

proceed from the simple to the complex, from monosyllables to polysyllables, from the agglutinative to the inflectional ; then the languages of Polynesia, through their various dialects, are among the oldest living on the face of the earth.

It does not follow that because a tribe or nation has no written language their speech is merely a kind of gibberish, having neither correct sense, sound, nor grammar. I have lived among Papuans for nearly thirty years, and reduced several of their languages to writing, and can testify that in some respects they are even superior to our own. Some of them have inclusive and exclusive pronouns, dual and triad numbers, as many as seven words for the pronoun *you*, all of different grades, also a court and common language ; and the words are all as precise in their meanings as if they had been defined by Johnson ; the grammar is as regular and uniform as if it had been formed by Lindley Murray, while the pronunciation is as exact as if it had been settled and phonographed by Walker, thus clearly pointing back to a higher state of civilization from which they had fallen.

How come the natives in Polynesia and New Guinea—savages, idolators, and cannibals—to have such a language if they have not brought it down with them ? If all our civilization is to be traced to a slow but gradual development from a state of primitive barbarism and savage existence, how are we to account for the condition of these people ? Here we have two large sections of prehistoric men, who are still in the age of stone and lake-dwellings. Where is the evidence that they are advancing in civilization, intelligence, morality, or happiness ? The fact is that there is abundant evidence that both races are retrograding, and none whatever that they are advancing, except under influences from without. I have found some of the bush tribes in the vicinity of the Fly River practising cremation. If it is true that "the custom of burning the dead was well-nigh universal in remote ages in the countries of the Old World," then it is probable that the Papuans have brought this custom with them, as well as others—that of circumcision, for instance. The stone gods and charms among the natives of Polynesia and New Guinea—some standing erect from one to eight feet in height, others portable and carried about by the natives—also point to very ancient forms of worship. Now consider that the first empires that arose in the world were formed by descendants of Ham, and that Nimrod, the grandson of Ham, went into Assyria and founded Nineveh, and the city which he built, and the empire, continued for ages to overshadow all Western Asia. Mizraim, the son of Ham, founded the Egyptian monarchy and the Philistine Commonwealth. Canaan, the fourth son, settled in Palestine, and his descendants founded, first the Canaanitish kingdoms, then Tyre, and subsequently Carthage.

These were for a long time the leading nations of the world ; they possessed its highest civilization, and held all but a monopoly of its commerce. These young monarchies, no doubt, sent forth strong and vigorous colonies,