

they are all instances of a parent and child being married, not simultaneously but successively, to the same person. In the first two cases a man marries a woman and her daughter. In the last two a woman marries a man and his son.

If such marriages are to be sanctioned and tolerated by law, mark the practical result. Fornication is very often committed under the impression that a subsequent marriage will put all right or nearly so. The fact that such an impression extensively prevails amongst those whose moral feelings are not very refined cannot be denied, and should not be ignored. If adultery can be atoned for in a similar way, it will also appear a light matter to the same class of persons. If it should be discovered, and occasion a divorce, the inconvenience will be remedied by the partners in crime getting married. This form of immorality is more difficult of detection than the other—the birth of a child being usually no evidence, as it is in the case of fornication. The facilities of committing it in the case of parties *living together* as members of one family are abundant. It would therefore seem to be particularly necessary to surround the purity of married life with such safeguards as would foster, especially in the minds of near relations, a deep sense of the vileness and wickedness of adultery. Just such a safeguard is the abhorrence of incest, as extending to the near relations of both parties, and thus embracing the kinship of affinity as well as the kinship of consanguinity.

Let us ask what is the foundation of laws of incest, even as applied to blood relations. Is it not to prevent, by a sense of law operating with the power of an instinct, the occurrence of illicit intercourse *within families*, where the opportunities are so frequent that it could scarcely be prevented otherwise? But the near relations of a wife or husband occupy very much the same social position as one's own; and the safeguard afforded by a law of incest is therefore required in their case as well as in the other.

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### LETTER FROM ENGLAND.

The great theme before the religious public for the last few months has been the Bicentenary of the fatal EJECTMENT of the TWO THOUSAND in 1662. The story is a sad, a terrible one, and it is well that England should recall it to her memory that she may do justice to the principles and the conduct of the illustrious men who preferred to forsake their earthly all to making a compromise with Erastianism and Papal error. The impression is too general that clergymen are of the same stamp with the *Vicar of Bray*, whose conscience possessed to a wonderful degree the quality of accommodating itself to circumstances. This worthy gentleman changed his religion three times, and on being reproached as a turncoat he used to offer the following triumphant vindication of his own consistency, "Nay, nay, I always keep to my principles, which are these, *to live and die Vicar of Bray.*" It must be confessed that the vast majority of the Clergy of England were actuated by the Vicar's principles in 1662 and during previous years. But *Two Thousand* witnesses rise up to testify to the power of conscience and to prove that after all there is in Christianity a virtue that rises triumphant over the blandishments as well as the persecutions of a corrupt world.

What the Disruption of 1843 was to Scotland, the Ejectment of 1662 should have proved to England; but the English nonconformists lacked organiza-