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THE EVOLUTION OF THE FAMILY.

By OSCAR BROWNING M.A., V.P.R.Hist.S.

WE live in an age when the theory of evolution is being applied to all the phenomena of the universe. It is natural, therefore, that we should attempt to explain the sequence of the various forms of government by this hypothesis. Political science, although it is a favourite study in America, is not much regarded in England. We are, perhaps, too much absorbed in political practice to believe in the reality of political theory. Still it is probable that, as democracy advances, and as the necessity of educating the masses of our population in politics becomes more imperative, political science will claim a larger share of attention. This science is divided into two branches, the one deductive and speculative, the other inductive and historical. The 'Elements of Politics,' by Professor Sidgwick, is perhaps the first attempt to treat the first division thoroughly and systematically in the English language. The writer essays, with more or less success, to trace every ramification of the perfect modern state, as it ought to be, based upon the theory of the greatest happiness of the greatest number. The second department has not yet been worked out, but there is no reason why this should not be done. Anyone who attempted it would have to separate the facts of government from all other social phenomena, and to seek to arrange them in such an order, proceeding from the more simple to the more complex, that he could arrive at some conclusion, more or less valid, as to the manner in which the state had been evolved and differentiated amongst human beings. Attempts have

been made to effect this in isolated parts of the whole field. The 'Comparative Politics' of Freeman are written with this end; Maine's 'Ancient Law' is a treatise on the evolution of certain parts of human society. But these writers have adopted a method which is not likely to lead to very satisfactory results. Freeman confines himself principally to the evidence of history, and Maine to that of Roman law. The conclusions of Maine have been invalidated by Maclennan, who has shown that, although some of the phenomena asserted by Maine to be universal are really so in rudimentary societies, yet the working out of them in detail, as exhibited in Roman Law, was confined to the Romans. Freeman also, in comparing Greek, Roman, and German kingship, and drawing illustrations from the existing *Landesgemeinden* of Switzerland, does not carry us very far in the path of generalisation, owing to the paucity and uncertainty of the evidence with which he has to deal. A modern school has therefore arisen which regards historical evidence as inadequate, and draws its materials from the ample sources of comparative anthropology. It rests upon the assumption that human nature is under all circumstances and under all conditions substantially the same; that there is less difference between the highest and the lowest types of men discoverable in the world than between the lowest men and any beasts; that man is a state-forming animal (*πολιτικὸν ζῶον*), as Aristotle called him more than two thousand years ago; that the creation of cities and governed communities is just as natural to men as the making of waxen cells to bees, or of dams to beavers; that political problems are very much the same all the world over, and that human beings having to cope with them are likely to solve them much in the same way; that the form of institutions depends, not on their antiquity in point of time, but upon the state of development which the particular community has reached which makes use of them. Therefore, it is said, that if we could obtain—which is extremely difficult—an accurate account of all the political institutions which exist in the world at the present day, we should have a collection of types

of all the most important institutions which ever have existed, and we should be able to arrange them in an order of probable sequence, so as to be able to infer how one type had been evolved from the other. This way of looking at things has revolutionised the study of historical political science, and with it the kindred science of law. We do not neglect the study of history; indeed historical evidence becomes of greater importance than before. But we affirm that history alone does not afford us sufficient ground for the conclusions we wish to draw. The general practice of mankind as taught us by comparative anthropology enables us to make large generalisations, to trace the broad outlines of an all-embracing system. When we have laid this groundwork we are in a position to fit in our historical facts wherever they will go. Historical evidence does not lose, but gains largely by this treatment. Isolated pieces of evidence are enlightened and explained by the juxtaposition of cognate forms from unexpected sources; and the fact that a particular race has acted in one recorded instance in a particular manner receives strong confirmation from the discovery that this particular action is in accordance with the practice under similar circumstances of the whole human race.

It was necessary to state this much, by way of preface, to show the method which I propose to adopt in dealing with the evolution of the family. I shall base my view of this evolution on what is known of the practices of rudimentary, but not necessarily ancient races. I do not wish to assert that the question of the evolution of the family is a very important matter of itself. We may fairly say that no political question can be considered of very great moment which does not in some way or other bear upon present or future political action, and that only those institutions are worthy of our notice which have left memories amongst those people of modern times, whose laws and customs are worthy of consideration. It would be rash to say that the earlier types of the family have left no such traces, but undoubtedly the main importance of the evolution of the family is that it is the

indispensable prelude and vestibule to the evolution of the state. Everywhere when we trace back the state to its earliest forms we find that it is based upon the family ; that it grew by a natural process out of the family. Therefore, if we would understand the state, we must inquire how the family first came into existence.

The teachings of comparative anthropology point to a time when the principal characteristics of the modern family were entirely unknown. Aristotle describes the family as consisting of father, mother, child, and slave—we should still say that it consisted of the same elements, except the slave—and that in a condition of things where the names of father, mother, brother and sister, son and daughter do not exist, the family cannot be considered to be in being. Yet everything points to a very early community of this nature. Just as in early societies there was no property, either individual or personal, no personal responsibility, no possibility of personal individual contract ; so there was no wife, no husband, no son, no daughter, no brother, no sister. Every woman was the wife of the whole tribe, no child knew his father, and if he knew his mother it made no difference ; there was no distinction between the relation of brother and sister and that of cousin ; there was a condition which some might call homogeneity, others promiscuity. I do not mean to say that this state of society ever had a real existence. No one conversant with the customs of rudimentary nations is likely to believe this. To decide exactly the state in which rudimentary nations live almost transcends the power of ordinary language. Language is only suited to express ideas which we are capable of forming, and the social conditions of rudimentary peoples are at once so fluid and so complex that it is difficult to make a statement about them which does not require to be so carefully guarded and qualified that it almost ceases to be an exact statement in the process. But we may assert that rudimentary societies tend to approach this condition, and that the further we trace them back the more we find that they tend to approach it. Now, at the

very outset, we are met with a difficulty. The most rudimentary of human beings most nearly resemble animals. Evolution asserts that the corporeal part of us is directly derived from lower animals, probably arboraceous apes. Shall we not, therefore, it is asked, obtain a better solution of our difficulty if we inquire into the social and family relations of animals? These relations are extremely difficult to determine. A book recently published, which has attracted a good deal of attention—Westermarck's 'History of Human Marriage'—deals very largely with these problems. He conducts a vehement polemic against the supporters of promiscuity, and asserts that the higher apes, from whom we are presumably descended, are not only monogamists, but in their isolated circle offer lessons of conjugal fidelity and domestic virtue which refined civilisation might do well to imitate. He also asserts, with perfect truth, what I have admitted above, that there is no absolute evidence that such a state of promiscuity either does exist, or ever has existed. But his whole contention is beside the point—we are speaking not of families, but of communities. It is quite possible that the earliest man whenever he came into existence, lived with his wife and children in the innocence of a golden age, and that the traveller of those days might have found in the clearings of a primeval forest these isolated groups as self-contained, as contented, and perhaps as immaculate as our first parents in the Garden of Eden, or as any gorilla in the wilds of Central Africa. But it does not follow that when communities were formed, by whatever process, the same state of things continued, nor does Westermarck contend that monogamy is characteristic of communities of animals. Some sort of family probably preceded the community, but the community preceded the family as we know it, and that primitive community from which the family, as we know it, sprang possessed, or tended to possess, the characteristics which I have above described. The family, therefore, is not so much an evolution as a differentiation. The family gradually came into being by the recognition of distinctions

within the homogeneous community which were not in the first instance observable. This community, having little or no differences within itself, was separated from other communities who were settled around it by two great ties, blood and language. All members of the community either were, or feigned to be, of the same blood, descended from the same real or pretended ancestor. All, of course, spoke a language which was mutually intelligible, and which was probably different from that of every other community, however closely related.

We must now ask, how did this differentiation begin? It obviously took two directions, leading in one case to the family—as we understand it—in the other towards the state, that is, towards the existence of a government; for we must assume a time when nothing which could be called a government had an existence in the homogeneous community. In the first case, distinctions are recognised, first of old, young, and middle-aged, then of groups of relations, brothers and the most distant cousins being reckoned as undistinguishable. At last the mother becomes recognised, and receives honour and obedience as head of her family. Long after that, the father is known, and succeeds to a similar position. Or, taking the other line, the community acquires slaves from the fortune of war; the same war elevates individuals into nobles, partly as the reward of personal prowess, partly as the result of acquired wealth. When classes have thus grown up, and become consolidated, at last kingship comes into existence, and the state, or something resembling a state, is formed. It may be that the question as to which of these two lines of differentiation is the older admits of no decided answer. The evolution of human society in all its branches has followed no single or uniform course. It has always depended on two factors, which are never the same in any case: the character of the individual germ from which the community sprang, and the environment by which it was surrounded, cold, heat, or temperate climate, land, sea, mountains, rivers, friends or foes. A hundred differences in

the nature of these factors, and in their relation to each other, are the parents of as many divergences in the resultant organisms.

We will consider each of these lines of differentiation separately. In the systems of relationship existing in primitive communities we find that, whereas, as I have said above, the tie between the members of a community is always a tie of blood, relationship is always reckoned through women, and not through men. This custom is so widely spread, and is discovered among tribes so entirely different in origin, that it must have arisen from a fundamental tendency in human beings as such, and cannot have been derived by imitation from one to the other. It is found amongst the whole of the North American Indians, from the extreme north to the Natchez in Florida, amongst a large number of tribes in South America. It is found in Australia, in many islands of Australasia, in the Mariana Islands, in Fiji, and in the Tonga Islands, in the Caroline Islands, amongst the Singalese of Ceylon, in the islands of the Malay Peninsula, the Malays being at the present time the race which offers the richest evidence to the inquirer upon these subjects. It is common amongst many tribes in East Africa, in those south of the Sahara, on the coast of Guinea, in Loango and Congo, in Madagascar, and generally amongst the tribes of Central Africa, as shown by the recent explorations of Stanley and others. It existed without doubt amongst the Iberians, that ancient black tiny race which inhabited large portions of Western Europe before the arrival of the Aryans, fragments of which are found among the Basques, and in small conquered populations in Italy and Gaul in historical times. It has been asserted that it did not exist among the Aryans, but there are traces of it amongst the Romans, the Greeks, and the Germans, as well as among the Lycians, the Ionians, and the Etruscans. The scanty notices upon which this last portion of evidence is based derives great strength from the fact that the custom of tracing relationship through women is so widely spread elsewhere. Undoubtedly there are a certain number

of primitive races who trace their descent and relationship through males, but it may be asserted that whereas in historical times there is abundant evidence for relationship through females having passed into relationship through males, there is no evidence of the contrary process. It is therefore probable that even in these communities there was a system of this kind preceding that with which we are familiar. This relationship points to that primitive condition of homogeneity and promiscuity which I above stated to be probably the earliest condition of the human community. Monogamy or polygamy can only exist where the father is acknowledged the head of the family. In considering this system, which is conveniently known as the matriarchate, we must not suppose that a woman is regarded as the head of the tribe. This is never found in practice, and there are no traces of its having existed in prehistoric times. A man always stands at the head of the community, but he is not the father, but the mother's brother. It is to the maternal uncle that the love, reverence, and obedience which we consider as the natural rights of the father are really paid. The father does not properly belong to the family at all; indeed, he belongs to a different family, and sometimes stands in a hostile relation to his own children; or if, like women in ancient Rome, he passes into the family of his wife, as they did into the families of their husbands, he holds there an entirely subordinate position, which is often not better than that of a slave.

In the primitive homogeneous community, as there was no realisation of parentage, so there was no realisation of relationship. Among rudimentary tribes we find no word to express marriage; so also we find no words to denote the relationships which are common amongst ourselves. There is no expression for father, mother, brother, sister, uncle, or aunt; there are only expressions which denote classes of relationship. Before this period the only distinctions recognised were those of age. In a tribe there were the old, the middle-aged, and the young, groups more carefully distinguished than the same

divisions amongst ourselves, guarded by special ceremonies, and invested with special privileges. The senate of Rome, the *γερονσία* of Sparta—each of them assemblies of old men—were so denominated, not as by a nickname, but as composed of certain people who possessed as we should the franchise or competence of belonging to them. Let us take two examples of this class relationship from two very different races, who as far as we know have nothing to do with each other—the Sandwich Islanders and the redskins of North America. Among the first we have one word denoting all relations, male and female, above the father up to the great-grandfather and the great-great-uncle. Another word denotes the father, the paternal uncle, the father's brother-in-law, the mother's brother and brother-in-law, the grandfather's brother's son. One word represents mother, mother's sister, and sister-in-law, father's sister and sister-in-law. Another represents son, sister's and brother's son, the son of a brother's son or daughter, and of a sister's son or daughter, the son of a mother's sister's son, and of a mother's brother's son. The same word denotes wife, wife's sister, brother's wife, wife's brother's wife, and the wife of all first cousins, whether on the male or female side. Thus every sister is wife of her brother-in-law, and the brother-in-law is husband of his brother's wife and the father of his brother's children. A wife has husbands and sisters-in-law, but no brother-in-law; a man has wives and brothers-in-law, but no sisters-in-law. Cousins have the same name as brothers and sisters. Therefore, in the Hawaiian system, as expressed in the Hawaiian language, the notion of marriage is entirely absent. The child is not related to his father or his mother, but with a group of relatives; every child has several fathers and several mothers. Of course I do not mean to imply that any system of relationship corresponding to this has been found in these islands, but language shows that some such system did once exist. Amongst the redskins the same word denotes father, father's brother, father's brother's son; the same word mother, mother's sister, and mother's sister's daughter; the same word brother and cousins; the

same word son and nephew. Similar names for relationships are found in Tamil. Nicolaus of Damascus gives us an account of the Galactophagi, whom he represents as practising a community of wives and property. Amongst them he says that the elderly people are called fathers, the younger sons, the middle-aged brothers, thus showing a combination of the age classes and the classificatory relationships.

I have shown how the primitive homogeneous horde develops the idea of parentage (in the first instance motherhood), and then certain elementary notions of kinship. But from an early period the weak conceptions of relationship which distinguish communities in this early stage is still further shown by the inclusion of persons whom we should not now regard as belonging to the family at all. Sometimes whole tribes entered into this kind of connection with other tribes, and the tie once formed was regarded as stronger than that of blood. Examples of this are found among the Afghans, in the Jewish clans of Medina in Arabia, and amongst the southern Slavs. Individuals are also admitted into the family in the same way, although sometimes in a subordinate position. The custom of adoption, so common amongst the Romans, is found in many other races of an entirely different origin ; for instance, amongst the redskins of North America, the Greenlanders, the Malays, and the Ainos of Japan. The object of adoption is to prevent the family from dying out and the family sacrifices from being interrupted. We find this to be a potent influence amongst the Galla tribes of Central Africa. Such pains are taken to insist upon the idea that the adoptive child stands in every respect in the place of a real child, that the circumstances of natural birth are sometimes imitated in the ceremonies of adoption found in various countries. Another most curious method of artificially extending the family is found in what we may call blood-brotherhood ; that is, the formation by solemn ceremonies of an artificial tie of the closest and most intimate nature between two individuals. The ceremonies attending it are described in many travellers' stories, and are very various and amusing.

The relationship takes different forms in different countries. In Melanesia this tie between two young men is regarded as a marriage, and they are called man and wife. They are bound to endure the same dangers, to defend each other when attacked, and if necessary to die together. If either of them wishes to marry, the tie between them must first be formally dissolved. A practice of the same kind exists amongst the Southern Slavs, and there are abundant traces of it among the early Germans. In Central Africa the ceremony of blood-brotherhood, repulsive and disgusting as it often is, is valued as the principal defence of the traveller against treachery and attack. Amongst many other peoples besides the Polynesians, it is regarded as a hindrance to marriage. On the other hand, it is not unfrequently followed by community of property, and even community of wives. In other cases the blood-brothers inherit from each other as a matter of course. The different methods by which this relationship may be brought into being are worth mentioning. Most commonly there is a kind of treaty. Sometimes it is the work of a moment. Among the Southern Slavs if a man finds himself in a great difficulty, he will turn to the person standing nigh to him and say, 'In God's name be my brother!' If the person called on refuses, he loses all claim to respect and consideration. A similar custom is said to be found among the Wahambas of Eastern Africa. An exceedingly common method found in all kinds of unrelated tribes in Madagascar, in South Africa, amongst the Albanians, Letts, and Magyars is the practice of drinking each other's blood. The representation of this ceremony occurs in one of Wagner's operas. This is in certain cases accompanied by an oath, which is written down and drunk with the blood. Occasionally a few drops of blood are mingled with a drink consisting of fresh and salt water, palm wine, and other ingredients. It is natural that when Christianity began to prevail the tie of artificial brotherhood should be enforced by religious ceremonies. The Montenegrins are said to have three kinds of artificial brotherhood. The first, which is of the weakest nature, is

formed by one man kissing another three times on the cheek ; the second has been alluded to above, and is formed by calling for help in the time of need in the name of God and St. John ; the third is formed by receiving the sacraments together in church. This last ceremony makes the two men brothers for life. Another form of artificial relationship is foster brotherhood, the tie formed by two persons being educated together as children : this is found amongst the Circassians, the Indians of the Himalayas, the Persians, and the Greenlanders. In the ancient laws of Ireland we find a similar relationship recognised between tutor and pupil. In certain cases the foster relationship supersedes the real relationship entirely. Yet another form of artificial relationship is milk-brotherhood, forming a close tie between the wet-nurse and the infant. In some cases the power of this connection is so strongly felt that a child is nurtured from the breast of every woman capable of giving it nourishment in turn, in order that the unity of the tribe may be strengthened. The milk tie is regarded in Moslem law as a bar to marriage, just as the tie of godfather and godmother has been sometimes so regarded in the Catholic Church.

In our own times the existence of a family is inconceivable without father, mother, and children. But this was not by any means always the case. We find in rudimentary civilisations families which acknowledge a mother only, and families which acknowledge a father only. As has been stated above, the latter is almost undoubtedly the primitive form, as we have numerous instances of the matriarchal family passing into the patriarchal, but none of the reverse process. It is interesting to trace the process by which the family, which, as we have seen, is differentiated from the homogeneous community, again becomes in itself a community in which the family can only be discerned by careful inspection. In the hill tribes of the Neilgherries the family comes entirely to an end at the death of the father, and separate families of the sons remain completely independent of each other. But in most cases both the matriarchal and patriarchal families hold

together and form a house community. Communities of the matriarchal type are found among the Malays of Sumatra. We find in their dwellings the mother and her children, the maternal uncles and aunts, the grandmothers, the maternal great-uncles and aunts. The name of these communities indicate that they spring from one mother. The head of the family, as we have before stated, is the maternal uncle, the *mamag*, and the head of this house community is the eldest of the *mamags*. As the family is increased by the birth of each successive child, an additional piece is built on to the original house, and this is continued until the number of inhabitants becomes too large, and the family is obliged to split up into two. The tie, however, continues to subsist between these two communities, and they are subject to the same head. When Kamtschatka was first explored by the Russians, large buildings called *ostrogs* were found, holding from 100 to 300 persons, having reached these dimensions from the germ of a single family. The old custom was that the daughters did not marry out of the *ostrog*, but the husband had to leave his *ostrog*, live with his wife's father, and act as his servant. Far more common, of course, are house communities on the patriarchal basis. Such are the joint family of the Hindoos, the Irish sept, the Roman gens, the Greek *γένος*, the German house communities described by Cæsar as 'gentes et cognationes hominum.' In Italy we find similar joint families existing in the middle ages with a *reggitore*, or male head, and a *massara*, or female head. Similar, too, in mediæval France were the *communautés* of serfs under a feudal organisation. Among the South Slavs we find traces of similar organisations. Relatives live together frequently to the second and third, sometimes to the fourth and fifth degrees, making up a number of fifteen to twenty-five, and sometimes of fifty or more. These communities disappeared in Styria, Carinthia, and Carniola two hundred years ago, and are dying out every day in Croatia, Servia, and Bulgaria. In those parts of the Indian Archipelago where the patriarchal system prevails we find that the son upon marriage does not leave

his father's house, but merely builds an additional room. Among the Dyaks of Borneo we find two hundred and fifty or three hundred people living in one house. A similar custom is found amongst the Kabyles of Algeria. It is, indeed, very curious to find in different parts of the world enormous houses which afford lodging to a whole community, reminding us of the habitations of animals, such as bees or rabbits, which are enlarged by a similar process. Indian villages are found consisting of one or two colossal buildings, five or six stories high, rising in terraces, and giving shelter to three or four hundred persons. Mexico, Yucatan, and Guatemala were once full of buildings of this kind. The Iroquois erected large houses, over a hundred feet long, in which ten or fifteen families found habitation, and lived together from the chase. Buildings have been found in Nootka Sound sufficient to contain eight hundred persons. It is not, however, certain that all the inhabitants of these house villages descended from the same ancestor; they may be conglomerations of villages brought closer together for convenience or defence. I have now, I hope, sufficiently shown how the idea of relationship differentiates itself out of the homogeneous community, how when it has so developed it receives accretions of what we should not now term relations, and how the family when it comes into existence tends to grow into larger groups. But I have only lightly passed over the most important relationship of all—that of marriage—and I must ask your indulgence in dealing with a very difficult subject. Evidence seems to show that when once the human community was formed, marriage, in the strict sense, ceased to exist, and that, just as everything was held in common, land, personal property, and children, so women were also held in common, or perhaps attributed, like other property, to the possession of the head of the tribe. We find in many rudimentary nations that there is scarcely anything which can be called a marriage ceremony, that there is frequently no word to express marriage, and that the earliest marriage ceremonies are merely symbolical of two people coming together to keep house. Also

there are numerous examples all over the world of temporary marriages, existing either for a definite period, or until the pair have made a trial as to whether they will suit each other or not. In some cases the marriage tie lasts only until the first child is weaned, sometimes until a certain number of children have been born, sometimes until it is ascertained that the wife is likely to become a mother. We also have cases in which the marriage tie is at first of a lax or provisional nature, and is afterwards superseded by one of a more permanent nature. In some instances the very fact of the birth of the first child sets the seal upon the union. Divorce—if it indeed can be called by that name—is made very easy in rudimentary societies. Indeed, the married pair separate whenever it pleases them to do so. Even the sale of wives, which in French legends is always attributed to the typical John Bull, is not without examples in other places. It may, of course, be urged that these lax relations do not represent a primitive condition, but are marks of a state of degeneracy. This view was, if not held, at least urged by Sir Henry Maine in answer to MacLennan. But there does not appear to be much value in this suggestion. I have said above that a condition of monogamy amongst isolated family groups is not inconsistent with the adoption of a different system as soon as mankind began to live together in communities. But if these communities had passed into the laxer state by degeneracy, there would probably be some trace of their former condition, either in language or in symbolical ceremonies. Also it is found in the physical, moral, and the social world that degeneracy leads back to a previous state of existence. It is not consistent with experience that a man or a community fall into a lower state which has not been at some time or other the normal condition of the individual or the community. Therefore, even degeneracy itself would be evidence of what a previous condition had been like.

There are also other phenomena, some of which are extremely unpleasant to mention or to allude to, which seem

to show that the growth of individual property in a wife was not only gradual, but was regarded as a lesion of the rights of the community at large. We are familiar with the socialistic maxim, *La propriété c'est le vol*. We are, happily, not so familiar with the proposition, *Le mariage c'est le vol*. Still, from the historical point of view, one statement is probably as true as the other. Statements with regard to this matter have been collected by Bachofen in his epoch-making work 'Das Mutterrecht,' the book which has given the strongest impulse to the kind of inquiry in which we are now engaged. Herodotus makes statements about the Massagetes, which are confirmed by the geographer Strabo, about the Nasamones and the Ausæ, which point to a time when individual property in wives was unknown. Solinus says that the Æthiopian Garamantes have no notion of private marriage. Mela, Pliny, and Martianus Capella say the same. Nicolaus of Damascus says that amongst the Liburnians all children are reared in common up to the age of five, and only after this period are divided amongst their putative fathers. The same writer says of the Galactophagi, the milk-feeders, 'They possess all their property and their wives in common.' Therefore they call all elderly men fathers, the younger sons, and men of their own age brothers. This statement is important, as it not only confirms the analogy I have indicated between community in land and in women, but it shows how this primitive state of things was connected with the general homogeneity of the community, a homogeneity which recognised no differences except those of age. This evidence is all derived from ancient writers, but it might be supplemented with a great wealth of illustration from existing races. The Jeehurs of Oude, the Jolah on the island of St. Mary in America, the tribes of Matto Grosso in South America, the Lubus of Sumatra, some of the Dyaks of Borneo, all afford examples of this condition, not to mention the copious evidence adduced from ancient Arabia by Wilken and by Professor Robertson Smith. We must not judge these conditions by our own

standard of morality. All writers are agreed that monogamy is the highest form of marriage, that family life as we understand it is the crown and the glory of the evolution of the family, that as races progress in civilisation the family tie becomes more strict and more sacred, and that the family as we know it is the only certain basis of social order. But just as we regard the breach of the marriage tie between two individuals as immoral, so do primitive communities regard the creation of it as immoral, because it is a wilful appropriation by an individual to himself of that which belongs to all. It is analogous to a violent seizure of the common land as a theft from the public treasury. We cannot accuse such tribes of adultery or incest, because no such ideas exist amongst them. The law has not as yet made them conscious of sin, because it has not as yet come into existence. I will not mention in detail the evidence alluded to above, which refers a number of curious customs to a state of transition which is gradually leading up to marriage. I will only say that there are nations all over the world, in ancient and modern times, in which prenuptial unchastity is regarded not only as permissible, but as a duty, and even an honourable and sacred duty. It is obvious that the marriage connections of which I have hitherto spoken are all what is called *endogamous*, that is, confined to the tribe, or even to the family. How strongly this preference for strict endogamy was ingrained is shown by the special and sacred character given to marriage between close relations. Zeus, as we know, was both the brother and the husband of Hera. Among the Persians, Kambyses married his sister Atossa, Artaxerxes his two daughters, and Kobad I his sister Sambyke. It is said that unions of this kind are found amongst the modern Persians. We find the same thing amongst the Hindus, in the islands of Oceania, and in ancient Wales. But it is also the fact that side by side with the principle of strict *endogamy* there exists an equally strict principle of *exogamy*, that is, an absolute prohibition of marriage between individuals of the same family or even the same tribe. Various explanations

have been given of the origin of this custom. Some have attributed it to the advantages found by experience to belong to the children of a mixed race; others have thought that, as capture was undoubtedly a very early form of marriage, so the capture of a wife from an alien tribe was regarded as an honourable exploit, and, therefore, became imitated and fashionable. Connected with exogamy, and, in the minds of some inquirers, indissolubly connected, is the practice of polyandry, that is, of one woman being at the same time the wife of a number of husbands. I need not go into detail upon this subject, which is fully described in Maclennan's 'Primitive Marriage.' I will only say, in passing, that in my opinion Maclennan greatly overrates the importance of the practice and exaggerates its universality. It is now believed to be only the product of special circumstances, the exact converse of those which have, amongst other communities, led to the practice of polygamy. Polyandrous marriages are, however, I believe, always exogamous.

I must not omit altogether two other forms of transitional marriage, one of which, from being mentioned in the Bible, is far better known than the other. I mean the practice of boy-marriage and the practice of the levirate. Boy-marriages are found in places as far apart as Southern India and the Caucasus. Among the Reddies of Southern India a young woman is married to a boy of five or six, but she lives with one of the boy's relatives, often with the boy's father, and any children that may be born are considered to be the children of the boy. In the Caucasian tribes the actual husband of the boy's wife is always his father, and the children are divided between them. The traveller Coxe relates that he found this practice in Poland, and it still exists as an abuse in some parts of Russia, but it is in these cases almost certainly a survival of a common practice. The levirate is the well-known Hebrew precept that if a man dies without children, his brother, the 'levir,' or brother-in-law of the widow, should take her to himself and raise up children to represent the race and name of his brother. This is found

in many other places besides ancient Palestine. In the Carolines the duty is reciprocal to both husband and wife, the widow having to marry her brother-in-law, and the widower his deceased wife's sister, thus making obligatory a connection which is forbidden amongst ourselves. Another very curious practice well known to us from the classical story of Hypermnestra and Lynceus, when the fifty sons of Ægyptus married the fifty daughters of Danäus, is the group marriage, in which a whole family of brothers are wedded to a whole family of sisters—an arrangement which would, I suppose, be quite legal amongst ourselves, and is sometimes found on a limited scale.

It has, indeed, been supposed that the levirate is a survival of the group marriage, and was occasioned by the sentiment which underlies it. Maclennan believes that the first recognition of fatherhood began with the levirate, and therefore the first practice of monogamy; others are of opinion that monogamy might be a natural result of capture; but it is more probable that it arose from the development of a proper pride amongst women themselves, and that a woman of high rank and character would not suffer her place to be shared by others. It is certain that, when once established, the great advantages accruing from it would cause it to supersede all other forms of union. It is curious to trace the effects which the practice of exogamy has had upon other forms of social relationship. A custom exists in many tribes which forbids persons nearly related to each other to see each other or to have anything to do with each other. In some parts of Ceylon a father is not permitted to see his daughter, or a mother her son, until they have reached their majority. Amongst some Mongolian tribes the father-in-law must avoid the society of his daughter-in-law. In other tribes the son-in-law must never see his mother-in-law, or even mention her name. In the Fiji Islands brothers and sisters, cousins on the father's side, fathers-in-law and sons-in-law, mothers-in-law and sons-in-law, brothers and sisters-in-law are not allowed to eat, or even to speak, with each other. Similar customs are found in parts of

Australia, in India, amongst the Dyaks of Borneo and the Brahmans of West Africa. The members of a family into which a man or a woman is about to marry are bound to avoid him or her from the moment of the engagement. Amongst the Somali it is considered a sin to see your mother-in-law, and even a still greater sin for a mother-in-law to allow herself to be seen.

From what I have said we see that marriage amongst rudimentary nations is not a matter of individuals but of communities. In all other departments of life it is only by slow degrees that the individual emerges out of the community. The community is the earliest form of society in which men come together, and as long as the existence of the community as such is the predominant preoccupation of its members, so long do the rights of the community overpower, and indeed annihilate, the rights of the individual. This kind of feeling, which has few if any traces among ourselves, survives in some shape even down into very advanced forms of civilisation. The Greek *πόλις*, at once the city and the state, made in many respects claims which are similar to that early community of which I am speaking; the individual would not exist outside the community. The *ἄπολις*, the cityless man, was an outcast and a pariah, with no legal and no social rights, with no claim either to protection or to happiness. Of course in Athens many individual rights of property and of marriage were well developed, and Grecian history supplies us with some of the strongest personalities which are to be found in history. But the general idea of the supremacy of the race community over its component parts is still the predominant idea of the *πόλις* in its supremacy over the citizens. It is not until the idea of the importance of the race community has entirely disappeared that modern marriage, the free union between male and female by mutual consent, can be accepted as the typical marriage of the human race.

I have now, I think, traced the development of the idea of the modern family in its main outlines from the condition of the

homogeneous horde with which our ancestors in all probability began. Want of time has compelled me to pass over many side lights. I might have shown how the restrictions upon marriage and the compulsion to marriage gradually became less as the necessity of preserving the continuity of the family or the community became less imperious. I might also have traced in its various developments the question of marriage by capture, showing how, as soon as endogamous marriages were discredited, it became the most honourable and eventually the sole method of procuring a wife ; how it was afterwards changed into a real or assumed purchase, and how traces both of capture and of purchase have survived until our own day. I might also have traced the development of marriage ceremonies, and their significant bearing on the theories of marriage held at different times. It is, for instance, interesting to see how the marriage ceremonies of the Greeks and Romans imply these separate stages : the separation of the bride from the hearth of her father, the leading her to the hearth of the bridegroom, and her reception into the family worship of her husband. The last was typified in Rome by the *confarreatio*, the breaking together of the sacred cake, the most sacred form of sacrifice offered by the Romans to the gods. Indian ceremonies of marriage point to the same idea. I might also have traced in greater detail the development of hindrances to marriage, showing the curious forms which the recognition of prohibited degrees have taken in ancient and modern times. Perhaps this point will be treated of by others. I should myself like at some future time to lay before you some considerations as to the gradual steps by which the homogeneous community out of which we have seen the family evolved becomes transformed into something which we can call a state.