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978-1-108-07790-3 - Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain: Volume 2

Alexander Von Humboldt Translated by John Black

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Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain

The acclaimed Prussian naturalist Alexander von Humboldt (1769–1859) was referred to by Charles Darwin as ‘the greatest scientific traveller who ever lived’. Several of his works were in the library aboard the *Beagle*, including the multi-volume *Personal Narrative of Travels*, two books on geology and *Tableaux de la nature* (all reissued in the Cambridge Library Collection). Darwin’s copy of this two-volume 1811 New York edition of Humboldt’s *Political Essay* (originally published in French earlier that year) is inscribed ‘Buenos Ayres’, suggesting he acquired it there in 1832–3, without its accompanying atlas (forthcoming). Humboldt had spent a year in Mexico in 1803–4, and was struck by its ‘civilization’ as compared to regions of South America that he had visited earlier on his expedition. Volume 2 of his account contains information about the population, language and key features of each district of Mexico, and about the country’s agriculture.

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VOLUME 2

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