

Francisco had expired and our rations reduced one-fourth. The captain submitted two propositions for our consideration. First, that we sail west hoping to catch the trade wind, which he had been trying to do ever since we left Panama. If we succeeded in this and had ordinary success thereafter, we could make San Francisco in thirty or forty days. If we chose this course our rations would have to be reduced one-half in everything but rice and pork, of which we had plenty for one hundred days at least; that we appoint a man to assist the steward in taking account of provisions and water on board before we decided on either course. Second, that we sail for the most available Mexican port, which would consume nearly as much time before getting back to our present position as it would to get to San Francisco.

The uncertainties were about equal on either route, and we had ample time for consideration while the committee was taking stock. The report verified Captain Harvey's statement with the exception of the water supply, for some tanks that were supposed to be full were only partially so. No blame could be attached to the captain, as the tanks had not been opened since they were filled at Taboga. A vote was taken, and by a large majority we were in favor of submitting to the judgment of the captain, accompanied with a request that he would keep us informed as to our surroundings. The captain's straightforward way had restored our confidence in him. He decided to stand out to sea for ten days. We had a fair wind the most of the time; deaths were less frequent; we did not miss very much the reduction in rations, and our hopes grew more buoyant. Sad, indeed, was our disappointment when we learned that we were only seventy miles nearer San Francisco. We had beat against a strong headwind and had sailed miles enough to take us half-way to our port if they had been in the right direction. The *Emily* could not sail close to the wind, and the ocean current was against us. An old sailor let us into the truth of the matter. Our faces grew longer day by day, and as our supply of water decreased we began for the first time to despair of ever seeing land again. A kind Providence came to our relief by sending us a heavy shower of rain, the first since we came aboard. At the time it began the sails were hanging limp and not a wave ruffled the sea; the sky was cloudless, when all at once it began raining as hard as it could pour. A small black cloud, apparently not larger than the vessel itself, hung over us; it was but the work of a moment to attach the hose to the scuttles and turn the water which fell upon the deck into the tanks. The deck was washed every morning, but the invalids and tobacco chewers had by this time—2 or 3 P. M.—literally smeared the deck with spittle. As we could not afford to lose a drop of water, filth and all was turned into the tanks. The shower lasted for more than an hour, and the cloud disappeared as suddenly as it came, but had left us several tanks full of water. Every man who had a bottle, cup, pan, or anything that would hold water, had it full, and no rations of water were necessary for several days. Without this shower I am confident we should have perished. The wind again failed, and for seven days the sails never fluttered. The second ten days' report showed we had lost thirteen of the seventy miles we had gained during the first ten days, and we were fully one hundred miles further away from shore. It was at this point that the captain informed us that he had now no hope of reaching San Francisco with what provisions we had, and would make sail for the most available port, which port depended on which way the wind blew. We were between the route