

Father Petitot writes in almost similar terms of the expressive ceremonies by which the Dené Dindjies celebrate the festival of the vernal equinox. Dr. Tylor, in his "Anthropology," says that in the infancy of civilisation, "dancing was full of passionate and solemn meaning. Savages and barbarians danced their joy and sorrow, their love and rage, even their magic and religion." And nowhere, perhaps, is this more true than among those children of the sun, who live in the equatorial and inter-tropical regions of our continent. Raymi, the great feast of the winter solstice among the Peruvians, was so called from a word signifying a solemn dance. It was a national thanksgiving for national blessings, and began at sunrise with songs of triumph and clamorous music. "On the day of the equinox," writes Von Tschudi, "the Inca waited, accompanied by all the priests and chief lords of the court, at the entrance of the chief temple, for the rising of the sun, and by means of a metallic mirror, called *Inca-rirpu*, concentrated its first rays, setting fire, with them, to a piece of sacred cotton, picked and prepared for the purpose. The substance was carried, while burning, to the temple, where the sacrifice and offerings to the sun were made, and afterwards it furnished fire to all the houses. The Inca was also accustomed to distribute to all the assistants bread and sacred *chicha*, [a sort of beer.] Finally, the feast was concluded with dancing, music and general rejoicing." There were four solemn feasts in the year, the first coming in December, the second, just described, in spring, the third, in June, and the fourth, in October. There were also minor feasts in the other months, and they were all observed with music, dance and song.

But, at the time of the Conquest, Peru had already attained the higher stage of development indicated by dramatic representation. An example of their talent in that direction is the Ollanta drama, so-called from the name of the leading personage. Ollanta is a warrior, who, being enamored of the Inca's daughter, has his suit rejected by the haughty monarch. In his indignation, he gathers his troops and makes war on the king. But meanwhile, Cusi-Coyllur, the lady of his love, is cast into prison, and her child and Ollanta's is taken from her. The Inca dies, and his rebel son-in-law seems to have won the day. But the new monarch crushes the revolt and Ollanta is taken captive. All ends well, nevertheless. Mindful of his former services, his sovereign pardons him, and once more he clasps Cusi-Coyllur to his breast. Among the minor characters there is a sort of clown, who is always joking, and a priest of the sun, who opposes the marriage. The following passage will give some notion of the style of the play. It is a monologue of Ollanta, just after he has been robbed of Cusi-Coyllur:—

"Huay Ollantay! Ollantay! O hapless Ollantay! What will become of thee now? Thou seest the base ingratitude of the man for whom thou didst conquer so many peoples, and whom thou hast served so faithfully and so long!

"And thou, Cusi-Coyllur, the wife of my heart, what will become of thee now that I, thine husband, have been the cause of thy desolation?

"The darkness of nothingness is coming upon my soul, O my princess, my dove!

"O Cuzco, the beautiful city, henceforth I shall be the implacable enemy of thy king. Tearing out his heart, I will give it for food to the vultures.

"That cruel monarch will see thousands of Antis, arming under my command; and having reached Sacsayhuaman, they will threaten him like a cloud of maledictions. Then, when he lies upon a bed of blood, that proud tyrant will know if my vassals are few in number.