

FRIENDSHIP

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Friendship by Marcus Tullius Cicero & Francis Bacon & Ralph Waldo Emerson

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**MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO &
FRANCIS BACON & RALPH WALDO EMERSON**

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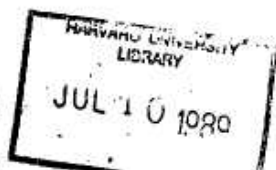
“FRIENDSHIP”

MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO

FRANCIS BACON

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

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DE AMICITIA

(CONCERNING FRIENDSHIP)

BY

MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO

TRANSLATED BY

CYRUS R. EDMONDS

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"A friend cannot be known in prosperity, and an enemy cannot be hid in adversity. True friends visit us in prosperity only when invited, but in adversity they come without invitation."—*Theophrastus*.

"The friends thou hast and their adoption tried,

Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel."—*Shakespeare*.

"When two friends part they should lock up each others' secrets and exchange keys."

DE AMICITIA.

QUINTUS MUCIUS, the augur, used to relate many things of Caius Lælius, his father-in-law, from memory and in a pleasant manner, and did not scruple in every discourse to call him a wise man. Moreover, I myself, after assuming the manly toga, was introduced by my father to Scævola, in such a way that, as far as I could and it was permitted me, I never quitted the old man's side. Accordingly, many sagacious discussions of his, and many short and apt sayings, I committed to memory, and desired to become better informed by his wisdom. When he died I betook myself to Scævola, the pontiff, who is the only man in our country that I venture to pronounce the most distinguished for talent and for integrity. But of him elsewhere. I now return to the augur. Among many other circumstances, I remember that once being seated at home in his arm-chair (as was his custom), when I was in his company, and a very few of his intimate friends, he fell by chance upon that subject of discourse which at the time was in the mouth of nearly every one; for you of course remember Atticus, and the more so because you were very intimate with Publius Sulpicius (when he, as trib-

une of the people, was estranged by a deadly hatred from Quintus Pompey, who was then consul, with whom up to that time he had lived on terms of the closest union and affection), how great was the surprise and even regret of the people. Accordingly, when Scævola had incidentally mentioned that very subject, he laid before us the discourse of Lælius on Friendship, which had been addressed by the latter to himself and to the other son-in-law of Lælius, Caius Fannius, the son of Marcus, a few days after the death of Africanus. The opinions of that disquisition I committed to memory, and in this book I have set them forth according to my own judgment. For I have introduced the individuals as if actually speaking, lest "said I" and "said he" should be too frequently interposed; and that the dialogue might seem to be held by persons face to face. For when you were frequently urging me to write something on the subject of friendship, it seemed to me a matter worthy as well of the consideration of all as of our intimacy. I have therefore willingly done so, that I might confer a benefit on many in consequence of your request. But as in the *Cato Major*, which was addressed to you on the subject of old age, I have introduced Cato when an old man conversing, because there seemed no person better adapted to speak of that period of life than he, who had been an old man for so long a time, and in that old age had been pre-eminently

prosperous; so when I heard from our ancestors that the attachment of Caius Lælius and Publius Scipio was especially worthy of record, the character of Lælius seemed to me a suitable one to deliver these very observations on friendship which Scævola remembered to have been spoken by him. Now this description of discourses, resting on the authority of men of old, and of those of high rank, seems, I know not on what principle, to carry with it the greater weight. Accordingly, while I am reading my own writing, I am sometimes so much affected as to suppose that it is Cato, and not myself that is speaking. But as then I, an old man, wrote to you, who are an old man, on the subject of old age, so in this book I myself, a most sincere friend, have written to a friend on the subject of friendship. On that occasion Cato was the speaker, than whom there was no one at that time older or wiser. On this, Lælius, not only a wise man (for so he has been considered), and one pre-eminent in reputation for friendship, speaks on that subject. I would wish you to withdraw your thoughts a little while from me, and fancy that Lælius himself is speaking. Caius Fannius and Quintus Mucius come to their father-in-law after the death of Africanus. With these the discourse begins. Lælius replies; and the whole of his dissertation regards friendship, which in reading you will discover for yourself.