

THE HEALTHY MARRIAGE.

CHAPTER I.

The Value of Marriage.

"No one regrets a youthful marriage."—*German proverb.*

FOR all women, even in these days of varied interests, the question of marriage is the most important. It is true that, as European civilisation advances, many vocations offer themselves to women and cause them to be given the choice between marriage and the non-married state. Moreover, some women in Europe have always been born with an apparent aversion to or fear of marriage, an aversion which was fostered and perhaps created by the teaching, which, while sanctifying marriage as a holy sacrament, taught that the unmarried state of the nun was the holier and worthier condition. The monasteries in the past sheltered all those women who, either by nature or training, shunned marriage. To-day the monasteries have little influence in the European states of the most advanced civilisation. But, though the monasteries have lost their influence and no longer offer a career to women as an alternative to that of the wife and mother, there remains a large class of women, who, while desiring to preserve the high respect of society, for some reason or other have to find careers other than marriage. For a long period these women in the better class of