

brother becomes also the legal spouse of the younger twain. The children of this woman are the objects of a common affection, and when one of her sons shall have grown to full manhood, and shall have married a wife chosen by his parents, he in turn shall come into a primacy of power over the patrimony, his elders reserving just enough to prolong their habitual comfort—not enough to prevent the establishment of a new generation. And thus, indefinitely, the cycle repeats itself; not less regularly, not less blindly, obeying nature's demand for new individuals, than elsewhere in more favoured lands, by other forms.

Should some rare good fortune befall, then the eldest brother may choose another wife, even a third. And so it may be, if the first wife have no children, though the property be not increased. And even when the number of wives is equal to the number of husbands, in polyandrous marriage, it is thought that the fertility of the women is less than if living in the monogamic relation, thus securing in part, that restraint upon population which is most fully developed when, as is often the case, the three brothers have but one wife.

Chinese officials reported to M. Grenard that female births are to male as seven to eight. If this be true, we have here a second, unconscious effort to diminish the surplus of unmarried women, which would result from the one-wife and three-husband marriage, taken as the type of polyandric unions. But it is by no means the universal type. Equal numbers of husbands and wives in one family are frequently seen. The women not disposed of in