

In August 1898, after several months of intensive work on his autobiography, Clemens decided to write up how he came to publish what he called his first magazine article, about the burning at sea of the clipper ship *Hornet*. At the end of August he told Henry Harper, "I want to write a magazine article of a reminiscent sort. The first magazine article I ever published appeared in Harper's Monthly 31 years ago under the name of (by typographical error) *MacSwain*. Can you send it to me?" (30 Aug 1898, InU-Li). Harper must have sent him tear sheets of "Forty-Three Days in an Open Boat," which had been published in the December 1866 issue of *Harper's* several months before Clemens published his first book, *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County, and Other Sketches*. "Forty-Three Days" was not, of course, Mark Twain's "first magazine article," since he had already published dozens of articles in *The Californian* and in several East Coast journals. But it was the first nonfictional work he had published in so eminent a journal as *Harper's*, and even though it was by no means humorous, it obviously followed upon his decision the previous year, in October 1865, to seriously pursue a literary career (19 and 20 Oct 1865 to OC and MEC, L1, 322–25).

The lengthy manuscript that Clemens wrote in October 1898 is now in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale. His Vienna typist, Marion von Kendler, made a typescript of it (now lost), which Clemens revised and eventually published in the November 1899 issue of the *Century Magazine* (SLC 1899). The *Century* publication made no mention of the autobiography, but the original manuscript shows that Clemens initially regarded the article as part of that work: "This is Chapter XIV of my unfinished Autobiography and the way it is getting along it promises to remain an unfinished one." Before the manuscript was typed he revised "unfinished" to "unpublished" and deleted the words following "Autobiography." In February 1899, when he submitted the revised typescript to *Century* editor Richard Watson Gilder, he claimed he had "abandoned my Autobiography, & am not going to finish it; but I took a reminiscent chapter out of it & had it type-written, thinking it would make a readable magazine article" (25 Feb 1899, CtY-BR). The article, which Clemens subsequently revised again at the request of one of the *Hornet* passengers, was collected in *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg and Other Stories and Essays* (1900) and *My Début as a Literary Person with Other Essays and Stories* (1903). The text that follows here is a critical reconstruction, based on the manuscript and revised as Clemens published it in the *Century*, not as it was reprinted in 1900 and 1903.

In 1906 Clemens considered including the piece in his Autobiographical Dictation of 20 February, noting in pencil on the typescript, "Insert, here my account of the 'Hornet' disaster, published in the 'Century' about 1898 as being a chapter from my Autobiography." For several reasons, that instruction cannot be carried out. But it shows that the piece was among those Clemens considered including in the final form of his autobiography, and it is therefore included in this section of preliminary drafts. Neither Paine nor Neider published this text.

## My Debut as a Literary Person\*

By Mark Twain (formerly "Mike Swain.")

*October 1, 1898.* In those early days I had already published one little thing ("The Jumping Frog,") in an eastern paper, but I did not consider that that counted. In my view, a person who

\*This is Chapter XIV of my unpublished Autobiography.

published things in a mere newspaper could not properly claim recognition as a Literary Person; he must rise away above that; he must appear in a Magazine. He would then be a Literary Person; also he would be famous—right away. These two ambitions were strong upon me. This was in 1866. I prepared my contribution, and then looked around for the best magazine to go up to glory in. I selected Harper's Monthly. The contribution was accepted. I signed it "MARK TWAIN," for that name had some currency on the Pacific Coast, and it was my idea to spread it all over the world, now, at this one jump. The article appeared in the December number, and I sat up a month waiting for the January number—for that one would contain the year's list of contributors, my name would be in it, and I should be famous and could give the banquet I was meditating.

I did not give the banquet. I had not written the "Mark Twain" distinctly; it was a fresh name to Harper's printers, and they put it *Mike Swain* or *MacSwain*, I do not remember which. At any rate I was not celebrated, and I did not give the banquet. I was a Literary Person, but that was all—a buried one; buried alive.

My article was about the burning of the clipper ship *Hornet* on the line, May 3d, 1866. There were thirty-one men on board at the time, and I was in Honolulu when the fifteen lean and ghostly survivors arrived there after a voyage of forty-three days in an open boat through the blazing tropics on *ten days' rations* of food. A very remarkable trip; but it was conducted by a captain who was a remarkable man, otherwise there would have been no survivors. He was a New Englander of the best sea-going stock of the old capable times—Captain Josiah Mitchell.

I was in the Islands to write letters for the weekly edition of the Sacramento *Union*, a rich and influential daily journal which hadn't any use for them, but could afford to spend twenty dollars a week for nothing. The proprietors were lovable and well-beloved men; long ago dead, no doubt, but in me there is at least one person who still holds them in grateful remembrance; for I dearly wanted to see the Islands, and they listened to me and gave me the opportunity when there was but slender likelihood that it could profit them in any way.

I had been in the Islands several months when the survivors arrived. I was laid up in my room at the time, and unable to walk. Here was a great occasion to serve my journal, and I not able to take advantage of it. Necessarily I was in deep trouble. But by good luck his Excellency Anson Burlingame was there at the time, on his way to take up his post in China where he did such good work for the United States. He came and put me on a stretcher and had me carried to the hospital where the shipwrecked men were, and I never needed to ask a question. He attended to all of that himself, and I had nothing to do but make the notes. It was like him to take that trouble. He was a great man, and a great American; and it was in his fine nature to come down from his high office and do a friendly turn whenever he could.

We got through with this work at six in the evening. I took no dinner, for there was no time to spare if I would beat the other correspondents. I spent four hours arranging the notes in their proper order, then wrote all night and beyond it; with this result: that I had a very long and detailed account of the *Hornet* episode ready at nine in the morning, while the correspondents of the San Francisco journals had nothing but a brief outline report—for they didn't sit up. The now-and-then schooner was to sail for San Francisco about nine; when I reached the

dock she was free forward and was just casting off her stern-line. My fat envelop was thrown by a strong hand, and fell on board all right, and my victory was a safe thing. All in due time the ship reached San Francisco, but it was my complete report which made the stir and was telegraphed to the New York papers. By Mr. Cash; he was in charge of the Pacific bureau of the New York *Herald* at the time.

When I returned to California by and by, I went up to Sacramento and presented a bill for general correspondence, at twenty dollars a week. It was paid. Then I presented a bill for “special” service on the *Hornet* matter for three columns of solid nonpareil at a *hundred dollars a column*. The cashier didn’t faint, but he came rather near it. He sent for the proprietors, and they came and never uttered a protest. They only laughed, in their jolly fashion, and said it was robbery, but no matter, it was a grand “scoop” (the bill or my *Hornet* report I didn’t know which); “pay it; it’s all right.” The best men that ever owned a newspaper.

The *Hornet* survivors reached the Sandwich Islands the 15th of June. They were mere skinny skeletons; their clothes hung limp about them and fitted them no better than a flag fits the flagstaff in a calm. But they were well nursed in the hospital; the people of Honolulu kept them supplied with all the dainties they could need; they gathered strength fast, and were presently nearly as good as new. Within a fortnight the most of them took ship for San Francisco. That is, if my dates have not gone astray in my memory. I went in the same ship, a sailing vessel. Captain Mitchell of the *Hornet* was along; also the only passengers the *Hornet* had carried. These were two young gentlemen from Stamford, Connecticut—brothers: Samuel Ferguson, aged twenty-eight, a graduate of Trinity College, Hartford, and Henry Ferguson, aged eighteen, a student of the same college, and now at this present writing a professor there, a post which he has held for many years. He is fifty years old, this year—1898. Samuel had been wasting away with consumption for some years, and the long voyage around the Horn had been advised as offering a last hope for him. The *Hornet* was a clipper of the first class and a fast sailer; the young men’s quarters were roomy and comfortable, and were well stocked with books, and also with canned meats and fruits to help out the ship fare with; and when the ship cleared from New York harbor in the first week of January there was promise that she would make quick and pleasant work of the fourteen or fifteen thousand miles in front of her. As soon as the cold latitudes were left behind and the vessel entered summer weather, the voyage became a holiday picnic. The ship flew southward under a cloud of sail which needed no attention, no modifying or change of any kind for days together; the young men read, strolled the ample deck, rested and drowsed in the shade of the canvas, took their meals with the captain; and when the day was done they played dummy whist with him till bedtime. After the snow and ice and tempests of the Horn the ship bowled northward into summer weather again and the trip was a picnic once more.

Until the early morning of the 3d of May. Computed position of the ship, 112° 10' west longitude; latitude, two degrees above the equator; no wind, no sea—dead calm; temperature of the atmosphere, tropical, blistering, unimaginable by one who has not been roasted in it. There was a cry of fire. An unfaithful sailor had disobeyed the rules and gone into the booby-hatch with an open light, to draw some varnish from a cask. The proper result followed, and the vessel’s hours were numbered.

There was not much time to spare, but the captain made the most of it. The three boats

were launched—long-boat and two quarter-boats. That the time was very short and the hurry and excitement considerable is indicated by the fact that in launching the boats a hole was stove in the side of one of them by some sort of a collision, and an oar driven through the side of another. The captain's first care was to have four sick sailors brought up and placed on deck out of harm's way—among them a "Portyghee." This man had not done a day's work on the voyage, but had lain in his hammock four months nursing an abscess. When we were taking notes in the Honolulu hospital and a sailor told this to Mr. Burlingame, the third mate, who was lying near, raised his head with an effort, and in a weak voice made this correction—with solemnity and feeling—

"*Raising* abscesses; he had a family of them. He done it to keep from standing his watch."

Any provisions that lay handy were gathered up by the men and the two passengers and brought and dumped on the deck where the "Portyghee" lay, then they ran for more. The sailor who was telling this to Mr. Burlingame, added—

"We pulled together thirty-two days' rations for the thirty-one men that way."

The third mate lifted his head again and made another correction—with bitterness:

"The Portyghee et twenty-two of them while he was soldiering there and nobody noticing. A damned hound."

The fire spread with great rapidity. The smoke and flame drove the men back, and they had to stop their incomplete work of fetching provisions, and take to the boats, with only ten days' rations secured.

Each boat had a compass, a quadrant, a copy of Bowditch's Navigator, and a Nautical Almanac, and the captain's and chief mate's boats had chronometers. There were thirty-one men, all told. The captain took an account of stock, with the following result: four hams, nearly thirty pounds of salt pork, half-box of raisins, one hundred pounds of bread, twelve two-pound cans of oysters, clams, and assorted meats, a keg containing four pounds of butter, twelve gallons of water in a forty-gallon "scuttle-butt," four one-gallon demijohns full of water, three bottles of brandy (the property of passengers), some pipes, matches, and a hundred pounds of tobacco. No medicines. Of course the whole party had to go on short rations at once.

The captain and the two passengers kept diaries; on our voyage to San Francisco we ran into a calm in the middle of the Pacific and did not move a rod during fourteen days; this gave me a chance to copy the diaries. Samuel Ferguson's is the fullest; I will draw upon it, now. When the following paragraph was written the ship was about one hundred and twenty days out from port, and all hands were putting in the lazy time about as usual, and no one was forecasting disaster:

*May 2.* Latitude 1° 28' N.; longitude 111° 38' W. Another hot and sluggish day; at one time, however, the clouds promised wind, and there came a slight breeze—just enough to keep us going. The only thing to chronicle to-day is the quantities of fish about: nine bonitas were caught this forenoon, and some large albacores seen. After dinner the first mate hooked a fellow which he could not hold, so he let the line go to the captain, who was on the bow. He, holding on, brought the fish to with a jerk, and snap went the line, hook and all. We also saw astern, swimming lazily after us, an enormous shark, which must have been nine or ten feet long. We tried him with all sorts of lines and a piece of

pork, but he declined to take hold. I suppose he had appeased his appetite on the heads and other remains of the bonitas we had thrown overboard.

Next day's entry records the disaster. The three boats got away, retired to a short distance, and stopped. The two injured ones were leaking badly; some of the men were kept busy bailing, others patched the holes as well as they could. The captain, the two passengers and eleven men were in the long-boat, with a share of the provisions and water, and with no room to spare, for the boat was only twenty-one feet long, six wide and three deep. The chief mate and eight men were in one of the smaller boats, the second mate and seven men in the other. The passengers had saved no clothing but what they had on, excepting their overcoats. The ship, clothed in flame and sending up a vast column of black smoke into the sky, made a grand picture in the solitudes of the sea, and hour after hour the outcasts sat and watched it. Meantime the captain ciphered on the immensity of the distance that stretched between him and the nearest available land, and then scaled the rations down to meet the emergency: half a biscuit for breakfast; one biscuit and some canned meat for dinner; half a biscuit for tea; a few swallows of water for each meal. And so hunger began to gnaw while the ship was still burning.

*May 4.* The ship burned all night very brightly; and hopes are that some ship has seen the light, and is bearing down upon us. None seen, however, this forenoon; so we have determined to go together north and a little west to some islands in 18° to 19° N. latitude, and 114° to 115° W. longitude, hoping in the meantime to be picked up by some ship. The ship sank suddenly at about 5 A.M. We find the sun very hot and scorching; but all try to keep out of it as much as we can.

They did a quite natural thing, now; waited several hours for that possible ship that might have seen the light to work her slow way to them through the nearly dead calm. Then they gave it up and set about their plans. If you will look at the map you will say that their course could be easily decided. Albemarle island (Galapagos group) lies straight eastward, nearly a thousand miles; the islands referred to in the diary indefinitely as "some islands" (Revillagigedo islands,) lie, as they think, in some widely uncertain region northward about one thousand miles and westward one hundred or one hundred and fifty miles; Acapulco on the Mexican coast lies about northeast something short of one thousand miles. You will say, random rocks in the ocean are not what is wanted; let them strike for Acapulco and the solid continent. That does look like the rational course, but one presently guesses from the diaries that the thing would have been wholly irrational—indeed, suicidal. If the boats struck for Albemarle, they would be in the "doldrums" all the way—and that means a watery perdition, with winds which are wholly crazy, and blow from all points of the compass at once and also perpendicularly. If the boats tried for Acapulco they would get out of the "doldrums" when half way there—in case they ever got half way—and then they would be in lamentable case, for there they would meet the northeast trades coming down in their teeth; and these boats were so rigged that they could not sail within eight points of the wind. So they wisely started northward, with a slight slant to the west. They had but ten days' short allowance of food; the long-boat was towing the others; they could not depend on making any sort of definite progress in the doldrums, and

they had four or five hundred miles of doldrums in front of them, yet. *They* are the real equator, a tossing, roaring, rainy belt ten or twelve hundred miles broad which girdles the globe.

It rained hard the first night and all got drenched, but they filled up their water-butt. The brothers were in the stern with the captain, who steered. The quarters were cramped; no one got much sleep. "Kept on our course till squalls headed us off."

Stormy and squally the next morning, with drenching rains. A heavy and dangerous "cobbling" sea. One marvels how such boats could live in it. It is called a feat of desperate daring when one man and a dog cross the Atlantic in a boat the size of a long-boat, and indeed it is; but this long-boat was overloaded with men and other plunder, and was only three feet deep. "We naturally thought often of all at home, and were glad to remember that it was Sacrament Sunday, and that prayers would go up from our friends for us, although they know not our peril."

The captain got not even a cat-nap during the first three days and nights, but he got a few winks of sleep the fourth night. "The worst sea yet." About ten at night the captain changed his course and headed east-northeast, hoping to make "Clipperton Rock." If he failed, no matter, he would be in a better position to make those other islands. I will mention, here, that he did not find that Rock.

On the 8th of May no wind all day—sun blistering hot. They take to the oars. Plenty of dolphins, but they couldn't catch any. "I think we are all beginning to realize more and more the awful situation we are in." "It often takes a ship a week to get through the doldrums—how much longer, then, such a craft as ours." "We are so crowded that we cannot stretch ourselves out for a good sleep, but have to take it any way we can get it."

Of course this feature will grow more and more trying, but it will be human nature to cease to set it down; there will be five weeks of it, yet—we must try to remember that for the diarist, it will make our beds the softer.

The 9th of May the sun gives him a warning: "looking with both eyes, the horizon crossed thus X." "Henry keeps well, but broods over our troubles more than I wish he did." They caught two dolphins—they tasted well. "The captain believed the compass out of the way, but the long-invisible North Star came out—a welcome sight—and indorsed the compass."

May 10, latitude 7° 0' 3" N.; longitude 111° 32' W. So they have made about three hundred miles of northing in the six days since they left the region of the lost ship. "Drifting in calms all day." And baking hot, of course; I have been down there, and I remember that detail. "Even as the captain says, all romance has long since vanished, and I think the most of us are beginning to look the fact of our awful situation full in the face." "We are making but little headway on our course." Bad news from the rearmost boat; the men are improvident; "they have eaten up all of the canned meats brought from the ship, and are now growing discontented." Not so with the chief mate's people—they are evidently under the eye of a *man*.

Under date of May 11: "Standing still! or worse; we lost more last night than we made yesterday." In fact, they have lost three miles of the three hundred of northing they had so laboriously made. "The cock that was rescued and pitched into the boat while the ship was on fire still lives, and crows with the breaking of dawn, cheering us a good deal." What has he been living on for a week? Did the starving men feed him from their dire poverty? "The second mate's boat out of water again, showing that they overdrink their allowance. The

captain spoke pretty sharply to them.” It is true; I have the remark in my old note-book; I got it of the third mate, in the hospital at Honolulu. But there is not room for it here, and it is too combustible, anyway. Besides, the third mate admired it, and what he admired he was likely to enhance.

They were still watching hopefully for ships. The captain was a thoughtful man, and probably did not disclose to them that that was substantially a waste of time. “In this latitude the horizon is filled with little upright clouds that look very much like ships.” Mr. Ferguson saved three bottles of brandy from his private stores when he left the ship, and the liquor came good in these days. “The captain serves out two table-spoonsful of brandy and water—half and half—to our crew.” He means the watch that is on duty; they stood regular watches—four hours on and four off. The chief mate was an excellent officer,—a self-possessed, resolute, fine all-around man. The diarist makes the following note—there is character in it: “I offered one bottle of the brandy to the chief mate, but he declined, saying he could keep the after-boat quiet, and we had not enough for all.”

*Henry Ferguson’s diary to date, given in full:—May 4, 5, 6. Doldrums. May 7, 8, 9. Doldrums. May 10, 11, 12. Doldrums:—Tells it all. Never saw, never felt, never heard, never experienced such heat, such darkness, such lightning and thunder, and wind and rain, in my life before.*

That boy’s diary is of the economical sort that a person might properly be expected to keep in such circumstances—and be forgiven for the economy, too. His brother, perishing of consumption, hunger, thirst, blazing heat, drowning rains, loss of sleep, lack of exercise, was persistently faithful and circumstantial with his diary from the first day to the last—an instance of noteworthy fidelity and resolution. In spite of the tossing and plunging boat he wrote it close and fine in a hand as easy to read as print.

They can’t seem to get north of 7° N. They are still there the next day:

*May 12. A good rain last night and we caught a good deal, though not enough to fill up our tank, pails, etc. Our object is to get out of these doldrums, but it seems as if we cannot do it. To-day we have had it very variable, and hope we are on the northern edge, though we are not much above 7°. This morning we all thought we had made out a sail; but it was one of those deceiving clouds. Rained a good deal to-day, making all hands wet and uncomfortable; we filled up pretty nearly all our water-pots, however. I hope we may have a fine night, for the captain certainly wants rest, and while there is any danger of squalls, or danger of any kind, he is always on hand. I never would have believed that open boats such as ours, with their loads, could live in some of the seas we have had.*

During the night, 12–13th, “the cry of *A ship!* brought us to our feet.” It seemed to be the glimmer of a vessel’s signal lantern rising out of the curve of the sea. There was a season of breathless hope while they stood watching, with their hands shading their eyes, and their hearts in their throats—then the promise failed; the light was a rising star. It is a long time ago—thirty-two years—and it doesn’t matter now, yet one is sorry for their disappointment. “Thought often of those at home to-day, and of the disappointment they will feel next Sunday

at not hearing from us by telegraph from San Francisco." It will be many weeks, yet, before the telegram is received, and it will come as a thunder-clap of joy then, and with the seeming of a miracle, for it will raise from the grave men mourned as dead. "To-day our rations were reduced to a quarter of a biscuit a meal, with about half a pint of water." This is on the 13th of May, with more than a month of voyaging in front of them yet! However, as they do not know that, "we are all feeling pretty cheerful."

In the afternoon of the 14th there was a thunder-storm "which toward night seemed to close in around us on every side, making it very dark and squally." "Our situation is becoming more and more desperate," for they were making very little nothings, "and every day diminishes our small stock of provisions." They realize that the boats must soon separate, and each fight for its own life. Towing the quarter-boats is a hindering business.

That night and next day, light and baffling winds and but little progress. Hard to bear—that persistent standing still, and the food wasting away. "Everything in a perfect sop; and all so cramped, and no change of clothes." Soon the sun comes out and roasts them. "Joe caught another dolphin to-day; in his maw we found a flying-fish and two skipjacks." There is an event, now, which rouses an enthusiasm of hope: a land-bird arrives! It rests on the yard for a while, and they can look at it all they like, and envy it, and thank it for its message. As a subject for talk it is beyond price—a fresh new topic for tongues tired to death of talking upon a single theme: shall we ever see the land again; and when? Is the bird from Clipperton Rock? They hope so; and they take heart of grace to believe so. As it turned out, the bird had no message; it merely came to mock.

May 16th, "the cock still lives, and daily carols forth His praise." It will be a rainy night, "but I do not care, if we can fill up our water-butts."

On the 17th one of those majestic spectres of the deep, a water-spout, stalked by them, and they trembled for their lives. Young Henry set it down in his scanty journal, with the judicious comment that "it might have been a fine sight from a ship."

From Captain Mitchell's log for this day: "*Only half a bushel of bread-crumbs left.*" (And a month to wander the seas yet.)

It rained all night and all day; everybody uncomfortable. Now came a sword-fish chasing a bonita, and the poor thing, seeking help and friends, took refuge under the rudder. The big sword-fish kept hovering around, scaring everybody badly. The men's mouths watered for him, for he would have made a whole banquet; but no one dared to touch him, of course, for he would sink a boat promptly if molested. Providence protected the poor bonita from the cruel sword-fish. This was just and right. Providence next befriended the shipwrecked sailors: they got the bonita. This was also just and right. But in the distribution of mercies the sword-fish himself got overlooked. He now went away; to muse over these subtleties, probably. "The men in all the boats seem pretty well; the feeblest of the sick ones (not able for a long time to stand his watch on board the ship) is wonderfully recovered." This is the third mate's detested "Portygee" that raised the family of abscesses.

Passed a most awful night. Rained hard nearly all the time, and blew in squalls, accompanied by terrific thunder and lightning, from all points of the compass.—*Henry's Log.*

Most awful night I ever witnessed.—*Captain's Log.*

Latitude, May 18, 11° 11'. So they have averaged but forty miles of northing a day during the fortnight. Further talk of separating. "Too bad, but it must be done for the safety of the whole." "At first I never dreamed; but now hardly shut my eyes for a cat-nap without conjuring up something or other—to be accounted for by weakness, I suppose." But for their disaster they think they would be arriving in San Francisco about this time. "I should have liked to send B—the telegram for her birthday." This was a young sister.

On the 19th the captain called up the quarter-boats and said one would have to go off on its own hook. The long-boat could no longer tow both of them. The second mate refused to go, but the chief mate was ready; in fact he was always ready when there was a man's work to the fore. He took the second mate's boat; six of its crew elected to remain, and two of his own crew came with him, (nine in the boat, now, including himself.) He sailed away, and toward sunset passed out of sight. The diarist was sorry to see him go. It was natural; one could have better spared the Portyghee. After thirty-two years I find my prejudice against this Portyghee reviving. His very looks have long ago passed out of my memory; but no matter, I am coming to hate him as religiously as ever. "Water will now be a scarce article; for as we get out of the doldrums we shall get showers only now and then in the trades. This life is telling severely on my strength. Henry holds out first-rate." Henry did not start well, but under hardships he improved straight along.

Latitude, Sunday, May 20, 12° 0' 9". They ought to be well out of the doldrums, now, but they are not. No breeze—the longed-for trades still missing. They are still anxiously watching for a sail, but they have only "visions of ships that come to naught—the shadow without the substance." The second mate catches a booby this afternoon, a bird which consists mainly of feathers; but "as they have no other meat it will go well."

May 21, they strike the trades at last! The second mate catches three more boobies, and gives the long-boat one. Dinner, "half a can of mince-meat divided up and served around, which strengthened us somewhat." They have to keep a man bailing all the time; the hole knocked in the boat when she was launched from the burning ship was never efficiently mended. "Heading about northwest, now." They hope they have easting enough to make some of those indefinite isles. Failing that, they think they will be in a better position to be picked up. It was an infinitely slender chance, but the captain probably refrained from mentioning that.

The next day is to be an eventful one.

*May 22.* Last night wind headed us off, so that part of the time we had to steer east-southeast, and then west-northwest, and so on. This morning we were all startled by a cry of "*Sail ho!*" Sure enough, we could see it! And for a time we cut adrift from the second mate's boat, and steered so as to attract its attention. This was about half past 5 A.M. After sailing in a state of high excitement for almost twenty minutes we made it out to be the chief mate's boat. Of course we were glad to see them and have them report all well; but still it was a bitter disappointment to us all. Now that we are in the trades it seems impossible to make northing enough to strike the isles. We have determined to do the best we

can, and get in the route of vessels. Such being the determination it became necessary to cast off the other boat, which, after a good deal of unpleasantness, was done, we again dividing water and stores, and taking Cox into our boat. This makes our number fifteen. The second mate's crew wanted to all get in with us and cast the other boat adrift. It was a very painful separation.

So those isles that they have struggled for so long and so hopefully, have to be given up. What with lying birds that come to mock, and isles that are but a dream, and "visions of ships that come to naught," it is a pathetic time they are having, with much heartbreak in it. It was odd that the vanished boat, three days lost to sight in that vast solitude, should appear again. But it brought Cox—we can't be certain why. But if it hadn't, the diarist would never have seen the land again.

*May 23.* Our chances as we go west increase in regard to being picked up, but each day our scanty fare is so much reduced. Without the fish, turtle, and birds sent us, I do not know how we should have got along. The other day I offered to read prayers morning and evening for the captain, and last night commenced. The men, although of various nationalities and religions, are very attentive, and always uncovered. May God grant my weak endeavor its issue!

Latitude, May 24, 14° 18' N. Five oysters apiece for dinner and three spoonful of juice, a gill of water and a piece of biscuit the size of a silver dollar. "We are plainly getting weaker—God have mercy upon us all!" That night heavy seas break over the weather side and make everybody wet and uncomfortable, besides requiring constant bailing.

Next day, "nothing particular happened." Perhaps some of us would have regarded it differently. "Passed a spar, but not near enough to see what it was." They saw some whales blow; there were flying-fish skimming the seas, but none came aboard. Misty weather, with fine rain, very penetrating.

Latitude, May 26, 15° 50'. They caught a flying-fish and a booby, but had to eat them raw. "The men grow weaker, and, I think, despondent; they say very little, though." And so, to all the other imaginable and unimaginable horrors, silence is added! The muteness and brooding of coming despair. "It seems our best chance to get in the track of ships, with the hope that some one will run near enough our speck to see it." He hopes the other boats stood west and have been picked up. [They will never be heard of again in this world.]

*Sunday, May 27.* Latitude 16° 0' 5"; longitude, by chronometer, 117° 22'. Our fourth Sunday! When we left the ship we reckoned on having about ten days' supplies, and now we hope to be able, by rigid economy, to make them last another week if possible.\* Last night the sea was comparatively quiet, but the wind headed us off to about west-northwest, which has been about our course all day to-day. Another flying-fish came aboard last night, and one more to-day—both small ones. No birds. A booby is a great catch, and a good large one makes a small dinner for the fifteen of us—that is of course, as dinners go in the

\*There are nineteen days of voyaging ahead yet.—M. T.

*Hornet's* long-boat. Tried this morning to read the full service to myself with the communion, but found it too much; am too weak, and get sleepy, and cannot give strict attention; so I put off half till this afternoon. I trust God will hear the prayers gone up for us at home to-day, and graciously answer them by sending us succor and help in this our season of deep distress.

The next day was “a good day for seeing a ship.” But none was seen. The diarist “still feels pretty well” though very weak; his brother Henry “bears up and keeps his strength the best of any on board.” “I do not feel despondent at all, for I fully trust that the Almighty will hear our and the home prayers, and He who suffers not a sparrow to fall sees and cares for us, His creatures.”

Considering the situation and the circumstances, the record for next day—May 29—is one which has a surprise in it for those dull people who think that nothing but medicines and doctors can cure the sick. A little starvation can really do more for the average sick man than can the best medicines and the best doctors. I do not mean a restricted diet, I mean *total abstinence from food for one or two days*. I speak from experience; starvation has been my cold and fever doctor for fifteen years, and has accomplished a cure in all instances. The third mate told me in Honolulu that the “Portygee” had lain in his hammock for months, raising his family of abscesses and feeding like a cannibal. We have seen that in spite of dreadful weather, deprivation of sleep, scorching, drenching, and all manner of miseries, thirteen days of starvation “wonderfully recovered” him. There were four sailors down sick when the ship was burned. Twenty-five days of pitiless starvation have followed, and now we have this curious record: “*All the men are hearty and strong; even the ones that were down sick are well; except poor Peter.*” When I wrote an article some months ago urging temporary abstinence from food as a remedy for an inactive appetite, and for disease, I was accused of jesting, but I was in earnest. “*We are all wonderfully well and strong, comparatively speaking.*” On this day the starvation-regime drew its belt a couple of buckle-holes tighter: the bread-ration was reduced from the usual piece of cracker the size of a silver dollar *to the half of that, and one meal was abolished from the daily three*. This will weaken the men physically, but if there are any diseases of an ordinary sort left in them they will disappear.

Two quarts bread-crumbs left, one-third of a ham, three small cans of oysters, and twenty gallons of water.—*Captain's Log*.

The hopeful tone of the diaries is persistent. It is remarkable. Look at the map and see where the boat is: latitude 16° 44', longitude 119° 20'. It is more than two hundred miles west of the Revillagigedo islands—so they are quite out of the question against the trades, rigged as this boat is. The nearest land available for such a boat is the “American Group,” *six hundred and fifty miles away*, westward—still, there is no note of surrender, none even of discouragement! Yet—May 30—“we have now left: *one can of oysters; three pounds of raisins; one can of soup; one-third of a ham; three pints of biscuit-crumbs.*” And fifteen starved men to live on it while they creep and crawl six hundred and fifty miles. “Somehow I feel much encouraged by this change of course (west by north) which we have made to-day.” Six hundred and fifty miles on a hatful of provisions. Let us be thankful, even after thirty-two years, that they are mercifully

ignorant of the fact that it isn't six hundred and fifty that they must creep on the hatful, but *twenty-two hundred!*

Isn't the situation romantic enough, just as it stands? No. Providence added a startling detail: pulling an oar in that boat, for common-seaman's wages, was a *banished duke*—Danish. We hear no more of him; just that mention; that is all, with the simple remark added that "he is one of our best men"—a high enough compliment for a duke or any other man in those manhood-testing circumstances. With that little glimpse of him at his oar, and that fine word of praise, he vanishes out of our knowledge for all time. For all time, unless he should chance upon this note and reveal himself.

The last day of May is come. And now there is a disaster to report: think of it, reflect upon it, and try to understand how much it means, when you sit down with your family and pass your eye over your breakfast table. Yesterday there were three pints of bread-crumbs; this morning the little bag is found open and *some of the crumbs missing*. "We dislike to suspect any one of such a rascally act, but there is no question that this grave crime has been committed. Two days will certainly finish the remaining morsels. God grant us strength to reach the American Group!" The third mate told me in Honolulu that in these days the men remembered with bitterness that the "Portygree" had devoured twenty-two days' rations while he lay waiting to be transferred from the burning ship, and that now they cursed him and swore an oath that if it came to cannibalism he should be the first to suffer for the rest.

The captain has lost his glasses, and therefore he cannot read our pocket-prayerbooks as much as I think he would like, though he is not familiar with them.

Further of the captain: "He is a good man, and has been most kind to us—almost fatherly. He says that if he had been offered the command of the ship sooner he should have brought his two daughters with him." It makes one shudder yet, to think how narrow an escape it was.

The two meals (rations) a day are as follows: fourteen raisins and a piece of cracker the size of a cent, for tea; a gill of water, and a piece of ham and a piece of bread, each the size of a cent, for breakfast.—*Captain's Log*.

He means a cent in *thickness* as well as in circumference. Samuel Ferguson's diary says the ham was shaved "about as thin as it could be cut."

*June 1.* Last night and to-day sea very high and cobbling, breaking over and making us all wet and cold. Weather squally, and there is no doubt that only careful management—with God's protecting care—preserved us through both the night and the day; and really it is most marvelous how every morsel that passes our lips is blessed to us. It makes me think daily of the miracle of the loaves and fishes. Henry keeps up wonderfully, which is a great consolation to me. I somehow have great confidence, and hope that our afflictions will soon be ended, though we are running rapidly across the track of both outward and inward bound vessels, and away from them; our chief hope is a whaler, man-of-war, or some Australian ship. The isles we are steering for are put down in Bowditch, but on my map are said to be doubtful. God grant they may be there!

Hardest day yet.—*Captain's Log.*

*Doubtful.* It was worse than that. A week later *they sailed straight over them.*

*June 2.* Latitude 18° 9'. Squally, cloudy, a heavy sea. \* \* \* I cannot help thinking of the cheerful and comfortable time we had aboard the *Hornet*.

Two days' scanty supplies left—ten rations of water apiece and a little morsel of bread. *But the sun shines, and God is merciful.*—*Captain's Log.*

*Sunday, June 3.* Latitude 17° 54'. Heavy sea all night, and from 4 A. M. very wet, the sea breaking over us in frequent sluices, and soaking everything aft, particularly. All day the sea has been very high, and it is a wonder that we are not swamped. Heaven grant that it may go down this evening! Our suspense and condition are getting terrible. I managed this morning to crawl, more than step, to the forward end of the boat, and was surprised to find I was so weak, especially in the legs and knees. The sun has been out again, and I have dried some things, and hope for a better night.

*June 4.* Latitude 17° 6'; longitude 131° 30'. Shipped hardly any seas last night, and to-day the sea has gone down somewhat, although it is still too high for comfort, as we have an occasional reminder that water is wet. The sun has been out all day, and so we have had a good drying. I have been trying for the past ten or twelve days to get a pair of drawers dry enough to put on, and to-day at last succeeded. I mention this to show the state in which we have lived. If our chronometer is anywhere near right, we ought to see the American Isles to-morrow or next day. If they are not there, we have only the chance, for a few days, of a stray ship, for we cannot eke out the provisions more than five or six days longer, and our strength is failing very fast. I was much surprised to-day to note how my legs have wasted away above my knees; they are hardly thicker than my upper arm used to be. Still I trust in God's infinite mercy, and feel sure He will do what is best for us. To survive, as we have done, thirty-two days in an open boat, with only about ten days' fair provisions for thirty-one men in the first place, and these twice divided subsequently, is more than mere unassisted *human* art and strength could have accomplished or endured.

Bread and raisins all gone.—*Captain's Log.*

Men growing dreadfully discontented, and awful grumbling and unpleasant talk is arising. God save us from all strife of men; and if we must die now, take us himself and not embitter our bitter death still more.—*Henry's Log.*

*June 5.* Quiet night and pretty comfortable day, though our sail and block show signs of failing, and need taking down—which latter is something of a job, as it requires the climbing of the mast. We also had bad news from forward, there being discontent and some threatening complaints of unfair allowances, etc., all as unreasonable as foolish; still these things bid us be on our guard. I am getting miserably weak, but try to keep up the best I can. If we cannot find those isles we can only try to make northwest and get in the track of Sandwich Island bound vessels, living as best we can in the meantime. To-day we changed to *one* meal, and that at about noon, with a small ration of water at 8 or 9 A. M., another at 12 M., and a third at 5 or 6 P. M.

Nothing left but a little piece of ham and a gill of water, all round.—*Captain's Log.*

They are down to one meal a day, now—such as it is—and *fifteen hundred miles to crawl yet!* And now the horrors deepen. There is talk of murder. And not only that, but worse than that—cannibalism. Now we seem to see why that curious accident happened, so long ago: I mean, Cox's return, after he had been far away and out of sight several days in the chief mate's boat. If he had not come back the captain and the two young passengers would have been slain, now, by these sailors who have become maniacs through their sufferings.

*Note secretly passed by Henry to his brother:*

"Cox told me last night there is getting to be a good deal of ugly talk among the men against the captain and us aft. Harry, Jack, and Fred especially. They say that the captain is the cause of all—that he did not try to save the ship at all, nor to get provisions, and even would not let the men put in some they had, and that partiality is shown us in apportioning our rations aft. Jack asked Cox the other day if he would starve first or eat human flesh. Cox answered he would starve. Jack then told him it would be only killing himself. If we do not find these islands we would do well to prepare for anything. Harry is the loudest of all."

*Reply.*—"We can depend on Charley, I think, and Thomas, and Cox, can we not?"

*Second Note.*—"I guess so, and very likely on Peter—but there is no telling. Charley and Cox are certain. There is nothing definite said or hinted as yet, as I understand Cox; but starving men are the same as maniacs. It would be well to keep a watch on your pistol, so as to have it and the cartridges safe from theft."

*Henry's Log, June 5.* "Dreadful forebodings. God spare us from all such horrors! Some of the men getting to talk a good deal. Nothing to write down. Heart very sad."

*Henry's Log, June 6.* "Passed some sea-weed, and something that looked like the trunk of an old tree, but no birds; beginning to be afraid islands not there. To-day it was said to the captain, in the hearing of all, that some of the men would not shrink, when a man was dead, from using the flesh, though they would not kill. Horrible! God give us all full use of our reason, and spare us from such things! 'From plague, pestilence, and famine, from battle and murder—and from sudden death: Good Lord deliver us!'"

*June 6.* Latitude 16° 30'; longitude (chron.) 134°. Dry night, and wind steady enough to require no change in sail; but this A.M. an attempt to lower it proved abortive. First, the third mate tried and got up to the block, and fastened a temporary arrangement to reeve the halyards through, but had to come down, weak and almost fainting, before finishing; then Joe tried, and after twice ascending, fixed it and brought down the block; but it was very exhausting work, and afterward he was good for nothing all day. The clew-iron which we are trying to make serve for the broken block works, however, very indifferently, and will, I am afraid, soon cut the rope. It is very necessary to get everything connected with the sail in good, easy running order before we get too weak to do anything with it.

Only three meals left.—*Captain's Log.*

*June 7.* Latitude 16° 35' N.; longitude 136° 30' W. Night wet and uncomfortable. To-day shows us pretty conclusively that the American Isles are not here, though we have had some signs that looked like them. At noon we decided to abandon looking any further for them, and to-night haul a little more northerly, so as to get in the way of Sandwich Island vessels, which, fortunately, come down pretty well this way—say to latitude 19° to

20° to get the benefit of the trade-winds. Of course all the westing we have made is gain, and I hope the chronometer is wrong in our favor, for I do not see how any such delicate instrument can keep good time with the constant jarring and thumping we get from the sea. With the strong trade we have, I hope that a week from Sunday will put us in sight of the Sandwich Islands, if we are not saved before that time by being picked up.

It is twelve hundred miles to the Sandwich Islands; the provisions are virtually exhausted, but not the perishing diarist's pluck.

*June 8.* My cough troubled me a good deal last night, and therefore I got hardly any sleep at all. Still I make out pretty well, and should not complain. Yesterday the third mate mended the block, and this P.M. the sail, after some difficulty, was got down, and Harry got to the top of the mast and rove the halyards through after some hardship, so that it now works easy and well. This getting up the mast is no easy matter at any time with the sea we have, and is very exhausting in our present state. We could only reward Harry by an extra ration of water. We have made good time and course to-day. Heading her up, however, makes the boat ship seas, and keeps us all wet; however, it cannot be helped. Writing is a rather precarious thing these times. Our meal to-day for the fifteen consists of half a can of "soup-and-bouillé"—the other half is reserved for to-morrow. Henry still keeps up grandly, and is a great favorite. God grant he may be spared!

A better feeling prevails among the men.—*Captain's Log.*

*June 9.* Latitude 17° 53'. Finished to-day, I may say, our whole stock of provisions.\* We have only left a lower end of a ham-bone, with some of the outer rind and skin on. In regard to the water, however, I think we have got ten days' supply at our present rate of allowance. This, with what nourishment we can get from boot-legs and such chewable matter, we hope will enable us to weather it out till we get to the Sandwich Islands, or, sailing in the meantime in the track of vessels thither bound, be picked up. My hope is in the latter—for in all human probability I cannot stand the other. Still we have been marvelously protected, and God, I hope, will preserve us all in His own good time and way. The men are getting weaker, but are still quiet and orderly.

*Sunday, June 10.* Latitude 18° 40'; longitude 142° 34'. A pretty good night last night, with some wettings, and again another beautiful Sunday. I cannot but think how we should all enjoy it at home, and what a contrast is here! How terrible their suspense must begin to be! God grant it may be relieved before very long, and He certainly seems to be with us in everything we do, and has preserved this boat miraculously; for since we left the ship we have sailed considerably over three thousand miles, which, taking into consideration our meagre stock of provisions, is almost unprecedented. As yet I do not feel the stint of food so much as I do that of water. Even Henry, who is naturally a great water-drinker, can save half of his allowance from time to time, when I cannot. My diseased throat may have something to do with that, however.

Nothing is now left which by any flattery can be called food. But they must manage somehow for five days more, for at noon they have still eight hundred miles to go. It is a race for life, now.

\*Six days to sail yet, nevertheless.—M. T.

This is no time for comments, or other interruptions from me—every moment is valuable. I will take up the boy-brother's diary, and clear the seas before it and let it fly.

#### HENRY FERGUSON'S LOG.

*Sunday, June 10.* Our ham-bone has given us a taste of food to-day, and we have got left a little meat and the remainder of the bone for to-morrow. Certainly never was there such a sweet knuckle-bone, or one which was so thoroughly appreciated. \* \* \* I do not know that I feel any worse than I did last Sunday, notwithstanding the reduction of diet; and I trust that we may all have strength given us to sustain the sufferings and hardships of the coming week. We estimate that we are within seven hundred miles of the Sandwich Islands, and that our average, daily, is somewhat over a hundred miles, so that our hopes have some foundation in reason. Heaven send we may all live to see land!

*June 11.* Ate the meat and rind of our ham-bone, and have the bone and the greasy cloth from around the ham left to eat to-morrow. God send us birds or fish, and let us not perish of hunger, or be brought to the dreadful alternative of feeding on human flesh! As I feel now, I do not think anything could persuade me; but you cannot tell what you will do when you are reduced by hunger and your mind wandering. I hope and pray we can make out to reach the Islands before we get to this strait; but we have one or two desperate men aboard, though they are quiet enough now. *It is my firm trust and belief that we are going to be saved.*

*All food gone.—Captain's Log.\**

*June 12.* Stiff breeze, and we are fairly flying—dead ahead of it—and toward the Islands. Good hopes, but the prospects of hunger are awful. Ate ham-bone to-day. It is the captain's birthday—he is fifty-four years old.

*June 13.* The ham-rags are not quite all gone yet, and the boot-legs, we find, are very palatable after we get the salt out of them. A little smoke, I think, does some little good; but I don't know.

*June 14.* Hunger does not pain us much, but we are dreadfully weak. Our water is getting frightfully low. God grant we may see land soon! *Nothing to eat*—but feel better than I did yesterday. Toward evening saw a magnificent rainbow—*the first we had seen.* Captain said, "Cheer up, boys, it's a prophecy!—*it's the bow of promise!*"

*June 15.* God be forever praised for His infinite mercy! *Land in sight!* Rapidly neared it and soon were *sure* of it. . . . Two noble Kanakas swam out and took the boat ashore. We were joyfully received by two white men—Mr. Jones and his steward Charley—and a crowd of native men, women and children. They treated us splendidly—aided us, and carried us up the bank, and brought us water, poi, bananas and green coconuts; but the white men took care of us and prevented those who would have eaten too much from doing so. Everybody overjoyed to see us, and all sympathy expressed in faces, deeds and words. We were then helped up to the house; and help we needed. Mr. Jones and Charley are the only white men here. Treated us splendidly. Gave us first about a teaspoonful of spirits in water, and then to each a cup of warm tea with a little bread. Takes *every* care of us. Gave us later another cup of tea—and bread the same—and then let us go to rest. *It is the happiest day of my life.* . . . God in His mercy has heard our prayer. . . . Everybody is so kind. Words cannot tell—

\*It was at this time discovered that the crazed sailors had gotten the delusion that the captain had *a million dollars* in gold concealed aft, and they were conspiring to kill him and the two passengers and seize it.—M. T.

*June 16.* Mr. Jones gave us a delightful bed, and we surely had a good night's rest—but not sleep—we were too happy to sleep; would keep the reality and not let it turn to a delusion—dreaded that we might wake up and find ourselves in the boat again. . . .

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It is an amazing adventure. There is nothing of its sort in history that surpasses it in impossibilities made possible. In one extraordinary detail—the survival of *every person* in the boat—it probably stands alone in the history of adventures of its kind. Usually merely a part of a boat's company survive—officers, mainly, and other educated and tenderly reared men, unused to hardship and heavy labor—the untrained, roughly-reared hard workers succumb. But in this case even the rudest and roughest stood the privations and miseries of the voyage almost as well as did the college-bred young brothers and the captain. I mean, physically. The minds of most of the sailors broke down in the fourth week and went to temporary ruin, but physically the endurance exhibited was astonishing. Those men did not survive by any merit of their own, of course, but by merit of the character and intelligence of the captain—they lived by the mastery of his spirit. Without him they would have been children without a nurse; they would have exhausted their provisions in a week, and their pluck would not have lasted even as long as the provisions.

The boat came near to being wrecked, at the last. As it approached the shore the sail was let go, and came down with a run; then the captain saw that he was drifting swiftly toward an ugly reef, and an effort was made to hoist the sail again, but it could not be done, the men's strength was wholly exhausted; they could not even pull an oar. They were helpless, and death imminent. It was then that they were discovered by the two Kanakas who achieved the rescue. They swam out and manned the boat and piloted her through a narrow and hardly noticeable break in the reef—the only break in it in a stretch of thirty-five miles! The spot where the landing was made was the only one in that stretch where footing could have been found on the shore—everywhere else precipices came sheer down into forty fathoms of water. Also, in all that stretch this was the only spot where anybody lived.

Within ten days after the landing all the men but one were up and creeping about. Properly, they ought to have killed themselves with the “food” of the last few days—some of them, at any rate—men who had freighted their stomachs with strips of leather from old boots and with chips from the butter-cask, a freightage which they did not get rid of by digestion, but by other means. The captain and the two passengers did not eat strips and chips as the sailors did, but *scraped* the boot-leather and the wood and made a pulp of the scrapings by moistening them with water. The third mate told me that the boots were old, and full of holes; then added, thoughtfully, “but the holes digested the best.” Speaking of digestion, here is a remarkable thing, and worth noting: during this strange voyage, and for a while afterward on shore, the bowels of some of the men virtually ceased from their functions; in some cases there was no action for twenty and thirty days, and in one case for forty-four! Sleeping, also, came to be rare. Yet the men did very well without it. During many days the captain did not sleep at all—twenty-one, I think, on one stretch.

When the landing was made, all the men were successfully protected from overeating except the “Portyghee;” he escaped the watch and ate an incredible number of bananas; a hundred

and fifty-two, the third mate said, but this was undoubtedly an exaggeration; I think it was a hundred and fifty-one. He was already nearly full of leather—it was hanging out of his ears. (I do not state this on the third mate's authority, for we have seen what sort of a person he was; I state it on my own.) The Portygee ought to have died, of course, and even now it seems a pity that he didn't; but he got well, and as early as any of them; and all full of leather, too, the way he was, and butter-timber and handkerchiefs and bananas. Some of the men did eat handkerchiefs, in those last days, also socks; and he was one of them.

It is to the credit of the men that they did not kill the rooster that crowed so gallantly, mornings. He lived eighteen days, and then stood up and stretched his neck and made a brave weak effort to do his duty once more, and died in the act. It is a picturesque detail; and so is that rainbow, too—the only one seen in the forty-three days—raising its triumphal arch in the skies for the sturdy fighters to sail under to victory and rescue.

With ten days' provisions Captain Josiah Mitchell performed this memorable voyage of forty-three days and eight hours in an open boat, sailing four thousand miles in reality and thirty-three hundred and sixty by direct courses, and brought every man safe to land. A bright, simple-hearted, unassuming, plucky, and most companionable man. I walked the deck with him twenty-eight days—when I was not copying diaries—and I remember him with reverent honor. If he is alive he is eighty-six years old, now.

If I remember rightly, Samuel Ferguson died soon after we reached San Francisco. I do not think he lived to see his home again; his disease had doubtless doomed him when he left it.

For a time it was hoped that the two quarter-boats would presently be heard of, but this hope suffered disappointment. They went down with all on board, no doubt. Not even that knightly chief mate spared.

The authors of the diaries wanted to smooth them up a little before allowing me to copy them, but there was no occasion for that, and I persuaded them out of it. These diaries are finely modest and unaffected; and with unconscious and unintentional art they rise toward the climax with graduated and gathering force and swing and dramatic intensity, they sweep you along with a cumulative rush, and when the cry rings out at last, "Land in sight!" your heart is in your mouth and for a moment you think it is yourself that have been saved. The last two paragraphs are not improvable by anybody's art; they are literary gold; and their very pauses and uncompleted sentences have in them an eloquence not reachable by any words.

The interest of this story is unquenchable; it is of the sort that time cannot decay. I have not looked at the diaries for thirty-two years, but I find that they have lost nothing in that time. Lost?—they have gained; for by some subtle law all tragic human experiences gain in pathos by the perspective of time. We realize this when in Naples we stand musing over the poor Pompeian mother, lost in the historic storm of volcanic ashes eighteen centuries ago, who lies with her child gripped close to her breast, trying to save it, and whose despair and grief have been preserved for us by the fiery envelop which took her life but eternalized her form and features. She moves us, she haunts us, she stays in our thoughts for many days, we do not know why, for she is nothing to us, she has been nothing to any one for eighteen centuries; whereas of the like case to-day we should say "poor thing, it is pitiful," and forget it in an hour.

Vienna, October, 1898.

Mark Twain

The manuscripts for these next three pieces ("Horace Greeley," "Lecture-Times," and "Ralph Keeler") are all in the Mark Twain Papers. Clemens wrote all three in Vienna at about the same time, either in late 1898 or (more likely) in early 1899. He had apparently abandoned (at least briefly) the autobiography as he had originally conceived it in favor of a "portrait gallery of contemporaries," as he told one interviewer in May 1899: "A man cannot tell the whole truth about himself, even if convinced that what he wrote would never be seen by others. . . . For that reason I confine myself to drawing the portraits of others" ("Mark Twain's Bequest," datelined "Vienna, May 22," London *Times*, 23 May 1899, 4, in Scharnhorst 2006, 333–34).

Although Clemens here placed the encounter with Greeley in 1871, it almost certainly occurred slightly earlier, sometime between 12 and 17 December 1870, while Clemens was on a week-long trip to New York (*RI* 1993, 825 n. 78). He told a nearly identical version of the story in 1905 (3 Oct 1905 to the Editor of *Harper's Weekly*, RPB-JH, published in SLC 1905e). Paine did not include this anecdote in his edition of the autobiography, but a brief typescript of it prepared for him suggests that he very likely considered doing so. He had already quoted still another version of the story in his 1912 biography (*MTB*, 1:472). Neider likewise omitted it, but Bernard DeVoto published it in the "Miscellany" section of *Mark Twain in Eruption*, which he said was "composed of fragments lifted from contexts that did not seem to me interesting enough to be run in their entirety" (*MTE*, xii–xiii, 347–48).

## Horace Greeley

I met Mr. Greeley only once and then by accident. It was in 1871, in the (old) *Tribune* office. I climbed one or two flights of stairs and went to the wrong room. I was seeking Colonel John Hay and I really knew my way and only lost it by my carelessness. I rapped lightly on the door, pushed it open and stepped in. There sat Mr. Greeley, busy writing, with his back to me. I think his coat was off. But I knew who it was, anyway. It was not a pleasant situation, for he had the reputation of being pretty plain with strangers who interrupted his train of thought. The interview was brief. Before I could pull myself together and back out, he whirled around and glared at me through his great spectacles and said—

"Well, what in hell do *you* want!"

"I was looking for a gentlem—"

"Don't keep them in stock—clear out!"

I could have made a very neat retort but didn't, for I was flurried and didn't think of it till I was down stairs.