

connection was during this time lost between the operative and the speculative in Masonry, and since then it has been chiefly on the line of the speculative. I believe we can trace the origin of the three degrees of Masonry to the construction of the Tower of Babel when there was confusion of languages and the dispersion of the people. I believe that the three sons of Noah then created a Masonic language that should be a sign to all their descendants wherever they might wander. The ability to speak this tongue would be a sure indication that they were of the same race, of the same father and of the same brotherhood, and in this sense, Masonry stands to-day as one of the finest proofs of the unity of the human race in this world. Savage nations have had this institution among them from time immemorial, and how would you get it around the world if you did not start it with those who were dispersed? If you object to that conclusion you have a greater difficulty to account for this fact otherwise than by believing that the three sons of Noah were directed by Shem, their great Grand Master. I was told by Dr. Lang, a member of the Queensland Parliament, of an exploring expedition he made into the interior of Queensland. After travelling two or three days without encountering any natives, his party at last met a tribe whose language neither he nor his native interpreters could understand. The wild tribe were showing signs of hostility when the traveller and his white companion, as a last resort, gave them the signs of the first three degrees of Masonry when several of the blacks responded intelligibly enough to be understood in the Masonic language, and they were thus protected and saved. The question is: How did these natives get these secrets? They had no knowledge of anyone living in the world but themselves, and had lost the traditional idea of white men. They must have got this Masonic language by descent from the dispersion of