

*Mapas de América en los libros españoles de los siglos xvi al xviii (1503-1798)*. By FRANCISCO VINDEL. Madrid, 1955. Index. Pp. xii, 378. 1,000 pesetas.

Twice in the present decade Spanish scholarship has given us important works in the field of American historical cartography. *Mapas Españoles de América, Siglos XV-XVII*, edited by a committee of scholars headed by the Duke of Alba and published in 1951 with aid from the late Archer M. Huntington, brought together and reproduced in color in a work of remarkable beauty and technical perfection a total of seventy-eight maps and charts, chiefly in manuscript, from Spanish archives. Now in the year just gone by, Francisco Vindel of Madrid, in the book entered above, has published in line reproduction 241 facsimiles of engraved maps found in printed Spanish books of three centuries. Each entry comprises a brief title, essential bibliographical details, pertinent quotations from the book itself, a full-page reproduction of title-page, the colophon in full when it exists, and, in excellent line reproduction, whatever map or maps rightly belong to the work described. Mr. Vindel's book is, in brief, one of those monumental works of Spanish conception and publication in which handsome form and generous disposition of text and illustration pay tribute to importance of contents.

In his "Preliminares," Mr. Vindel states clearly his rule that no books were considered for entry which had been published outside Spain in Latin or in a foreign language even though they were translated works of Spanish authors. He proposes, it is reassuring to read, a supplement in which books of this designation will be included. One may express regret, however, that he reserved works in these categories for a supplement. The impact of the book is lessened by the absence from it of such extremely important maps as that of the Gulf Coast which accompanied the Nuremberg and Venice, 1524, editions in Latin and Italian of the second Cortés letter (Harrisse, *B.A.V.*, Nos. 125 and 129); or, to take another example, that map of very high consequence, the so-called "Ramusio" map or "Spanish woodcut map" of North and South America (Harrisse, *Discovery of North America*, No. 211), which without question was made to accompany the work of Venice, 1534, containing, in Italian, narratives by Peter Martyr and Oviedo, edited by Ramusio as the *Libro primo*, *Libro secondo*, and *Libro ultimo* "de l'Indie Occidentali."

Mr. Vindel has excluded also certain maps for the reason that they were not available to him in Spain and, consequently, could not

be reproduced directly from the originals. It must be assumed that this idealistic rule of exclusion accounts for the omission of the map of the New World found in the 1552 and 1553 Zaragoza editions of López de Gómara, *La istoria de las Yndias* (Wagner, *Spanish Southwest*, Nos. 2 and 2a). Presumably the copies of these editions in Spanish libraries lack the map, but copies containing it are found elsewhere, and to some readers it will seem that even moderately good reproductions of this bibliographically important map or, at least, references to it, would have been better than a complete ignoring of its existence.

We await Mr. Vindel's supplement with assurance of its importance and interest. In the meantime we are grateful to him for an illuminating and permanently helpful book which for the first time brings organization to an important area of the impressive contribution made by Spain to the mapping of the Americas.

John Carter Brown Library

LAWRENCE WROTH