

THE HOME CIRCLE.

BY M.

No. 1.—INTRODUCTORY.

The most important association on earth is that of the household. Home is of divine institution. The first home was organized in Eden to continue in succession to the end of time. Its design is to promote God's glory and man's felicity. The individual is solitary, but "God setteth the solitary in families." "He setteth the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock" who might praise and adore the name of the Lord. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that every home should be established upon principles in harmony with its high origin and destiny.

Home is the grand centre of all moral and physical interests—the church and state are here in embryo; character that must develop itself in due time, to the joy or sorrow of every individual member of the family, is here in formation; immortal souls are here in training for eternity. How few realize the responsibility connected with the government of the household! How very few seem to obey the divine injunction: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it!" Of what father could it now be said: "I know that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment!" What parent trembles at the Prophet's petition: "Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know Thee not, and upon the *families* that call not on Thy name!"

Could home and household duties only be viewed in their true light, what a change would soon be manifest in the community. Were it generally believed and acted upon that all real improvements and reforms must take their rise in the domestic circle; that, in no case, could commerce and legislation restore a day of honesty and plenty without the co-operation of the family; and that the only radical cure for all moral and financial evils must begin in the household, how soon would it be said of us "that there be no complaining in our streets."

There is nothing on earth so beautiful as the domestic circle where christian love is radiant with smiles; it is here the voice of rejoicing and salvation is heard. The christian home is the sweetest type of heaven; no cloud can darken its horizon; no storm can shake its foundation, for God's testimony is its guiding star, and its anchor is cast within the vail. It is a place of repose, safety and cheer, that cannot be found elsewhere in this vale of tears, for the toil-worn labourer, the man of business and others to enter when the storms, cares and trials of the day are over. What a hallowed name, "Home, home, sweet home!" Well may it be said "There is no place like home." It may be a rude, rough home in some lonely forest or sequestered dell; but, wherever we wander, we look back to it with the utmost interest. Who can forget the happy home of his childhood! What mingled associations cluster around the old homestead! —In the hours of solitude, how thought rushes upon thought of the happy meetings, sweet interviews, and sad partings we have had with