

WHENCE COMES OUR BREAD.

I stood by the farmer's wheat bin. And coyed with the amber grain. And the handful of kernels lifted. Through my fingers fell like rain. And it seemed that a fairy whisper Was borne to my listening ear. And this is the beautiful story. I lowered my head to hear: "Behold, 'tis the life of the people. The food, the strength and power. That falls through your listless fingers. While spending an idle hour. And little heed you, nor any. Of how you are strong and warm. That your blood is red and strident With life from an humble farm. "All day, through the sultry August. The toiler guides his plow; Each furrow is blessed and watered. By the sweet from his reeking brow. And thus is the wheat-crown mellowed. And thus prepared for the seeds. With plow, and harrow, and roller. While the sweat falls down in beads. "And when, with sowing completed, He watches the seasons go. Till spring, with its rain and sunshine. Has softened the covering snow. Waits, waits till the glowing summer Develops a field of wheat. And crystallizes the sweet drops. For you and all to eat. "Then with reaping and threshing. All through the summer's heat. The water that blessed the furrow Must flow till the work's complete. Remember the drops which the toiler Has brushed from his wearied brow. Are here, in the teeming wheat bin. To nourish a nation now." —Irene Bailey.

THE OLD MAIDS.

It wasn't that old maids were rare in our village. Single ladies of a certain age, who scorned matrimony and were thankful that they were not burdened with husbands and household cares, were plentiful—almost as plentiful as sea captains.

The widow Cummings' "select boarding-house" was full of them. Miss Harriet Beasley, who presided over the Ladies' Circulating Library, boarded there; so did Miss Olivia Simpson, the school-teacher, and Miss Jane Berry, local leader of the Women's Rights movement, and several more dignified and precise spinners. Conversation at the Cummings table was conducted on a highly literary and learned plane. It is recorded of Zoeth Labrick, the sexton, one of the few males who "took meals" at the widow's, that, after his first fortnight of select boarding, he drifted into Dr. Hallett's office and asked the doctor if he had read "any book about the house that was written by Mike L. Angelo, one of them Eyetalians."

"You see, doc," said Zoeth, "Hattie Beasley and the rest have been talking about this Angelo critter meal-times till you can't rest. Asked me what I considered the chief beauty of his 'moses.' And when I says: 'Moses who?' they giggled. Makes a foeller feel like a born fool."

Abitha Doane, the milliner, was a spinster; so was Caroline Pepper, the dress-maker, who lived with her. Caroline looked the part, too, and she had earrings and a tan-colored false front. Either her head had grown or the "front" had shrunk, for the tan area only extended to the tops of her ears and her own gray hair stuck out around the edges like trimming. Miss Pepper was an old maid to the fullest extent of the popular meaning of the term, but when the people of our village mentioned "the old maids" they were not speaking of her and Abitha, nor of the boarders of the Cummingses. They referred to "Pashy and Hully" Baker. "Pashy and Hully" were the maids.

The house where the old maids lived was on the Neck Road, beyond the grove known locally as "Elkanah's Pines," and near the swamp where the feather-grass grew and the spring bubbled up in the sunken barrel. It was a big, square old house, standing a good way back from the sidewalk, with high plastered chimneys, the plaster had peeled off in spots so that the red bricks showed, and it had a massive front door with pillars at each side and an arched window above. Your Cousin Ed, who lived in Boston, and was going to be an artist some day—after he got through "making the crew" and being conditioned at Harvard—enthusiast over that house. He said it was a perfect specimen of Colonial architecture. Then he saw the old maids themselves, and promptly declared that they were perfect specimens likewise.

Your earliest memories of the old maids and their home are associated with summer Sunday afternoons and the walks you used to take with grandma. These walks varied a little as to route, but their objective point was always the same, namely, the cemetery. There were many things which the respectable portion of our village considered wicked to do on Sunday, but to walk to the cemetery was not one of these. Grandma liked to go there for various reasons, to carry flowers for Aunt Desires' grave, to see if the man who was paid one dollar a year for taking care of the family lot was earning his salary, to inspect the new tombstones which were erected from time to time and speculate concerning their cost, and to instill into your young mind the inevitable end of worldly ambition and the necessity of preparation for the hazardous beyond.

You didn't care much for the cemetery. There were several epitaphs which fascinated you for a while, epitaphs like that of "Solon Tyndall, Killed by a Fast from the Main topsail Yard of the Bark Amazon, in the Harbor of Buenos Ayres on March 12, 1850."

"He as a seaman did his duty well. But his foot slipped and from aloft he fell. Fell, but to rise and climb the shoals on high. And greet his Master with a glad 'Aye, ave.' On that which recorded the fate of 'Abraham Peters, shot in the Creek by the Explosion of his own Gun.'"

As grandma when she read this inscription invariably pronounced "creek" like "crick" you associated it with the lumbago, called locally "a crick in the back," and wondered what the unfortunate Abraham was doing with his gun behind him. Later you learned that he was duck-hunting in the creek between East Harris and our village and had been accidentally shot through the breast. But though the epitaphs soon lost their

novelty and the cemetery itself grew to be as tiresome as grandma's sermons, the walks there and back were delightful. You turned in at Cap'n Roger's side gate, went down through the pasture, by the "peat hole" where the turtles were sunning themselves on the projecting stumps, and climbed the hill on the other side. This hill winter was the most dangerous, and consequently the most fascinating, coast in town, but now it was a daisy-strewn outlook from which you might see for three land miles and fifteen watery ones. Directly beneath you were clumps of huckleberry bushes and scrub oaks, with the path winding through them between the cranberry swamps; beyond was the dusty yellow ribbon of the Neck Road, bordered with gray rail fences or mossy stone walls, with an occasional house, barn, and chicken yard scattered along it. "Elkanah's Pines" made a velvety green blotch, and the white stones of the cemetery shone in the sun; back of all was the blue bay-a-dance in the wind, with the distant buff sand dunes of the Trumet shore notching the sky-line.

From the hill the old maids' house was conspicuous. Four-square, solid, and aristocratic, in its hill on the most pretentious dwelling on the Neck Road, it seemed to be holding itself aloof from the common herd, and secluded behind the two great elms at each side of its door, to be viewing the village with dignified toleration. At this distance, it did not see the broken plaster of the chimneys, the lack of paint, the rotting shingles, the fences leaning this way and that. From the hill it appeared eminently genteel; near at hand the shabbiness of the gentility forced itself upon you.

The foot of this hill, near the plank bridge over the cranberry ditch, was a spot where you and grandma were most likely to meet the old maids. You had caught glimpses of them through the huckleberry bushes as you came down the slope. The swamp honeysuckles grew thick about the little bridge, and perhaps that is why you never saw "Pashy and Hully" without seeming to sniff the perfume of the honeysuckle blooms.

"Pashy"—her right name was Patience, you discovered later, and her sister's, Hully—was in the lead. She always took the lead when the pair were walking, just as she did in all practical and worldly matters, household cares and the like. Hully only led in a fashionable conversation, in letter-writing, in fancy needle-work, and in the discussion of Tom Moore's merits as a poet. So it had been since they were children—Pashy was the caretaker and business manager; Hully the social star, the family pet and ornament.

This distinction showed in the manner in which the sisters dressed. Both wore garments which had been the fashion fifteen years before, but Pashy's were plain and businesslike, while Hully's were more pretentious and inclined toward a middle-aged and very respectable coquetry. It was Pashy who wore the shoulder kerchief and the plain bonnet of a coal-scuttle pattern, which in cold weather was exchanged for a quilted hood. Her hair was parted in the middle and brushed back at each side. Hully wore curls and a hat which tied with ribbons beneath her chin; a figured cashmere shawl was thrown over her shoulders, and about her neck was a red coral necklace. Her collar was fastened with a large cameo pin, and there was a gold ring on her finger, and what grandma called "danglets" of red coral dependent from her ears.

Hully carried a faded blue silk parasol, and Pashy wore an ancient and pudgy green umbrella and a flowered carpet bag with a pair of leather handles. The contents of that carpet bag seldom varied, and could have been itemized from memory by every adult and nearly every child in our village. There were the two clean handkerchiefs—a plain one for Pashy and an embroidered one for Hully; a bottle of smelling salts, empty of a leather purse, containing very little except two large house keys, those of the front and back doors; a little silk bag with some bits of sugar; a flagon of water; and always on Sunday afternoons a plump envelope stamped precisely in the upper right-hand corner, and addressed to the niece who lived in Louisville, Kentucky.

Writing this letter to the far-off niece was a Sabbath ceremony as regular and almost as solemn as going to church, for the old maids. Hully sat down to the mahogany desk with the rickety, twisted legs, and unlocked the inlaid writing-case, which her father, pompous old Cap'n Darius Baker, had brought home from aboard when she was a child. Pashy sat beside her sister, holding in her lap a copy of "The Gentlewoman's Complete Letter Writer." Between them, on the floor, lay Dr. Johnson's ponderous dictionary. Hully looked at her sister, took up the pearl-handled pen which had come with the writing-case, and drew a long preparatory breath. Pashy returned the look and also drew a long breath. Then Hully dipped the pen in the ink-well and wrote at the top of the sheet of note paper:

"BELOVED NIECE—I take my pen in hand to inform you that my dear sister and I are well and we trust and pray that this may find you the same."

The letter, thus begun, continued for exactly eight pages. It was filled with such bits of village news as had reached the ears of the sisters, together with a careful notation of the household doings, how many eggs the hens had laid, the number of pears on the ancient Bartlett tree, and similar items, all couched in the stilted language of the "Complete Letter Writer," and ornamented with such quotations from Moore's poems as Hully considered appropriate.

The next step, following the completion of the letter, was to take it to the post-office, in order that it might be sure to go out on the early mail Monday morning, and this trip to the office, via the same "short cut" which you and grandma took on the way to the cemetery, was the occasion of your meeting the old maids with such regularity at the little bridge.

The conversation at these meetings did not vary greatly. "Land sakes!" grandma would exclaim, under her breath; "here's the old maids. Thought 'twas about time. They're as sure as death and taxes." Then aloud: "Good morning, Pashy. How d'ye do, Hully? Nice seasonable weather, aren't they having. I presume likely you're going up to mail your letters."

The old maids acknowledged the greeting each in her individual manner. "Good afternoon," said Pashy, briskly. "Yes, we're going to the post-office to—" "To insert our epistle in the receptacle for postal matter," concluded Hully graciously. "The weather is indeed delightful. As the bard has said—" What the bard said can not be recalled at the moment. However, it doesn't mat-

ter; he was sure to have said something appropriate to any and all topics. The old maids passed on and grandma looked after them.

"Cat's foot!" she exclaimed. "Don't they beat the Dutch? A body would think they were King Solomon's highest relations and yet it's just as likely as not they don't have a full meal of victuals from one week's end to the other—that is, unless they're invited out."

There was truth in grandma's observation, but on the one memorable occasion when you and mother took tea with the old maids the grandeur of the ceremony overshadowed any shortage in the commissary department. The table was set in the dining-room, of course, the old-time, low-studded dining-room, with its yellow woodwork, which had once been white, and the braided rag mats on the floor, with its chairs at equal distances along the walls, and each set so exactly in its habitual place that there were little marks on the floor which the legs fitted into.

Everything was years and years old and far behind the times; even the tall clock, which, so Pashy explained, was two hours and a quarter slow, as she and her sister were used to it, and always figured accordingly, it really didn't make much difference. The clock, by the way, exhibited a queer peculiarity. It was a pendulum, where a ship behind a ridge of tin waves rocked steadily with every swing of the pendulum.

The dishes were blue and white, with pictures of pagodas and funny little bridges upon them. The tea-cups had no handles, but they were made without them—and both Pashy and Hully drank their tea from the saucers instead of the cups themselves; the air with which Hully sipped hers, holding the saucer in her left hand, was inimitable and impressive. The milk-pitcher was yellow, and upon its side was a picture of the death of Washington, the great George being lifted from his bed by four angels with spreading wings and radiant halos, up to a mass of tumbled clouds which seemed to betoken a coming thunderstorm.

There were pictures on the walls, pictures of ships at sea or of scenes in foreign ports. A worsted "sampler," made by Pashy when a schoolgirl, was framed and hung among them; so, too, was Cap'n Baker's certificate of membership in the Boston Marine Society, and the coat of arms of the Baker family, done in screaming water colors. Also there was a large colored print of the battle between the Constitution and the Guerriere. The Constitution flew a tremendous battle flag, the red blue of which not only covered the banner but a liberal section of adjacent sky.

Pashy pronounced a solemn and lengthy blessing, to which her sister, from the foot of the table, responded with a devout "Amen." Then Pashy poured the tea, Hully passed the bread and butter, and the meal began.

It was a quaint, old-fashioned meal, the food not too abundant, but everything very good indeed. There were caraway-seed cookies and sweet apple and barberry preserves, and tiny cranberry tarts, sweetened with molasses instead of sugar. And, while you ate, the old maids and mother talked, talked of the minister's latest sermon and of the weather and of grand-father's health. Hully embellished the conversation with quotations from Dr. Johnson and Tom Moore, and gave unqualified testimonial to the benefit derived from "the picture," a picture of the receipt for which had been handed down from her grandparents. Also she spoke of "Godey's Lady's Book" as the one periodical suited to the literary needs of a genteel family.

"We used to take," she added, a tinge of regret in her voice, "Godey's Monthly Pictorial," but that was when father was alive. We don't take it now. It isn't what it used to be."

Now the "Pictorial" was still a revered visitor at your house, therefore you were surprised when mother acquiesced with a prompt "no, certainly not." One element of tea-table chat was conspicuously lacking, that is, gossip. The old maids never gossiped—gossip was not genteel.

After supper you went into the sitting-room. And there, amid some heavy pieces of mahogany furniture and bits of oriental bric-a-brac from China and Japan and India, under inspection by rows of stiff portraits in oil, you sat and wriggled both mother and the old maids talked and talked and talked and talked.

Hully said good-bye in the sitting-room, but Pashy came to the door. There she and mother whispered for a few moments. You caught fragments like: "Yes, the shawl will be done in a week! I can work nights; my eyes aren't what they used to be." "Yes, we should be thankful for the potatoes, but of course we couldn't do that." "You're not to let them to us. We are not dependent upon charity, thank goodness." And, "Please don't let Hully know I told you this. She is so delicate, and has been through so much, poor child, that I try to carry most of the load myself. But sometimes it is awful hard."

Then you went away into the shadows of the starry night, wondering and thinking. After you had passed the cemetery and felt safe enough to relax your grip on mother's hand, you asked her many questions, but she would not answer them, always changing the subject. So you knew there was a mystery concerning the old maids—a secret known to mother and grandma and perhaps all the "grown-ups," but not to little boys.

"Well, you know the secret now. The romance you suspected was there, but it was such a sordid, pitiful romance, hardly worth the telling, it may be, except for the fact that it contained a great surprise. And the surprise was this:

The old maids were not old maids at all! That is, one of them was not. Hully had been married, she was a widow. Cap'n Darius Baker was a great man in his day. One of the magnates of our village he was, after he retired from sea, and drove a span and gave liberally to the church and for town improvements. After his election to the State Legislature the big house on the Neck Road was filled with guests whom the Cap'n brought down from Boston, and there were parties and dinners galore. Once—it was grandma's pet story—the Governor visited our village, and it was Cap'n Baker who entertained him and, at the ball the evening after, Cap'n Baker's daughter, Hully, who led the march with the great man.

Pashy and Hully were girls at that time, but then, as later, it was Pashy who attended to the household duties and Hully who shone in the social gaiety. Mrs. Baker had died when her youngest daughter was born, and upon Patience, the elder, fell the care of the establishment and its servants—three of them, more than any other house in the community could boast of. Pashy was plain and practical; Hully rather pretty and poetical. Hully was her father's spoiled

darling, and Pashy, without jealousy, assisted in the spoiling.

Cap'n Darius, though respected and envied, was not a universal favorite. He was considered pompous and "stuck up," and people said that he held himself above "common folks." At any rate, he certainly did seem to consider his daughters too good for the village young men who came to call upon them, and some of those young men were promising skippers of full-rigged ships, and "catches" whom many a scheming parent had marked and laid plans for. So, though the girls—Hully in particular—had many would-be beaux, no one of the latter could be picked out by the gossips as "steady company" for either of the sisters.

And then came the Count. This is the only recorded instance of the coming of nobility to our village, and it created a sensation which extended over the whole county. On the first Sunday when Hully Baker entered the meeting-house upon the arm of the titled foreigner, Parson Simpkins' reading of the Scripture stopped for an instant, and the buzz of excited interest which stirred the congregation reminded its older members of the time when Araminta Panminan marched up the aisle with her bonnet on "hind side before."

The Count, so it appeared—his name is forgotten now, and you never heard it pronounced twice alike by those who pretended to remember it—was an Italian nobleman visiting this country on a pleasure trip. He had met Cap'n Darius at a dinner in Boston, and the Cap'n, with enormous enterprise, had set upon him and brought him home for an over Sunday stay. People, supposed to be up in such matters, remarked that he was "dead gone on Hully already."

Apparently he was, for he came again and again, until, finally, the engagement was announced. The wedding was the swiftest affair ever known on the Cape, and, so the "Itens" said, was attended by "a galaxy of beauty and chivalry which would have done honor to the proudest capitals of Europe." None of the Count's relatives were present, but that was not expected—it was a long way off in those days. The bridal couple departed, via the Boston packet, on their honeymoon journey to . . . well, anywhere from the pyramids of Egypt to Niagara Falls, according to who told the story. Cap'n Baker remained at home to keep house as usual, and our village rubbed its eyes and settled back to await developments.

They came within a year. Of course every one who reads this has already foreseen the miserable denouement. But cables were scarce then, and newspapers scarce, so tales of bogus counts and their wives had not been printed broadcast to serve as warnings for aspiring fathers and ambitious young women. The Count wasn't a count at all. He wasn't even an Italian, but hailed from somewhere in South America, and his wife, a daughter living in New Orleans. Anxious letters from the forsaken wife led to the disclosure and the consequent scandal. Our village stopped work for a week, to gather at the sewing circle and the post-office and whisper rumors and surmises.

The rumors became certainties, and more rumors trod upon the heels of the first. Hully had come back to her father at Boston. The Count was in jail somewhere. Cap'n Baker was in financial difficulties; he had been speculating and had lost all his money; the marriage was supposedly rich, a nobleman had been arranged by him with a hope that his son-in-law's wealth might help him out of his troubles. Hully was very sick. There was talk of arresting her father.

They say Pashy's demeanor at this dreadful time was something to write and read. She grew thin and white, but she bore herself as proudly and went about her work as bravely as when the family name was clean and unsmirched. She went to church each Sunday and sat in the Baker pew, and those who would fain have sympathized with her did not do so, any more than the meaner souls who would have liked to gloat over her downfall dared sneer in her presence. Then came the final crash. Cap'n Darius committed suicide in a Boston hotel, and Hully, weak, worn, and crushed, came to our village with her body. Even the Pashy did not openly give way, but sheltered her sister from curious eyes and took upon her own shoulders all the worry and anxiety of the months that followed.

So that is the story of the old maids. All the times they lived in the old house, the old treasures collected during their father's prosperity, and no one but a very few knew—though many guessed—how hard was the struggle for even the necessities of life, and how they sewed and crocheted and knit far into the nights to make the articles they sold to the townspeople and the summer visitors. And to Pashy still was known how steadfastly Pashy bore her burden and how she refused charity and sacrificed her own comfort and actual needs to honor her weaker sister. The "niece" in New Orleans was the Count's daughter. Hully felt curious and deep-rooted sympathy for this girl, whose father had wronged her, and the letter every Sunday was faithfully written and faithfully mailed until the hands which wrote and mailed it were still forever.

The old maids died years ago, before you left our village. Pashy, worn out, died first, and Hully, entirely at sea without her protector and guide, followed in a few months. She left the house and its contents to the New Orleans "niece," but no sooner was she in her grave than behold a swarm of hitherto unheard-of relatives appeared—cousins three or four times removed—and they fought over the will like sharks over a dead whale. There were auction sales in which the blue china cups and saucers and the spinning wheel and warming pans, the mahogany furniture and the gilt-framed mirrors, were sold at prices which would have kept the old maids in comfort for years. But to sell articles which belonged to "father" was not Pashy's way; she would have worked herself to death first.

The house on the Neck Road is now occupied by a Portuguese family, who pick cranberries and go out "choring" and washing. One day during a recent summer, as you were strolling by, you saw three of the little Portuguese children—goodness knows how many of them there are—playing at "keeping house" in the yard. They had a lean-to of boards, and it was furnished, after a fashion, with broken-down doll's furniture donated by some kind-hearted summer resident. There was a piece of looking-glass tacked on the walls of the playhouse and what appeared to be a framed picture. But it wasn't a picture—it was the worsted "sampler" that hung on the walls of the dining-room that evening when you took tea with the old maids.

You thought that sampler and you took it yet. To you it is fragrant with the scent of wild honeysuckle and of sugared

flagroot, of the summer Sunday walks with grandma, and memories of "Pashy and Hully."—By Joseph C. Lincoln, in Collier's.

THE YEAR 1909.

Anniversary of the Year in Which many Great Men were Born. A Year of Great Deeds. The Discovery of the North Pole—Wireless Telegraphy—Greatest Ocean Speed—Man Begins to Fly—The Wireless Telephone.

At the beginning of 1909, we all knew that it was the hundredth anniversary of a year that is famous as the year in which great men were born, several of them, indeed, were among the most distinguished men of modern times. And as some of our newspapers have recently pointed out, in looking back over 1909, we realize that it, too, is a remarkable year, and likely to be famous in history as a year in which great things were done.

To the girls and boys of the United States probably the centennial anniversary of the birth of President Abraham Lincoln—one of our greatest Presidents—was the most conspicuous because of its general celebration in the schools. To the men of the greatest statesmen of England, William Ewart Gladstone; of one of its greatest poets, Alfred, Lord Tennyson, and of perhaps its greatest scientist, Charles Darwin.

The musical world rejoiced that 1809 had produced two of the most illustrious composers, Chopin and Mendelssohn; and two of America's most brilliant writers, Edgar Allan Poe and Oliver Wendell Holmes, also were born that year.

The city and State of New York also celebrated the one hundredth anniversary of the beginning of successful steam navigation on the Hudson river, and the three hundredth anniversary of the exploration of that river by Henry Hudson. But it must be remembered that there have been several other important centennial celebrations in 1909. Among the minor "Three Hundred Years Ago" erections by the Chicago Congregational club of a tablet in Amsterdam, Holland, in memory of the Pilgrim Fathers who afterward came to America. It was there three hundred years ago that they decided to cross the sea and begin a new life in the New World. Gov. Bradford thus expressed it: "By a joynt consente they resolved to go into ye Low Countries, where they heard was freedom of Religion for all men" . . . and lived at Amsterdam.

A similar gift by the people of Boston was made to the city of Leyden in Holland. But famous as 1909 is as a one hundredth (and a three hundredth) anniversary year, it seems likely to be even more famous as the beginning of an era of marvelous advancement in the fields of science. Indeed, several remarkable scientific achievements—genuine "fairytale" of science—must already be recorded to the credit of the year.

Let us glance at some of them in detail: The Discovery of the North Pole—Probably the most dramatic event of the year, bringing to a triumphant conclusion more than three centuries of arctic exploration, has been the announcement of the discovery of the north pole. Within a single week of 1909 such announcements and claims were made by Dr. Frederick A. Cook and by Commander Robert E. Peary, of the United States navy.

Arctic explorations began in 1553 by English explorers, Willoughby and Chancellor, seeking for a passage through arctic waters. In 1773 Martin Frobisher discovered Frobisher bay and brought home earth that he claimed contained gold. He made two later voyages and was followed in 1585 by John Davis, who discovered the straits that have since borne his name.

William Baffin, in 1646, reached about 77 degrees and 45 minutes north latitude. His record remained unequalled for 236 years. William Barentz made three voyages. On the last, in 1596-97, he discovered Spitzbergen, but failed to find the supposed eastern passage.

Various exploring parties were sent out to the far north about this time by New England, Holland and Denmark, and each one added something to our geographical knowledge of polar regions. One of these parties in 1607 was commanded by Henry Hudson, who was disappointed in not finding the "northwest passage," and then turned southwest. His little ship, the Half Moon, found what was much better, the Hudson river and the site of the present great metropolis, New York. (Italians claim that Verrazano, and not Hudson, was the first discoverer of this river, but that Hudson was the first to explore and make it widely known.)

Lieut. John Franklin was one of the most famous of the explorers of the frozen north. His explorations ended in 1826. Then followed Capt. John Ross in 1829, Capt. C. Back in 1833, Dr. Kane in 1853, and several other famous explorers, including Greely and Nansen, during the last forty years have tried nobly, but in vain, to reach the pole.

Commander Robert E. Peary began his explorations in 1886 and several times has pushed his way into the far north. Dr. Cook was surgeon for Commander Peary on his trip in 1891; and the journey inspired him with a love of arctic exploration that was put into practice in several ventures and exploring trips.

This brief review of some of the many arduous explorations of the North by many brave men helps us to realize the difficulties they had to overcome, and makes the success of 1909 all the more important and wonderful.

2. Wireless Telegraphy. In some respects the most dramatic of all events on the ocean and the most wonderful of all accomplishments of science was the saving of the lives of some fifteen hundred passengers on the Republic of the White Star Line by wireless telegraphy. The boat was about forty-five miles from Nantucket, on her way to Naples, last January. Early in the morning she was struck by another boat, the Florida.

This accident was chiefly due to a heavy fog. The steel stem of the Florida smashed through steel plates on the side of the Republic as if they had been made of cardboard. Both the ships were badly damaged and hopelessly groping in the fog. But Jack Binns, the wireless telegraph operator of the injured steamship, Republic, faithfully good at his post and sent off messages for help. These electrical waves went in every direction. Soon came the answer, through the unseen electric waves in the fog, that boats were on the way to rescue. Some of these came from many miles—even from eighty or one hundred miles away. Thus 1909 saw for the first time "boats called from beyond sight or hearing, without wires or any other old-time method of communication, to the assistance of a sinking ship.

Almost two thousand lives saved go to the credit of this victory for science, and they count Jack Binns, who remained faithfully at his wireless telegraph instrument, as one of the heroes of the year.

3. Great Ocean Speed. The year 1909 has produced, by the steamship Mauretania, the highest ocean speed yet attained. The Mauretania's record is as follows: Eastward: Highest day's run, 610 knots; shortest passage, 4 days, 13 hours, 41 minutes (short track); highest average speed, 25.89 knots (long track); Westward: Highest day's run, 673 knots; shortest passage, 4 days, 10 hours, 51 minutes (short track); highest average speed, 26.06 knots (short track). The Mauretania holds the eastward and westward records for highest daily runs, fastest passages, shortest passages and highest speed between the Irish coast and Sandy Hook.

4. Man Begins to Fly—This same year has seen most wonderful demonstrations of the success of flying machines—not merely steerable balloons, but machines that are heavier than air and yet really fly in spite of this weight. Prominent in many daring flights, during the year, have been: In America, the Wright brothers; in Germany, Count Zeppelin (with his huge, metal-covered dirigible balloon); and in France, M. Bleriot (who was able to cross the English channel in a flying machine.)

5. The Wireless Telephone. Another wonderful achievement is the ability to send the voice through space without wires. With the wireless telephone, the voice produces electrical vibrations, and travel through the air as do the electrical waves of wireless telegraphy. One writer has expressed it thus: "The difference is precisely that between shouting to a man across the street and talking to him over the wire, save that the radiophone hurries the sound waves over greater distances than the unaided voice."

What next? Our month January was named after the old Latin god Janus, who was supposed to have two faces, looking in opposite directions—forward and backward toward both the past and the future. (His fanciful image, holding the keys of past and future, is woven into the head-piece on page 266.) And two-headed Janus, in this particular January, has mighty achievements of mankind to behold in the realm of nature and science. The opportunities and possibilities of the future will always be greater than the accomplishments of the past. But we accomplish what we have so much in one year to be proud of as we had in 1809 and 1909.

—Do you know that you can get the finest oranges, bananas and grape fruit, and pine apples, Sechler & Co.

What the Pennsylvania Railroad Company Has Done in the Matter of Pensions.

Reports compiled by the Relief Department of the Pennsylvania Railroad System show that since their establishment, some twenty-three years ago, there have been paid in benefits the sum of \$27,308,152.81. This is brought out in a report for the month of November, issued today, which also shows that the number of employees of the Pennsylvania Railroad System who were members of the relief funds on December 1st, 1909, was 143,102 as compared to 128,986 on the same date in 1908. The total amount of benefits paid in 1909 up to the end of November amounted to \$1,689,748.57.

The relief department of the lines east of Pittsburg and Erie in the month of November paid to its members the sum of \$115,039.55, representing \$47,108.00 paid to the families of members who died and \$67,931.55 to members who were incapacitated for work. The total payments on the lines east of Pittsburg and Erie since the Relief fund was established in 1886 have amounted to \$19,916,537.80.

In November, the relief department of the Pennsylvania lines west of Pittsburg and Erie paid out a total of \$42,477.00 of which \$15,750.00 were for the families of members who died, and \$26,727.00 for members who were unable to work. The sum of \$7,391,615.01 represents the total payments of the relief fund of the lines west since it was established in 1889.

Probably unique among the pension rolls of the country is that of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, which, according to a compilation just completed, is shown to have 226 employees who are over eighty years of age, and who were retired when they were seventy years, or younger, and have received annual pensions ever since.

A similar compilation made recently shows that the Pennsylvania Railroad has 1,350 active employees who have been with the road forty years or more, and 1,013 additional men who, before they were retired on pension had served the road more than forty years.

The number of employees on the Pennsylvania pay roll who are over eighty years of age is shown in the following table:

AGE	NUMBER
80	6
81	6
82	12
83	14
84	26
85	23
86	26
87	37
88	37
89	37
90	41

In addition to these employees there are three who are ninety years or more: Andrew Abels, of Philadelphia, who was born May 23, 1817; was retired January 1st, 1900; David B. Price, of the Sunbury division, was born Nov. 3, 1818 and was retired January 1st, 1900; he had been with the company as an active employee since 1854; Andrew Nebinger of Philadelphia Division, was born March 17th, 1819, and retired on a pension January 1st, 1900, after 46 years' continuous service with the road. These three men were retired when the Pennsylvania in 1900 established America's first railroad pension system.

These unusual statistics are not brought out in the report of the Railroad's Pension Fund of the Pennsylvania, which in its first nine years of its existence has paid to retired employees of the railroad a total of \$3,445,793.77.

—Do you know where to get the finest teas, coffees and spices, Sechler & Co. —Here's a heading in this paper which says, "Badly Mutilated by a Mount Band." —What was the name of the piece the band was mutilating? —If you wish for anything which belongs to another you lose that which is your own.