THE WRECK OF THE COD-SEEKER

By COLIN M'KAY

"SAVE you ever known fear, the stark fear of a slow, lingering, painful, abominable death?" remarked James E. Smith, Fishery Guardian at Lower Shag Harbor, Shelburne County, Nova Scotia. "I have. Imprisoned in a capsized vessel, gnawed by hunger, tortured by thirst, steeped in horror of helplessness, racked by a black, blind, bootless rage of resentment against fate, I knew fear, the fear that makes the hair bristle, the saliva in the mouth turn salt and bitter, the perspiration come out in clammy beads on the forehead, the heart almost stop beating." Then Mr. Smith told this tale:

On Wednesday, May 9, 1877, the schooner Cod-Seeker, bound from Halifax to Barrington, was running before an easterly gale. Her master was Philip Brown; her crew numbered fourteen hands all told.

A while before nine o'clock the lookout reported breakers ahead. Capt. Brown claimed that the white spaces seen were only the reflections of the Cape Light upon the waves; and he kept her going, though some of the older men criticized him sharply for doing so. I didn't like the look of things, but I was little more than a boy then.

The schooner stormed along, growing wilder in her motions, but as nothing happened I soon went down into the forecastle for a drink.

Before I could raise the dipper to my lips the schooner gave a wild lurch and flung over on her beam ends, and I went sliding to leeward.

The schooner lay on her side, with her spars flat on the sea, and the water roared into her through hatchways and companions. Getting to my feet I hauled myself up toward the companion, and tried to get out. I might as well have tried to crawl through a sluice-gate. The rush of the water splayed my fingers apart. Soon the bows plunged downward, and the water whelming in with great force swept me out of the companion.

I fell down on a heap of wreckage on the side of the ship, struck my head against something and was stunned for a space. When I got my wits I was standing up with my feet in the mouth of a berth and against the ship's side, and the water up to my armpits and a raffle of floating wreckage about me.

In a few seconds more I was struggling in a whirlpool of icy waters, beating my hands against the bottom of the forecastle, unable to see anything or to get a footing. As the ship moved, the flood in the forecastle, rising rapidly, surged back and forth, and once I became entangled in some half floating blankets and nearly succeeded in drowning myself. Like all fishing vessels she had a large forecastle down in the bows of her, in the utter darkness I could not tell my whereabouts.

Imprisoned in Capsized Schooner.

For a time I was too frantic with fright to think of getting hold of anything. I only thought of keeping my head above water.

But presently the ship seemed to grow quiet for a little, and I thought of getting a grip on something. Striking out I ran against a wall with an under slope, felt around, realized that it was the deck and, as there was nothing to hold there, I turned about and swam to the other side.

I paddled about for quite a time. But at last, stretching my hands out of the water, I managed to catch hold of the edge of a board—the faceboard of one of the weather bunks. As I held on, taking breath, the water rose and lifted my head and shoulders into the mouth of the berth. I hastily scrambled on to the inner side, then the top side, of the faceboard.

While I waited appalled, for I knew not what, I became aware of a moaning sound, and cried out, "Who's that?"

It was Sam Atwood, a young fellow about my own age. He was lying on his stomach on the inner or top side of the face-board of what had been a lower bunk. When the schooner was hove down he had been asleep in his bunk, but somehow he had managed to cling to the face-board, though the mattress and bottom boards had been rolled out into the forecastle. A man can face death better with a friend near him. I grew composed and began to take stock of the situation.

The schooner had settled as the water got in her and, happily for us, the bows were the highest part of her. We learned afterward that she had drowned two men in the after cabin.

The way she lay, the round of the star-board bow was the highest part of her, and we were in the after tier of bunks, built against the bulge of the bow. But our position was precarious enough, and neither dry nor comfortable.

Sluggishly she rose and fell to the heave of the swell, and we were afraid she would sink or turn turtle altogether.

After a time she seemed to bring up against something with a violent jerk, and her head was dragged downward, while the water in the forecastle surged afterward.

Mightily alarmed we sat astraddle on the face-boards, and pressed our noses against the skin of the ship in the angle made by the supporting knee of the deck beam. We found a little air imprisoned there after our shoulders and the backs of our heads were under water. But her bows continued to swoop downward and soon the water was over our faces. I thought it would soon be the end of us. I felt as if my head would burst with the intolerable pressure.

But before either of us lost consciousness something snapped—I thought it was something giving way in my brain. The schooner's head rose swiftly, the water receded and we found ourselves able to breathe again. Oh, but the air was good! Trembling, dizzy, exhausted, we stretched ourselves along the faceboards and rested.

What had happened was this: When the schooner was hove on her side the anchor chain, stowed in a box on deck, went overboard, and presently, as she swept along with the tide, the end fouled the bottom and dragged her head under water. Then a miracle occurred; the big link on the shackle of the other end near the windlass broke and allowed her head to come up again.

The schooner wallowed on her side. She rose and fell to the heave of the swell, in a heavy, sickening way, but she did not roll much. Often we were ducked under, and the noises were frightful; roaring, snarling sounds of surf; blood-thirsty gurglings, the dull booming sound of things beating against the skin of the hold.

I was numb with cold, and awfully weary and before long, in spite of the noises, the fear of slipping off my perch, the horror of it all, I dropped off into a doze. And as I dozed I dreamed the schooner was hove down while I was on deck; dreamed that I saw my chum Will Kenney washed overboard and dived after him.

Thirst, Cold and Horror.

Then I woke up to find myself struggling under water. It was was still pitchdark and for a moment or so I had no idea where I was. As my head came above the water I struck something hard, and down I went again before I could get my lungs full of air. Half stunned I struggled up again, and rammed my head through a small opening, so small that I could not get my shoulders through. My mouth was just above water. When I tried to struggle through the opening, the thing resting upon my shoulders would lift a little and then press me down till I could not breathe. I struggled frantically, and the harder I strove to keep my mouth above water the more I seemed to be forced down.

I could not imagine what kind of a trap I had got into, and my imagination was mighty active; just as they say of a drowning man. A moving picture of my whole life seemed to flash before me. Every deed of a sinful nature I had ever done seemed to rise up against me, crowding out all hope of salvation.

At the same time my mind was wildly searching for an explanation of my plight, and at last, when I was nearly done for, it struck me that the thing that was drowning me was the step-ladder of the forecastle-gangway. That was it; the ladder was floating, and I was under my head between the steps. I knew what to do then, but it was not easy to draw my head down and out, for the dread of the disaster, or of home and loved ones—and then awaken with a start to a keener fear and horror of our plight.

The time dragged along and, as the thirst took a fiercer grip on us, we ceased to feel the pangs of hunger. Our tongues swelled and burned; griping pains took us by the throat; our muscles ached as if pricked with hot pins. Having swallowed so much salt water, I suffered more than Atwood, and that afternoon I grew so wild I cut the ends of my fingers and sucked the blood. But that did me no good.

When Saturday morning came we were half stupefied with suffering. Several times we talked of dropping into the water and drowning ourselves. And always the temptation to drink the salt water was strong upon us. But we kept our heads; we hoped against hope that we would be rescued, and determined to hold out as long as we could.

That afternoon the long swell began to subside. The schooner grew quieter, and ceased to duck us, and the fever of our bodies dried our clothes. The fact that the swell was going down brought us face to face with a new cause of fear—the fear that soon there would not be sufficient trough to the sea to cause the main hatch to blow, and give us fresh air.

But we did not worry greatly over the prospect of being stifled for lack of oxygen; we had about exhausted our capacity for fear; we were too sick and miserable generally to be much troubled by the appearance of a new peril.

After Saturday noon it was just suffering and endurance. We seldom talked; our parched throats and swollen tongues made speech painful and our voices sounded weird and unnatural. Nor did we think much. Most of the time we lay as in a stupor. Now and then we dreamed of beautiful ships all around us, all coming to our rescue, and would awake with a start to wonder if we were going mad. We lived as in a nightmare, lost count of time, felt as if we had suffered through eternity. We were growing light-headed.

The Spook of the Derelict.

On Sunday afternoon the schooner Ohio of Gloucester, Capt. Edward O'Dor, was standing up for the Cape Shore when she sighted something black floating upon the waves. Some of her crew took it for a dead whale; others said it was a wreck; and a heated argument easued. To settle the matter the captain hauled up to investigate. Seeing that it was a vessel bottom-up he sent a boat to try to find out her name, and see if they could salvage anything.

So presently I thought I heard some unusual noises and roused myself from my lethargy to listen. In a few minutes I heard a sound like the clang of iron on iron; a man cutting at the lanyards of the deerrigging with an ax had hit the iron strap of the deadeye.

"There is somebody outside," I said, shaking Sam.

But he showed no interest.

"It's only something washing about in the hold," he answered.

"Let's shout, anyway," I said, and yelled as hard as I could:

"Help! Help! Help!"

Over my head there was an answering yell of startled fright, then footsteps pounding aft and a voice crying:

"She's haunted. Get into the boat, for — sake!"

And that chap so frightened the others that they piled into the boat and started to pull away. But, after recovering from their fright and astonishment, they grew ashamed of themselves and came back.

Meantime I had got hold of a stick and was rapping against the side. Soon I heard raps on the outside. I gave three raps and there were three raps in answer. We kept that up for a few minutes. Then we heard a man walking forward on the outside, and soon a voice called:

"In the name of God, are you ghosts, living men or the devil?"

We shouted that we were living men, and asked them to get us out, or we would not be living men very long. The voice asked no questions for a few minutes as if incredulous, and then some of them got to work with axes over our heads, while the boat went back to the Ohio for more men and axes.

They worked like Trojans, and cut right through a frame bolt to make a hole to get at us. When they broke through, the eruption of imprisoned air acted like a whirlwind, and the water leaped through the hole in a solid stream fifty feet into the air. Small sticks which had been floating in the forecastle whizzed by our heads. One man was knocked over as if by an explosion. They told us afterward that the released air gave off a sickening stench.

The schooner settled two or three feet, lurching as if she would turn turtle completely, and the men chopped away with redoubled energy. They soon had a hole about nine inches by eleven inches.

Rescue at Last.

Atwood, being slim, was pulled through without trouble, but when I got my head and one shoulder through, I stuck. I was not quite out of me and pulled, and at last when I thought I would be pulled apart I came through, minus my vest and several strips of skin.

The schooner which four days before had been taut and trim was now almost bottom-up, lying with her keel six feet above the water and her weather rail nearly a wash. Her mainmast was broken off and, far below the surface, I could see a faint shadow of canvas. We thought then we were the only survivors.

Was it any wonder I thanked God for my deliverance?

Capt. O'Dor said, "Come, my boy, let me help you to the boat," and took me by the arm. I thought I could walk, took a step and went tumbling. If it hadn't been for the captain I would have slid into the sea.

Aboard the Ohio they had made ready for us. The cabin table was loaded with everything to eat. But we weren't interested in food; we wanted water and the bucketful. They gave us a teaspoonful, and that only put an agonizing edge on our thirst. We pleaded wildly for more.

But they had realised our condition, and kept us waiting for about fifteen minutes, and then gave us another spoonful. After what seemed ages of raging agony they began to give us a spoonful every five minutes.

Needless to say, when I was carried home my parents were beside them selves with joy. As they expressed it, I was as one risen from the dead. The news of our rescue spread up and down the shore, and was generally received with unbelief. Many people would not believe we had managed to live so long in the capsized vessel, and hundreds came long distances to see us.

After I reached home I developed a high fever and my feet began to pain me. I had no desire for food; in fact I scarcely touched food for two days. But I was feeling terribly, and I couldn't sleep without a narcotic, and then only for a short time. Dr. Clark who attended me said ten drops of the narcotic would kill the devil, but I was so crazy with pain and lack of sleep that I used to cry for a big dose every few hours.

And one afternoon, when mother was out and the spasms of pain were wracking me, I crawled on my hands and knees, got up on a chair, took the bottle of narcotic from the shelf and drank half the contents. Then I navigated my way back to the lounge, crawled half-way up on it and went to sleep. That was the deepest, the best, most blessed sleep I ever had. The doctor and everybody thought I had gone to sleep for good and all, but I came round in twenty-six hours, feeling fresh and fine. But I continued to suffer great pain in my feet for two weeks, and it was a month before I could walk.

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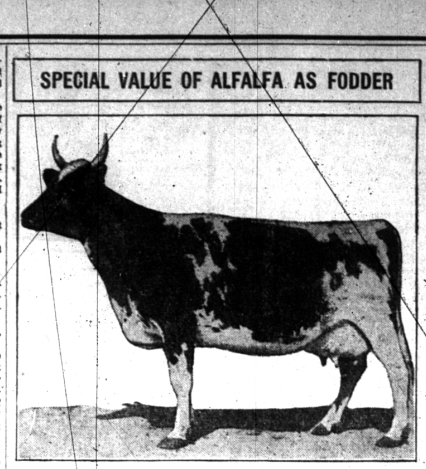
PRESIDENT CRITICISED IN 1813

One hundred years ago President Madison sent his annual message to congress. Public feeling was running high and the administration was being severely censured for its conduct of the war. The opposition sentiment was expressed in the following sarcastic editorial printed in the Trenton Federalist: "We have now before us the president's message to congress. Considering the case, he has really made out a pretty smooth story for the people. We are at war, he allows, and no prospect of peace—but then he points out so many advantages resulting from it that it would seem that it was better for us than peace. We have spent a good deal of money, he admits, but then he claims that we have full value for what we have spent by the 'learning we have gained about military affairs.' We must still borrow money, he allows, but then he consoles us with the suggestion that our credit is still good. He enumerates our victories—says little or nothing of our defeats and losses—but forgets to tell that with all our marches and counter marches we are just about where we began when we set out last spring for the conquest of Canada."

Oil Wells in the Ocean.

Unique among the oil fields of the world, says the Engineering and Mining Journal, is the Summerland group of wells in California, which extend out into the Pacific ocean. There are 141 producing wells in this group, which is situated about eighteen miles from Santa Barbara. These wells are drilled out in the ocean just off the coast and 100,000 barrels are taken from the oil sands underlying the ocean bed every year. This interesting spectacle of derricks built out into the sea is visible from the train on the way from Los Angeles to San Francisco.

SPECIAL VALUE OF ALFALFA AS FODDER



A First Prize Ayrshire Cow.

Successive drouths in the dairy section of the Northwest have served in a limited way to show the special value of alfalfa. There are several reasons why this fodder ought to be generally extensively used by Northern farmers.

Considered from any standpoint it is a profitable hay crop. It can be depended upon to bet the producer fully 50 per cent more profit than either timothy and red clover, whether disposed of in the market or fed out to live stock on the place.

As there is a cutting of alfalfa about the first of June in Northern states the crop is of most importance in keeping up milk contracts.

In the dry season the pastures give out or at least run down seriously during July while in August they may be practically bare.

The early cuttings of alfalfa is reasonably sure to be a heavy crop. Usually it is the best of the season. The yield may be depended upon to exceed that of any other fodder on an equal acreage.

Then it is three weeks or a month earlier than timothy or red clover. It comes in the right time to augment the pastures or the silo if summer feeding is necessary.

If it can be spared from the farm and is sent to market a good cash return is obtained and it is well to note that it is one of the first large items of the crop season.

It comes in considerably ahead of grain and the revenue may do away with the necessity of borrowing money for carrying on the heavy operations of the tarming season.

Usually the dairy farmer will prefer to have the alfalfa crop consumed on the place because it greatly increases the flow of milk. The cash return is thus likely to be larger than for marketing the hay and the midsummer and fall cuttings are equally profitable for winter feeding.

The crop will average three cuttings each season in this latitude, although it is commonly harvested five times in Kansas, Oregon, Washington, and a few other states.

In view of the difficulties which Northern farmers have experienced in keeping up their milk supply during the summer months it is worth while to consider the special value of alfalfa as a dairy fodder.

METHOD OF CLEANING A POULTRY HOUSE

Floor and Walls Should Be Brushed and Cleaned—Droppings Are Valuable.

Lime wash made from stone lime is the best purifier. Make the wash as follows: Stone lump lime, ten pounds; boiling water, two gallons, and carbolic acid, one ounce. Put lime in bucket, pour on the boiling water, cover with lid, and allow it to stand for one hour. The mixture must be well stirred to prevent scorching.

If there is not enough water not all the lime will be slaked well. On the other hand, too much water retards the slaking by lowering the heat. Add enough boiling water to make the wash just thick enough to spread well. Mix one ounce of carbolic acid in each bucket of wash. Carbolic acid is poisonous and must be handled with care. If the roosting poles and nest boxes are movable take them out of the house. Brush down the walls, clean the floor; then apply the wash, which should be put on hot. Take time to get the wash into the cracks.

The roosts and nest boxes should be brushed over with coal oil and then given a thick coat of the hot wash. The floor should be well coated with fresh air-slaked lime. If the work is well done the lice will be killed, the house disinfected and the appearance much improved. Choose a bright day for this work.

Clean up the droppings every morning; put in barrels between layers of rich sifted earth, spread one or two handfuls of plaster over each layer of manure; the plaster will prevent loss of ammonia.

Keep the barrels of manure under cover outside of the house. The droppings of 50 hens fed on mixed grain, meat, green bone, wheat bran, corn chops and a little linseed meal properly composted and kept dry, will make the best kind of a fertilizer—enough in six feeding months for a half-acre garden.

MAKING SUCCESS IN MAPLE SUGAR

Owner of Up-to-Date Plant Takes Care to Have Everything in Readiness Early.

(By BESSIE L. PUTNAM.)

The product is one of the most wholesome of sweets and if there is a surplus it can be readily disposed of at good prices.

Brand your name on the cans and work up a trade for the prime article. This done, customers become regular customers.

Never be tempted to sell old syrup for new. The price is alluring early in the season, but the fraud is sure to be detected; or even if you are not branded as a deceiver you will at least fall into the disrepute of having lost your skill in the maple business.

The owner of the up-to-date sugar camp takes care to have a good supply of wood ready and all his supplies on hand for catching the first run of sap, which is of the best quality and commands the highest price.

The old-fashioned trough is seldom seen these days, coating too much in the manufacture and the waste of time in the use. The pails are also much more sanitary as well as more easily handled. The cheapest grade of tin soon wears out and it is more economical in the end to buy a good grade, painting them on the outside and keeping them dry when not in use.

Syrup cans should never be washed when emptied, as it is almost impossible to get them entirely dry and the moisture soon induces rust. The latest and most satisfactory way is to pack them away in a dry closet with the syrup which naturally clings to them undisturbed. When ready to refill rinse them out with hot water or sap and they will keep sweet and bright for several years.

Be careful not to select an evapor ator too large for your camp. If you have not sap enough to keep it filled the contents will acquire a scorched flavor and lead to a suspicion of pastrons that your product is being adulterated with cane sugar.

A can which has been burnt can never again be depended upon for first class work.

COLOR OF SOILS TELLS CONDITION

Organic Matter When Present in Quantities Makes Land Either Black or Brown.

(By JAMES D. MARSHALL, Colorado Agricultural College.)

The color of soils is governed largely by the amount and kind of iron compounds and the percentages of organic matter which they contain. Iron may give soils a red, blue, yellow or gray color, depending largely upon texture, aeration and moisture content. Organic matter when present in quantities tends to make soils either black or brown in color. The combination of colors formed by the iron compounds and organic matter give rise to a great many intermediate tints.

As a rule the dark color of soils is closely associated with the presence of organic matter, while a light color indicates its absence. Dark colored soils are usually quite productive, while light colored ones are generally unproductive. Soils uneven in color and somewhat mottled indicate lack of aeration and drainage, and are not in good physical condition.

Electric Incubators.

Electrically heated incubators are now being used very largely. The Storrs Connecticut experiment station says that it is easy to construct an incubator which is fire proof and perfectly indestructible without the use of copper conductors.

High Priced Eggs.

Healthy, vigorous hens, properly housed and fed, cannot fail to produce a goodly number of eggs during the season of high prices.

Identifying Poultry Roup.

The most certain way of identifying poultry roup is a characteristic sickening odor.

Drought Resister.

Alfalfa is the prince of drought resisters.

Remarkable Records.

Remarkable records have been made by dairy cows during the past few years. Not only have breeders developed wonderful cows but they have raised the average standard of the various breeds and added to their beauty and adaptability.

Preparing Butter.

When preparing butter for sale always have it as neat and as attractive as possible. Use the white paraffin butter-paper for wrappings.

If you want to please a woman, shut your mouth and listen.

Putnam Fadeless Dyes are the brightest and fastest. Adv.

People who can't get in a word edgewise should sharpen them up a bit.

Be thrifty on little things like bluing. Don't accept water for bluing. Ask for Red Cross Ball Blue, the extra good value bluing. Adv.

Shortly after marriage a man begins to realize that he talked too much during the courtship.

Astonishing Tobacco Remedy—Guaranteed to instantly remove taste for cigarettes or tobacco in any form, or money refunded. Any druggist will tell you receive wonderful remedy by return mail. Address Sanol Laboratories, Wichita, Kansas. Adv.

Many a man is dissatisfied with his lot because it is located too near that of his neighbor.

Constipation causes and aggravates many serious diseases. It is thoroughly cured by Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets. The favorite family laxative. Adv.

Paradoxical Reception.

"They say a cold wave is coming."

"Then from sport lovers it will be warmly welcomed."

Only One "BROMO QUININE"

That is LAXATIVE BROMO QUININE. Look for the signature of E. W. GROVE. Cures a Cold in One Day. Cures Grip in Two Days. 25c.

So Why Not That One?

She—I'm afraid you couldn't support me in the style to which I've been accustomed.

He—Well, styles are always changing, aren't they?

Truly Impossible.

Critic—Your book isn't true to life.

Author—Why do you say that?

Critic—Well, you say, "as the young lady ordered a $4 dinner her fiance smiled." Did you ever see a fiance do that?

THE RIGHT SOAP FOR BABY'S SKIN

In the care of baby's skin and hair, Cuticura Soap is the mother's favorite. Not only is it unrivaled in purity and refreshing fragrance, but its gentle emollient properties are usually sufficient to allay minor irritations, remove redness, roughness and chafing, soothe sensitive conditions, and promote skin and hair health generally. Assisted by Cuticura Ointment, it is most valuable in the treatment of eczemas, rashes and itching, burning infantile eruptions. Cuticura Soap wears to a wafer, often outlasting several cakes of ordinary soap and making its use most economical.

Cuticura Soap and Ointment sold throughout the world. Sample of each free, with 32-p. Skin Book. Address post-card "Cuticura, Dept. L, Boston."—Adv.

On Other Shoulders.

Jones—Don't you think bachelors should be taxed to support fatherless children?

Brown—Sure! Then I could drop my life insurance!—Punch.

Rather Warm.

At a school in Dudley a teacher with whom I am well acquainted was taking his class in their poetry, "Casabianca." They came to the line, "The boy stood on the burning deck." He stopped the class, and asked this question, "Why did the boy stand on the burning deck?" He had a good show of hands, but one lad in particular seemed very eager to give the answer. The teacher noticed this, and asked him, whereupon he got the following answer, "Because it was too hot to sit down!" Which put the whole class in an uproar.—London Tit-Bits.

Explaining Telepathy.

There are numerous well authenticated cases on record in which persons, suffering a violent death, appeared as phantoms to persons who were dear to them at the moment of death. The emotion which a person who is conscious suffers at the moment when a violent death is inflicted him in the form of murder or accident, beggars every other emotion. Science, proceeding on the lines indicated above, hopes to unravel the mystery attaching to telepathy, by showing how the electric currents of the air, when impinged upon by the electric currents of the body at a moment of supreme emotional excitation, will transmit that shock over miles and miles, and deliver it safely to the receiving instrument in the form of another human electric current, attuned to the first in some way which science has not yet explained.

FRIENDLY TIP.

Restored Hope and Confidence.

After several years of indigestion and its attendant evil influence on the mind, it is not very surprising that one finally loses faith in things generally.

A. N. Y. woman writes an interesting letter. She says:

"Three years ago I suffered from an attack of peritonitis which left me in a most miserable condition. For over two years I suffered from nervousness, weak heart, shortness of breath, could not sleep, etc.

"My appetite was ravenous but I felt starved all the time. I had plenty of food but it did not nourish me because of intestinal indigestion. Medical treatment did not seem to help. I got discouraged, stopped medicine and did not care much whether I lived or died.

"One day a friend asked me why I didn't try Grape-Nuts food, stop drinking coffee and use Postum. I had lost faith in everything, but to please my friend I began to use both and soon became very fond of them.

"It wasn't long before I got some strength, felt a decided change in my system, hope sprang up in my heart and slowly but surely I got better. I could sleep very well, the constant craving for food ceased and I have better health now than before the attack of peritonitis.

"My husband and I are still using Grape-Nuts and Postum."

Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich. Read "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs. "There's a Reason."

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.