

THE HOME CIRCLE.

MARRIED PEOPLE.

BY J. F. WILLING.

In the purifying of the home sanctuary is found the solution of that problem of the ages—the bringing into right lines of the immense ethical forces that have run riot, working such hopeless, reckless ruin, such boundless wrong and outrage.

The family cannot be pure unless it is permanent, and its permanence depends upon the permanence of marriage.

Christianity alone makes provision for the permanence of marriage, because of all religions it alone teaches the inherent dignity of humanity, and the sacredness of inalienable human rights.

Marriage is of God. Jehovah united the first pair. He put to sleep his masterpiece, the wonderful complex being He had made in His own image, and awakened them to the happiness of shared work and joy; as if He had made tangible the gentler and more enduring part of human nature, clothing it in separate flesh that it might stand forth helping and helped, bone of man's bones, life of his life.

In the writings of the great apostle we find an amplification of the Divine idea. "He that loveth his wife loveth himself; for no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church."

The Gospel rule of domestic life is above criticism. "Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. Let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself, and the wife see that she reverence her husband."

In all lands where the Bible has little or no power, the permanence and purity of the home are hardly known. Wherever Jehovah's will is not recognised as law, the marriage tie is a mere financial adjustment; men and women join themselves to each other from impulse, and separate by caprice.

No doubt there is a constant infringement of the husband's claim to reverence and love. Probably he is cheated out of all those delicate, refining attentions that go to make the best of life—that that we live when the public eye is not upon us, and we are simply and only ourselves. Yet, as the condition of the woman is the more gross and appreciable exponent of the wrong, of that we usually speak.

Among pagans *the wife is bought and sold*—the slave of man's lust or of his greed. Men hold themselves above moral restraint, and regard women as existing simply for their service and comfort.

Among the Greeks and Romans, even when those people were at their best, the woman might not have a thought above her distaff. She