

# Mark Twain

## Short and Singular Rations

As many will remember, the clipper-ship *Hornet*, of New York, was burned at sea on her passage to San Francisco. The disaster occurred in lat, 2° 20' north, long. 112° 6' west. After being forty-three days adrift on the broad Pacific, in open boats, the crew and passengers succeeded in making Hawaii. A tribute to the courage and brave endurance of these men has been paid in a letter detailing their sufferings (the particulars being gathered from their own lips), from which the following excerpt is made:-

On Monday, the thirty-eighth day after the disaster, "we had nothing left," said the third mate, "but a pound and a half of ham-the bone was a good deal the heaviest part of it-and one soup-and-bully tin," These things were divided among the fifteen men, and they ate it-two ounces of food to each man. I do not count the ham-bone, as that was saved for next day. For some time, now, the poor wretches had been cutting their old boots into small pieces and eating them. They would also pound wet rags to a sort of pulp and eat them.

On the thirty-ninth day the ham-bone was divided up into rations, and scraped with knives and eaten. I said, "You say the two sick men remained sick all through, and after a while two or three had to be