

**BIBLIOTHECA AMERICANA
VETUSTISSIMA, A
DESCRIPTION OF WORKS
RELATING TO AMERICA**

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Bibliotheca Americana Vetustissima, a Description of Works Relating to America by Henry Harrisse

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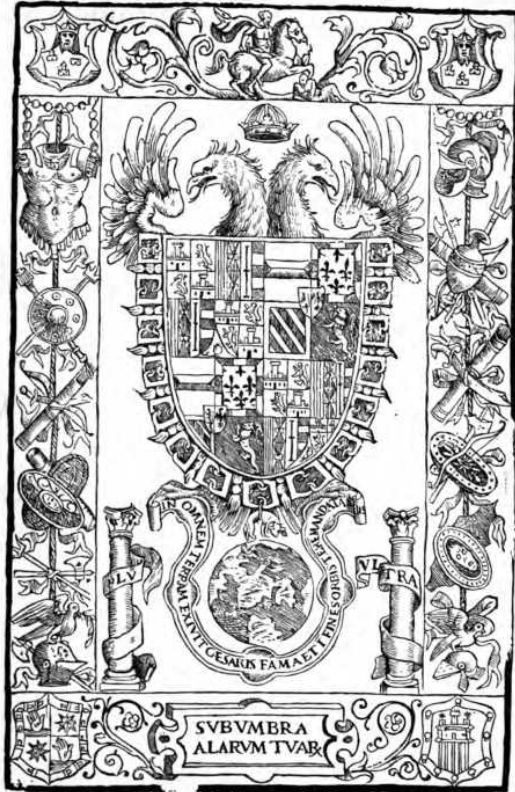
HENRY HARRISSE

**BIBLIOTHECA AMERICANA
VETUSTISSIMA, A
DESCRIPTION OF WORKS
RELATING TO AMERICA**

Bibliotheca Americana Detustissima

ADDITIONS.





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ALARVM TVAR

Bibliotheca Americana Detustissima

A

DESCRIPTION OF WORKS

RELATING TO

A M E R I C A

PUBLISHED BETWEEN THE YEARS

1492 AND 1551

ADDITIONS



PARIS

LIBRAIRIE TROSS

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258. d. 103.



INTRODUCTION.

I.



THE present volume is not a continuation of the *Bibliotheca Americana Velustissima*, but a series of notes and additions intended to aid towards forming a complete list of works relating to the discovery, history and geography of America, printed previous to the year 1551.

It will be found to contain one hundred and eighty-six articles, two thirds of which are new to collectors of books which relate to the New World. The other third is composed chiefly of descriptions *de visu* of extremely rare editions, which we had succinctly cited on the authority of other bibliographers, or published only in the appendix to the *B. A. V.*

Several of these additional titles present interesting and forgotten accounts of important events, or heretofore unknown translations and editions of leading works; but a great many must be viewed only in the light of brief allusions, destined to reflect and revive, after a

lapse of several centuries, the impressions produced on the early poets and chroniclers, when first informed that Columbus, Vespuccius, Magellan, Cortez and Pizarro, had discovered or conquered a new world.

The critic who may feel disposed to compare the five hundred works or editions which we have described, will find that they all can be traced to very few original texts, which were copied verbatim for half a century, frequently representing the heroes of those marvellous adventures as still living, many years after they had been dead. The translation made into Latin by De Cosco of Columbus's Epistle to Sanchez, Giovanni del Giocondo's version of Vespuccius's third voyage, and the first decades of Peter Martyr, have evidently supplied all the facts used in the chronicles and collections of voyages of the time. It is also worthy of notice that the historians of France, England and Portugal,¹ whose works circulated so freely as late as the middle of the sixteenth century, seem to ignore entirely the wondrous events which have rendered the names of the discoverers and conquerors of America famous, while the plaquettes printed immediately on the return of the navigators and giving the first accounts of their discoveries, are known to us only through German or Italian translations published on the Rhine or at Venice.² No contemporaneous Spanish or Portuguese editions of Vespuccius's

¹ The Chronicles printed at Paris (1516, 1533, 1542), contain no allusion whatever to the New-World. by Ferrebouc in 1531, by Regnault in 1532, by Galliot du Pré, in 1539, ² *Mundus Novus*. (B. A. P. the numerous editions of *La Mer des Indes*, Pynson's, Rastale's and Bonham's editions of Fabian's *Annals* stolum vertit."

or Magellan's voyages have come to our knowledge, and of Columbus's account of any of his four voyages we know only of one printed in Spain.

So few original documents, the impossibility of gaining access to the archives of Spain, and, let it be said, the comparatively limited and transient effect produced upon the public mind by the discovery of America, serve to explain the briefness of the accounts of Columbus's life and achievements to be found in the works printed during the first half of the XVIth century. It is only after the year 1571, that the narratives assume importance or prolixity. A number of circumstances, more or less imaginary, are made to cluster around a few unquestionable facts; these are soon altered to borrow the form of marvellous events, others are coined boldly; and soon afterwards we see Christopher Columbus issue from the accumulated efforts of chroniclers, poets and commentators, as a legendary hero and a saint.

The fact is that the Admiral was simply a bold, practical man, perfectly alive to his personal interest, constantly at variance with every body, yet honest, energetic, persevering and good-hearted, neither better

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mandata. (B. A. V. No. 36). "certainement traduit de l'italien",
 "El nuovo Mondo de Lengue says Humboldt.
Spagnele interpretato" (Puffi, B. A. V. Translation aus hispanischer Sprach
 No. 48). *nä Frantzisch gemacht.* (B. A. V.
Itinerarium Portugallium. (B. A. V. No. 113).
 No. 58) "ex vernaculo sermone in *Neue Zeitung aus Hispanien und*
 latinum tractatum." *Italien.* (B. A. V. No. 195).
Quatuor Americi Vespuccii nauiga- *Copy dlicher brieff infra,* No. 108).
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 in latinum." Spanish, Italian and French ori-
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