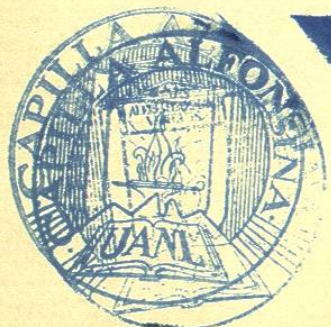


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## SCOPE OF THE WORK.

THE narrative contained in these volumes is personal. It is intended to draw together the more important and interesting parts in the journals of various expeditions made by me in the course of Western exploration, and to give my knowledge of political and military events in which I have myself had part. The principal subjects of which the book will consist, and which, with me, make its *raison d'être*, are three: the geographical explorations, made in the interest of Western expansion; the presidential campaign of 1856, made in the interest of an undivided country; and the civil war, made in the same interest. Connecting these, and naturally growing out of them, will be given enough of the threads of ordinary life to justify the claim of the work to its title of memoirs: purporting to be the history of one life, but being in reality that of three, because in substance the course of my own life was chiefly determined by its contact with the other two—the events recorded having in this way been created, or directly inspired and influenced, by three different minds, each having the same objects for a principal aim.

The published histories of the various explorations have now passed out of date, and are new to the present generation, to which the region between the Mississippi and the Pacific Ocean presents a different face from that to which these accounts relate.

In the present narrative the descriptions of the regions travelled over will be simply of what would then have met a traveller's eye. The prevailing impression on his mind would have been one of constant surprise that so large a portion of the earth's surface should have so long remained unoccupied and unused. Millions of people now occupy the ground where then he encountered only wild animals and wild men. But nothing of this present condition will be given here.

The slight knowledge which a traveller could glean in journeys that were impelled forward by hunger, and thirst, and imminency of dangers, has in this day been perfected and made thoroughly available. The scant



scientific information which was gathered in these travels, and which, as indications or suggestions, had its value at the time, will therefore not have any place in the present narrative. The striking features and general character of the regions traversed, the incidents which made their local coloring, and the hardships belonging to remote and solitary journeys, will be retained, so far as can well be done within the limit of the pages which are intended to embrace narratives covering broad regions of country and half a century of American time. But the emigrants who have since then traversed and changed the face of these regions will doubtless find enough to remind them, and have pleasure in being reminded, of the scenes with which they were once so familiar, and of hardships which they themselves were compelled to face.

Out of these expeditions came the seizure of California in 1846. The third exploring party was merged in a battalion which did its part in wresting that rich territory from Mexico, and the conquest of California will consequently have a prominent place in the narrative of these expeditions.

Concerning the presidential campaign of 1856, in which I was engaged, statements have been made which I wish to correct; and in that of 1864 there were governing facts which have not been made public. These I propose to set out.

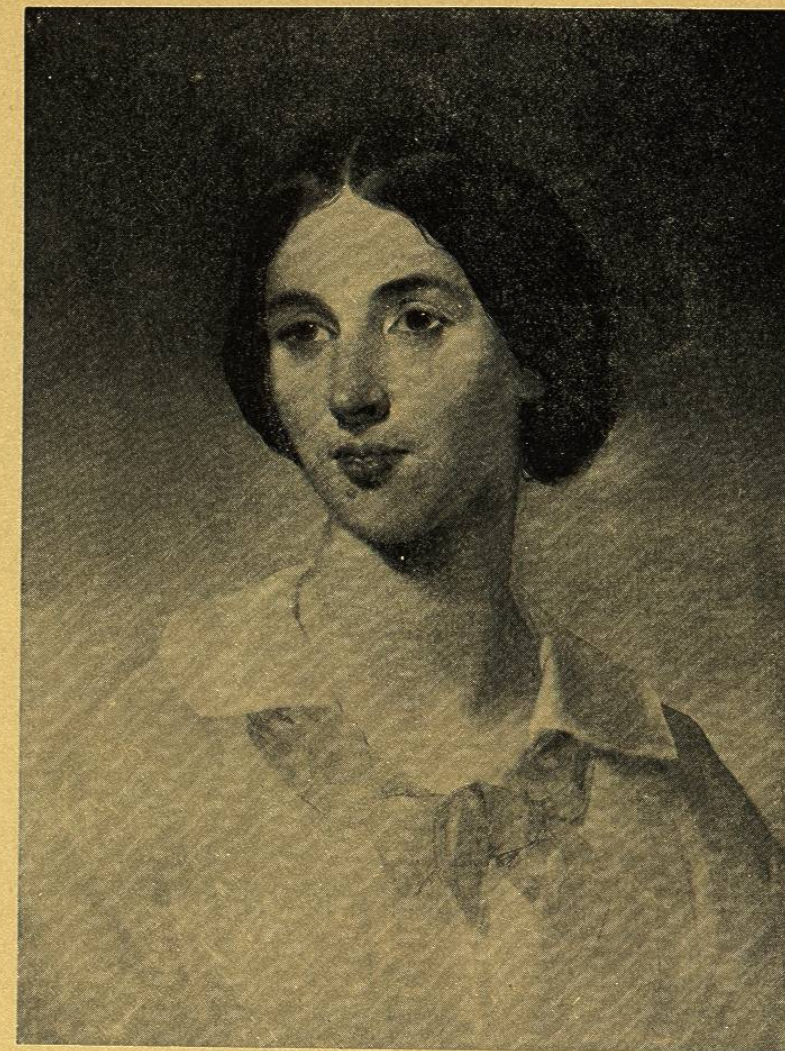
Some events of the civil war in which I was directly concerned have been incorrectly stated, and I am not willing to leave the resulting erroneous impressions to crystallize and harden into the semblance of facts.

These subjects, as I have said, make the chief reason for this work.

The general record is being made up. This is being done from different points of view; and, as this view is sometimes distorted by imperfect or prejudiced knowledge, I naturally wish to use the fitting occasion which offers to make my own record. It is not the written but the published fact which stands, and it stands to hold its ground as fact when it can meet every challenge by the testimony of documentary and recorded evidence.

JOHN C. FRÉMONT.

*Washington, D. C., May, 1886.*



*John C. Frémont*