

America, and even ascended the Andes, contributed by their discoveries and collections to augment the vegetable riches of the Old World. But, in their time, geology as a science had little or no existence. Of the structure of the giant mountains of our globe scarcely anything was understood; whilst nothing was known beneath the earth in the New World, except what related to her mines of gold and silver.

It remained for Humboldt to supply all that was wanting, by the publication of his Personal Narrative. In this, more than in any other of his works, he shows his power of contemplating nature in all her grandeur and variety.

The researches and discoveries of Humboldt's able coadjutor and companion, M. Bonpland, afford not only a complete picture of the botany of the equinoctial regions of America, but of that of other places visited by the travellers on their voyage thither. The description of the Island of Teneriffe and the geography of its vegetation, show how much was discovered by Humboldt and Bonpland which had escaped the observation of discerning travellers who had pursued the same route before them. Indeed, the whole account of the Canary Islands presents a picture which cannot be contemplated without the deepest interest, even by persons comparatively indifferent to the study of nature.

It is, perhaps, scarcely necessary to remind the reader that since the time when this work was first published in Paris, the separation of the Spanish Colonies from the mother-country, together with subsequent political events, have wrought great changes in the governments of the South American States, as well as in the social condition of their inhabitants. One consequence of these changes has been to render obsolete some facts and observations relating to subjects, political, commercial, and statistical, interspersed through this work. However useful such matter might have been on its original publication, it is wholly irrelevant