

indivisibility of property. If the last generalisation seems hastily put in line with the two preceding and more obvious principles, I think its truth may be established by inversion of reasoning in considering Tibetan conditions.

Suppose a family of three sons, without just now inquiring into the marriage relations of their parents; suppose a patrimony of miserly fields, which are barely sufficient to sustain the family in question, and suppose this patrimony to be physically difficult to subdivide; the house and court being obviously indivisible, the fields practically so by reason of their small individual areas and their relation to water supply. Suppose it to be exceedingly difficult, nay, practically impossible, to have other fields anywhere within a distance of hundreds of miles. Suppose, in spite of these untoward conditions, each of the three brothers to marry him a wife. We may then postulate as follows: There will be a fight about the division of floor space; there will be continued wrangling between the families; there will be frequent and murder-making adulteries; and there will be too many children to be fed from the meagre field, hence child-killing, or fell disease, must cull the o'er-rich crop. How then shall two objects be accomplished, that of securing a certain sense of unity in the conglomerate family and that of diminishing the number of births? However we might have ingeniously devised other systems, it remains that, impelled by the forces just described, the Tibetans have evolved a custom by which, first, the property goes into the control of the eldest brother; second, the wife chosen by this eldest