

A New Survey of the West Indies, 1648: Broadway Travellers Take to the Caribbean

Published in 1648, "A New Survey of the West Indies" offers a comprehensive historical account of the Caribbean region during the 17th century. Written by Richard Ligon, an English planter who spent several years in Barbados, the work provides valuable insights into the social, economic, and political dynamics of the time.



The English-American: A New Survey of the West Indies, 1648 (Broadway Travellers Book 8) by Lonely Planet

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 2810 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 457 pages



This article will delve into the contents of "A New Survey of the West Indies," exploring its historical significance and highlighting its key observations about the Caribbean region.

Historical Context

In the 17th century, the Caribbean region was a hub of European colonial activity. England, France, Spain, and the Netherlands competed for control of the islands, establishing plantations and exploiting their resources.

"A New Survey of the West Indies" provides a firsthand account of this era, capturing the complexities of life in the Caribbean colonies. Ligon's detailed observations shed light on the daily routines, social hierarchies, and economic practices of the time.

Key Observations

Geography and Natural Resources

Ligon's survey begins with a detailed description of the geography and natural resources of the Caribbean islands. He provides vivid accounts of the lush landscapes, diverse flora and fauna, and abundant mineral resources.



Plantations and the Sugar Industry

The sugar industry played a pivotal role in the economy of the Caribbean colonies. Ligon provides a detailed account of the sugar plantations, describing the labor-intensive cultivation and processing methods.

He vividly depicts the harsh conditions faced by enslaved Africans who worked on the plantations, highlighting the brutality and exploitation that were rampant in the sugar industry.

Trade and Commerce

The Caribbean region was a major hub of trade and commerce. Ligon describes the bustling ports and markets, where goods from Europe, Africa, and the Americas were exchanged.

He provides valuable insights into the trade practices, currencies, and commodities that circulated in the region.

Social Dynamics

"A New Survey of the West Indies" offers a glimpse into the social hierarchy of the Caribbean colonies. Ligon describes the divisions between European colonists, enslaved Africans, and indigenous peoples.

He provides detailed accounts of the social customs, religious practices, and cultural interactions within these diverse communities.

Historical Significance

"A New Survey of the West Indies" has been recognized as a significant historical document for several reasons:

1. **Firsthand Account:** Ligon's firsthand observations provide a vivid and detailed account of the Caribbean region in the 17th century.
2. **Comprehensive Scope:** The survey covers a wide range of topics, from geography and natural resources to plantations, trade, and social dynamics.
3. **Historical Insights:** The work offers valuable insights into the complexities of life in the Caribbean colonies, shedding light on the economic, social, and political realities of the time.
4. **Primary Source:** As a primary source, "A New Survey of the West Indies" provides researchers with firsthand evidence that can be used to reconstruct the history of the Caribbean region.

"A New Survey of the West Indies, 1648" remains an invaluable resource for historians, scholars, and anyone interested in the history of the Caribbean region. Richard Ligon's detailed observations provide a vivid glimpse into the social, economic, and political dynamics of the 17th century Caribbean, offering valuable insights that continue to inform our understanding of this fascinating period.



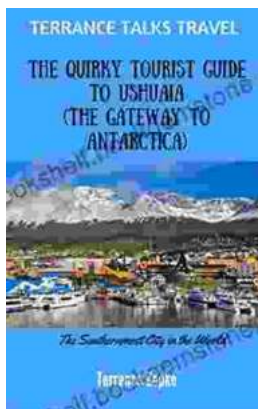
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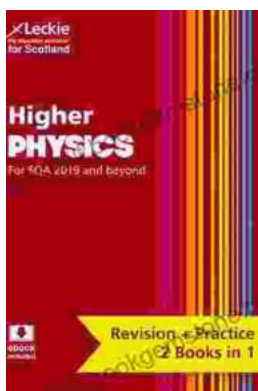
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