

MARRIAGE.

CHAPTER I.

ITS MORAL ASPECTS.

THE beautiful and touching Bible narrative of the first marriage will ever cast a romantic halo around the shadowy history of primeval man. The moral teaching of the record it is impossible to misunderstand. This marriage, at least, was made in heaven. God Himself was the Great High Priest who officiated at the ceremony. Angels may have looked down upon the first happy man and wife. The glad earth smiled in youthful beauty upon her lord and master. Homage Adam exacted, and homage he received from the woman God had given him. Protection he guaranteed, and she gave, in return, loyalty to her husband. Common cares and griefs soon knit the hearts of Adam and Eve closer together than ever love could. "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and conception," was the dread sentence of the Supreme Judge against sinning Eve; and to Adam, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." The first family, the first family quarrel, the first reconciliation, the first great joy, the first great grief, follow each other in rapid succession; and the history of the human race repeats, with fearful emphasis, the story recorded in its first chapter.

The end of marriage is the production of offspring. All animals have implanted in them a desire to perpetuate their species; this desire is one of nature's laws, and it is the strongest law in nature, for, without it animal life would soon cease to exist. Man is subject to the same physical laws as animals, and hence the desire in man to beget progeny does not differ in any respect from the animal passion. But the moral faculty of man is not found in any animal, and this power places the human race at an immeasurable distance above the most intelligent animal. Following the instincts of their nature, many animals display a wonderful forethought for the preservation of their young, and the most indefatigable exertion in providing