

**PRIMITIVE SOCIETY: THE
BEGINNINGS OF
THE FAMILY & THE
RECKONING OF DESCENT**

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Primitive society: the beginnings of the family & the reckoning of descent by Edwin Sidney Hartland

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EDWIN SIDNEY HARTLAND

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PRIMITIVE SOCIETY

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE FAMILY
& THE RECKONING OF DESCENT

BY

EDWIN SIDNEY HARTLAND

LL.D., F.S.A., HON. F.R.S.A.(IRELAND)

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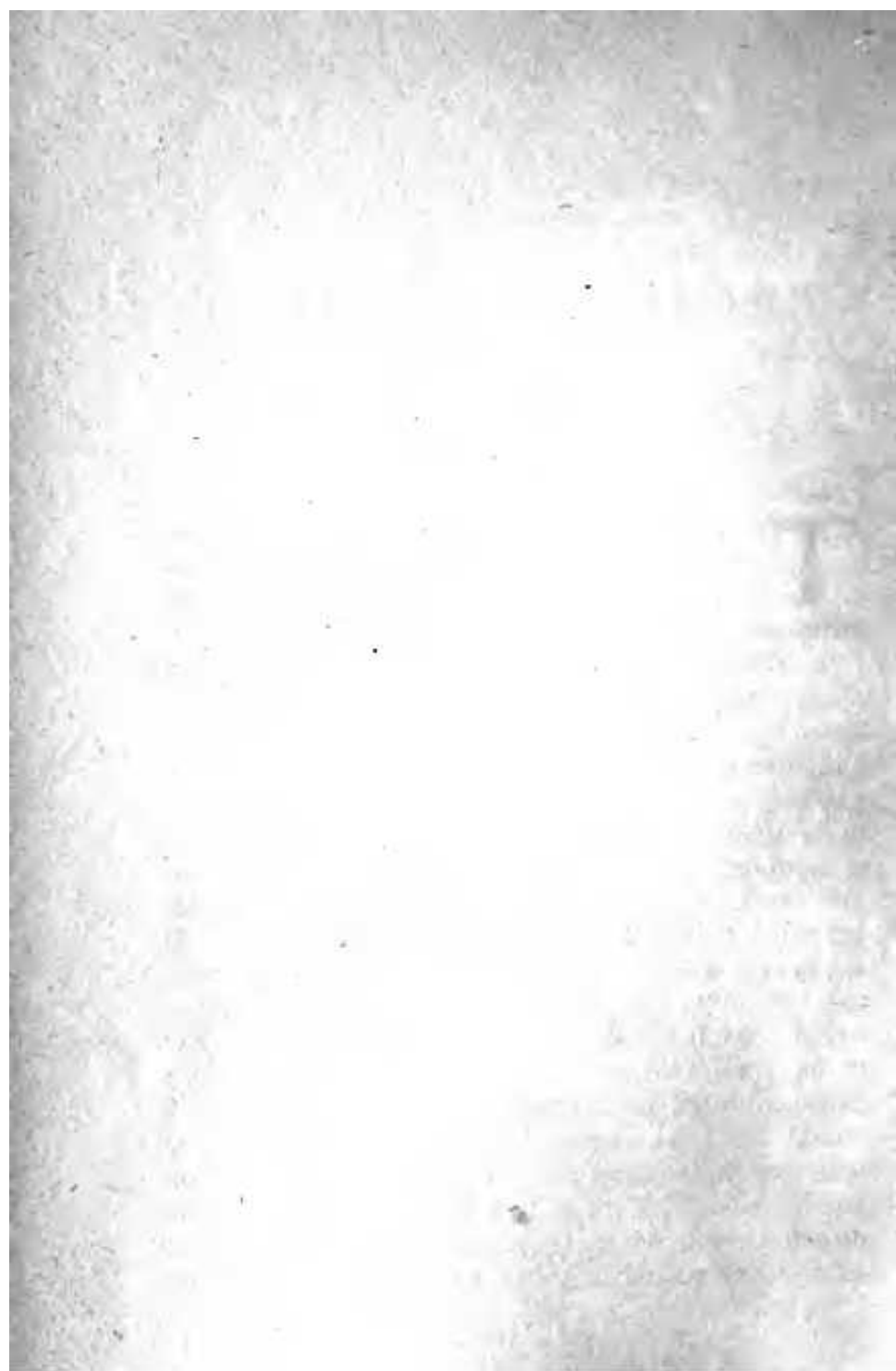


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PRIMITIVE SOCIETY

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

THE history of the evolution of human society from its remotest beginnings is one of the most interesting problems confronting modern anthropology. What was the social condition of the race when man first began to be man? How and along what lines did it develop? And were the direction and the stages of its development always and everywhere the same? The speculations of philosophers, the visions of poets, the revelations of more than one religion were concentrated for many ages upon these questions with dogmatic insistence and futile energy. In one thing only were they agreed: mankind started on its tragic career in happiness and innocence until corrupted by some external influence that plunged the race into a succession of misfortunes, sorrows and struggles in which it has been entangled down to the present hour. Science during the last two generations, refusing to be bound by preconceived opinions and disdaining all limits to its inquiries, has attacked the problem from another side. By the collection and collation of facts, discarding old dogmas and basing its inferences on ascertained customs, it has succeeded in discovering