

dite our departure, in consequence of the violent wind and rain. We intended to dispatch Drewyer and J. and R. Fields to hunt along the bay on this side of the Cathlamahs till we should join them hence; but the weather was so unsettled that we could not fix on a day for our departure, and we were unwilling to send them out in such uncertainty. We still have several days' provision on hand, which we hope will suffice for our subsistence during the time we may be weather-bound. Although we have not fared sumptuously the past winter and spring at Fort Clatsop, we have lived quite as comfortably as we had any reason to expect, and have accomplished every end we had in view in staying at this place, except that of meeting any of the traders who visit this coast and the mouth of the Columbia. Our salt will amply suffice to last us till we reach the Missouri, where we have cached a supply. It would have been very fortunate for us if some trader had arrived before our departure; for in that case we should have been able to add to our stock of merchandise, and made a much more comfortable homeward-bound journey.²⁴ Several of our men still complain of sickness; but we believe that this is mainly due to want of proper food, and we hope that as soon as we get under way we shall be much better off in this respect. The men have always been in better health when traveling than when stationary. Finding that the guns of both Drewyer and Sergeant Pryor were out of order, the first was fitted with a new lock, and the broken tumbler of the latter was replaced by a duplicate, which had been made at Harper's Ferry, where the gun itself had been manufactured. But for our precaution in bringing extra locks, and duplicate parts of the locks, most of our guns would

²⁴ The Expedition did not lack for means of purchasing anything that *money* could buy. When Lewis and Clark were projected into space, as it were, and essayed that mighty Missouri, coiled like a colossal interrogation-mark upon a continent, they were furnished by President Jefferson with probably the most comprehensive letter of credit ever handed to any individuals. It was addressed to the world, on faith in the credit of the United States; for neither Jefferson nor anyone else could have said whether, should the Expedition ever return, it