

The nations of the Tamanac race, the ancient inhabitants of those countries, have a local mythology, and traditions connected with these sculptured rocks. *Amalivaca*, the father of the Tamanacs, that is, the creator of the human race (for every nation regards itself as the root of all other nations), arrived in a bark, at the time of the great inundation, which is called 'the age of water,'\* when the billows of the ocean broke against the mountains of Encamarada in the interior of the land. All mankind, or, to speak more correctly, all the Tamanacs, were drowned, with the exception of one man and one woman, who saved themselves on a mountain near the banks of the Asiveru, called Cuchivero by the Spaniards. This mountain is the Ararat of the Aramean or Semitic nations, and the Tlaloc or Colhuacan of the Mexicans. *Amalivaca*, sailing in his bark, engraved the figures of the moon and the sun on the Painted Rock (*Tepumereme*) of Encaramada. Some blocks of granite piled upon one another, and forming a kind of cavern, are still called the house or dwelling of the great forefather of the Tamanacs. The natives show also a large stone near this cavern, in the plains of Maita, which they say was an instrument of music, the drum of *Amalivaca*. We must here observe, that this heroic personage had a brother, *Vochi*, who helped him to give the surface of the earth its present form. The Tamanacs relate, that the two brothers, in their system of perfectibility, sought, at first, to arrange the Orinoco in such a manner, that the current of the water could always be followed either going down or going up the river. They hoped by this means to spare men trouble in navigating rivers; but, however great the power of these regenerators of the world, they could never contrive to give a double slope to the Orinoco, and were compelled to relinquish this singular plan. *Amalivaca* had daughters, who had a decided taste for travelling. The tradition states, doubtless with a figurative meaning, that he broke their legs, to render them sedentary, and force them to people the land of the Tamanacs. After having regulated everything in America, on that side of the 'great water,' *Amalivaca* again embarked, and "returned to the other

† The *Atonatiuh* of the Mexicans, the fourth age, the fourth regeneration of the world.