

and the union of which is the aim and end of every scientific journey. The maritime war, during our abode in America, having rendered communication with Europe very uncertain, we found ourselves compelled, in order to diminish the chance of losses, to form three different collections. Of these, the first was embarked for Spain and France, the second for the United States and England, and the third, which was the most considerable, remained almost constantly under our own eyes. Towards the close of our expedition, this last collection formed forty-two boxes, containing an herbal of six thousand equinoctial plants, seeds, shells, insects, and (what had hitherto never been brought to Europe) geological specimens, from the Chimborazo, New Grenada, and the banks of the river Amazon.

After our journey to the Orinoco, we left a part of these collections at the island of Cuba, intending to take them on our return from Peru to Mexico. The rest followed us during the space of five years, on the chain of the Andes, across New Spain, from the shores of the Pacific to the coasts of the Caribbean Sea. The conveyance of these objects, and the minute care they required, occasioned embarrassments scarcely conceivable even by those who have traversed the most uncultivated parts of Europe. Our progress was often retarded by the necessity of dragging after us, during expeditions of five or six months, twelve, fifteen, and sometimes more than twenty loaded mules, exchanging these animals every eight or ten days, and superintending the Indians who were employed in driving the numerous caravan. Often, in order to add to our collections of new mineral substances, we found ourselves obliged to throw away others, which we had collected a considerable time before. These sacrifices were not less vexatious than the losses we accidentally sustained. Sad experience taught us but too late, that from the sultry humidity of the climate, and the frequent falls of the beasts of burden, we could preserve neither the skins of animals hastily prepared, nor the fishes and reptiles placed in phials filled with alcohol. I enter into these details, because, though little interesting in themselves, they serve to show that we had no means of bringing back, in their natural state, many objects of zoology and comparative anatomy, of which we have published descriptions and drawings. Notwithstanding some obstacles, and the expense occasioned by the carriage of these articles, I had reason to applaud the resolution I had taken before my departure, of sending to Europe the duplicates only of the productions we collected. I cannot too often repeat, that when the seas are infested with privateers, a traveller can be sure only of the objects in his own possession. A very few of the duplicates, which we shipped for Europe during our abode in America, were saved; the greater part fell into the hands of persons who feel no interest for