A THRILLING AND TRUTHFUL HISTORY OF THE PONY EXPRESS, OR, BLAZING THE WESTWARD WAY; AND OTHER SKETCHES AND INCIDENTS OF THOSE STIRRING TIMES

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A Thrilling and Truthful History of the Pony Express, or, Blazing the Westward Way; And Other Sketches and Incidents of Those Stirring Times by William Lightfoot Visscher

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WILLIAM LIGHTFOOT VISSCHER

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Alexander Majors.

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THE PONY EXPRESS

OR

BLAZING THE WESTWARD WAY

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WILLIAM LIGHTFOOT VISSCHER

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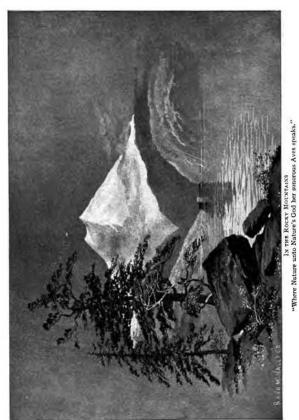
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CONTENTS

			PAGE
CHAPTER	I.	"The Great American Desert"	9
CHAPTER	II.	The Gold Fever	13
CHAPTER	III.	Winning the West	17
CHAPTER	IV.	The Pony Express Succeeds	22
CHAPTER	v.	Off Both Ways	
CHAPTER	VI.	Famous Rides and Riders	38
CHAPTER	VII.	"Pony Bob"—Robert Haslam	44
CHAPTER	VIII.	"Buffalo Bill"—Col. W. F. Cody	49
CHAPTER	IX.	A Little Pawnee	63
CHAPTER	X.	The Telegraph	69
CHAPTER	XI.	An Incident that Changed a Railroad Terminus	71
CHAPTER	XII.	"The Iron Trail"	75
CHAPTER	XIII.	General Sheridan's Way	80
CITADODO	VIV	The Baringing of the Rad	8-



THE WESTWARD TRAIL

Rising, the sun points westward, by the shadows of the trees.

The shadows of the mountains, and of monuments and men,
And westward is the trending from the continents and seas;

From all the earth, within the scope of mortal sight and ken.

From where the murky waters of the dark Missouri flow, And blot the blue of Mississippi's clear and placid tide. Since the dawn of Western Empire, a hundred years ago, Have ridden bands of hardy men, with Progress for their guide.

Amid the forests and along, where to the tawny stream,
Come branches, lazing eastward, across the desert plain,
They rode, and on, twixt castled buttes, to where the mountains gleam,
'Neath helmets of eternal snow, 'mid Nature's rugged reign.

Among the Sioux and Shoshone, and Cheyenne tribes that roamed, The region where the riders bold, undaunted took their way; Along the placid rivers, and where cascades dashed and foamed, They blazed the way of Empire; lit its wider, brighter day.

Over the mountain ranges, and among the crags and peaks;
Adown the streams that turn toward the great Pacific Sea;
Where Nature unto Nature's God her sonorous aves speaks,
Along the canons and the dalles, the forests and the lea.

Highways of steel have stretched along the trail the seekers made; Great mountains have been rent in twain, deep valleys bridged and spanned; As if by magic, cities rose, and arteries of trade Have pulsed the blood of enterprise through all this gloryland.

This gloryland where Nature's mood is wild, and free, and strong.

Where awful rise the mountain kings, where sweep the river queens,
In majesty unspeakable, and where the forest's song,
In high hosanna, rolls above its sea of evergreens.

Now here is high prosperity, and happiness, and health, With life that throbs in cestacy amid the golden gifts; Now the favored land rejoices in blest, God-given wealth, And in thanksgiving, ardently, its grateful voice uplifts.

Then Ho! for the land of plenty, under the western sun!

And Ho! for the land of flowers, land of the vine and tree!

Ho! for the land of grit and gold, the land by heroes won!

Ho! for the land of Fortune's home, along the western sea!

And shout for the flag—"Old Glory!" Shout for its waving bars, Where blaze the crimson tintings of the sunset's lustrous dyes, And gleams the snow of the mountains that reach toward the stars; The bravest flag that ever rose to kiss a nation's skies!

'Twas borne by heroes, valiantly, along the Western Trail,

The young republic's light and pride, "Old Glory," Hail! All hail!

W. L. V.

