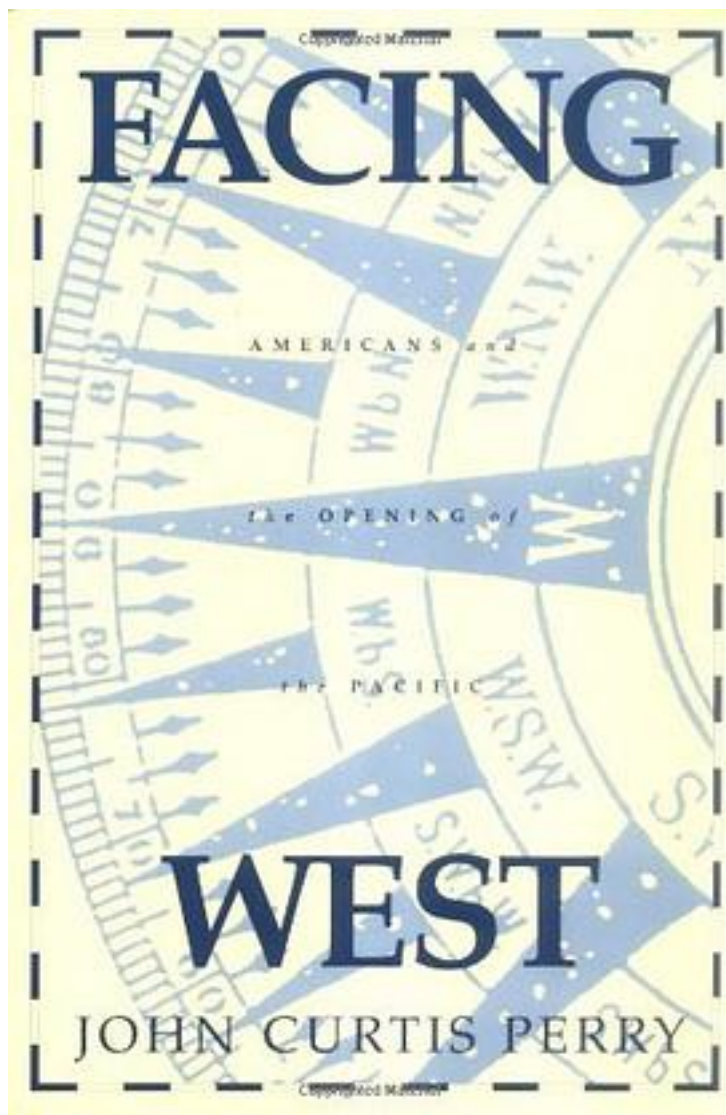


Facing West



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From the early years of the republic, many Americans anticipated a Pacific Age in world affairs that the United States would inevitably dominate, not in a territorial sense so much as in a cultural and commercial one. Despite the reality that Asia was of little real economic importance in American life until recently, a powerful image persisted in the American mind of the promises of riches to be found across the Pacific. This book provides the history of that dream, from the time of Spanish galleons to the hypersonic airplane of the future. With bewildering speed, the North Pacific region has come to rival the North Atlantic as a global center of manufacturing, trade and information, and the generation of wealth. The economic statistics show that the Age of the Pacific has truly arrived. Perry vividly shows that from the early years of the republic many Americans anticipated a Pacific Age in world affairs that the United States would inevitably dominate, not in a territorial sense so much as in a cultural and commercial one. Despite the reality that Asia was of little real economic importance in American life until recently, a powerful image persisted in the American mind of the promise of riches to be found across the Pacific. This book provides the history of that dream, from the time of Spanish galleons to the hypersonic airplane of the future. Countless books have been written about American-East Asian relations, but fewer books have addressed the importance of the Pacific Ocean to the United States. No one before has shown so comprehensively how Americans dominated the creation of trans-Pacific trade routes. This book will be of great interest to professional historians and the general public interested in the history of American-Pacific relations, the history of transportation, and the history of the entrepreneurial doers and dreamers who spearheaded American commerce with Asia.

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