

velled by order of the Yncas. It however gave to the lake its own name of Titicaca, which, in the Indian language, signifies a mountain of lead, and about two musket-shots from the shore. In this island the first Ynca, Mancho-capac, the illustrious founder of the empire of Peru, invented his political fable, That the Sun, his father, had placed him there, together with his sister and consort Mama Oello Huaco; enjoining them to draw the neighbouring people from the ignorance, rudeness, and barbarity in which they lived, and to humanize them by customs, laws, and religious rites, dictated by himself. So that in return for the benefits resulting from this artful stratagem, the island has been looked upon as sacred by all the Indians. And the Yncas determining to erect on it a temple to the Sun, caused it to be levelled, that its site might by that means be rendered the more delightful and commodious.

This was one of the most splendid temples in the empire. For, besides the plaits of gold and silver with which its walls were magnificently adorned, it contained an immense quantity of riches; all the inhabitants of the provinces which depended on the empire, being indispensably obliged to visit it once a year, and make some offering to it. This prodigious collection of riches, the Indians, upon seeing the violent rapacity of the Spaniards, are thought to have thrown into this lake; as it is certainly known they did with regard to a great part of those at Cusco, among which was the famous golden chain, made by order of the Ynca Huayna-capac, for solemnizing the festival of giving name to