saying to the effect that the best part of a college education is the fellows you meet there; and how firmly I believe that some of the most permanent and valuable and momentous of the friendships of life are formed in college. College students, too, are still in the natural friendship-making period of life. My theme, thus, seemed doubly appropriate to a student audience.

Moreover, there was the further personal reason, that in responding to the invitation to give these Haverford College Library Lectures I could hardly help wishing to share with the students of Haverford, in my single opportunity of addressing them, my best—that single thought that had been, perhaps, the most helpful and most influential in all my own thinking and living, the conception that unifies and simplifies for me the world and life, as does nothing else.

And yet, the great reason for my theme was simply that, after all, it is the greatest possible theme for any audience whatsoever. For the problem of these lectures, as I conceive it, and as I understand the Friends everywhere to conceive it—and I envy them their beautiful, significant, and

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simple name—is not the problem of a mere bit of life, something outside the main relations of life—though friendship has been often, perhaps usually, treated in literature as though it were a kind of side issue—but it is rather the problem of the whole of life.

The very fact that the problem is so significant and comprehensive a one, and that the fundamental thought which lies back of these lectures has long been for me a kind of ruling conception, makes it inevitable that I should be dealing here with themes that I have already partially treated elsewhere. I refer especially to Chapter XI of my *Reconstruction in Theology*, and to a part of my *Letters to Sunday School Teachers*. My readers should be fairly warned of the recurrence of the general line of thought of those portions of my previous writing.

But I have taken advantage of these lectures to do what I had long wished to do, and what I believed deserved to be done—to work out in a more thorough-going way, and with somewhat ampler illustration, this conception of life and of religion as friendship, and to disclose, if I might, its great fundamental laws. My

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own conviction is that no other analogy of the religious life has so much to contribute to our religious thinking and living; and that, at the same time, it is in the light of the likeness of the human and the divine friendships that our human friendships take on their true glory. I have, therefore, cherished the hope that this little book might help some to a richer and also to a more unified life in both the relation to God and the relation to men. For the human relation suffers as really as the divine from failure to heed its fundamental laws.

The lecture form has been abandoned, as not best adapted to the development of the theme. There was the greater reason for this, since two of the lectures were given without manuscript, and since considerable material has been added. I greatly regret that the preparation of these lectures for the press has been so long, though unavoidably, delayed.

HENRY CHURCHILL KING.

OBERLIN COLLEGE,  
January, 1909.