

and Christian family, with the consequent obscuration of domestic virtue, receives no countenance from ethical science. On the contrary, comparative and historical ethics show that the "pairing" family has hitherto always been associated with a stage of culture immensely inferior to our own. And, from the interrelation of social forces, it might not unreasonably be apprehended that a return to the barbarous system of conjugal relations would entail general social deterioration. If ethical science does show that the family, and the morality of the family, have had an historical growth, and that they vary with time and place, it does not thereby really derogate from their sanctity or authority within a civilization that has once absorbed them. Science, indeed, can tell us nothing of the validity of virtue, duty, or good. And if speculation in the guise of moral philosophy takes up the problem, it will find that the domestic virtues have the same warrant as justice or benevolence—that warrant being, in a last analysis, an inexpugnable consciousness of their right to us and authority over us.

