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MISCELLANY.

The Pony Phaeton, or Love on the Road.

POE
A Reminiscence
I was a fair and youthful
Who dwelt among the trees
As her true native air
And gentle as the event
The light of love was
That gleamed the mane
Gaily she filled her hair
With pleasant smiles
And her light brown eyes
Hopes, bright as youth
around
The pathway and lit up
Her eyes gleaming
Who led her well; a
The love they gave.

Any orders, sir?
No—yet stay; who came in that handsome
pony phaeton I saw standing in the yard?
A lady, sir.
A young widow, sir.
She's very handsome, sir.
Go along, and shut the door after you, minkered
the traveler, stately.
A woman and a widow! he soliloquized,
I'm glad I don't know her! I am certainly
very fortunate to have attained the age of forty
without any feminine entanglement. Independent
peculiarly—not ill-looking, I think I must
admit that I should make what those busy-bodies,
the match-makers, call a grand catch. But, thank
my stars! I've preserved my independence and content
so far, and I'm not likely to succumb now. No, no! Jack
Campion was born to live and die an old bachelor.
And now for the newspaper while my horse is
biting.

In the meantime another horseman had alighted
at the hotel, from a horse reeking with sweat,
and literally unable to put one foot before the
other.
The same hostler—an Irishman—made his
appearance.
"What's the matter with you, young man, fashionably
attired—ride your mare in the stable, and do
the best you can for her."
"Oh! Mischief, Traverser, an' abo's kilt in-
dredly!"
"What's a' goin' on?"
"No matter, is my sister here?"
"Yes, sir. Bill, show the gentleman into the
ladies' parlor; he wants to see Mrs. Leslie."
"Ah, Bill!" said the young woman, rising to
meet him. "But what's the matter with you?"
"Nothing, Bill—nothing."
"Something is certainly the matter. You
look flushed and excited."
"I've been riding hard, and my horse is
tired." "That's not all. O, tell me what has hap-
pened!"
"I must be brief, then, for I am pursued."
"Pursued?"
"Yes. You know that fellow who insulted you
in the coach the other day, replied the young man,
more than a week. I met him to-day in the
street, and gave him a confounded horse-whip-
ping. I handed him very roughly, I'm afraid."
He instantly got out a warrant against me,
and wishing to be dragged into court till I
was ready, mounted my horse and gave the
officer the slip. Perhaps I'd better have wait-
ed and braved it out; but having taken this
step, I'm bound to baffle them. To-morrow
I'll surrender myself. Now, Bill, if your pony
will take me to my uncle's in five minutes,
I'm your man."

"Poor Charley couldn't do it," said the lady.
"Then I'll make another arrangement. By-
and-by, Bill, I'll see you at the villa."
From the drawing-room the young man
rejoined into the stable.
"Pat," said he, "give me a horse—a good
one."
"Sorra the horse we've got in the stable, except
this black and that belongs to a gentleman
who came here just yore year. Och, but
he's a good one, tho' yer honour; 2,40 to a
scint."
"I'll borrow him," said Traverser, jumping on
his back. "Tell Bell to drive the gentleman
to the villa, and he shall have him again."
"But, yer honour, I remonstrated the hostler.
In vain. Traverser had set upon the horse,
and was off like a thunderbolt.
"What'll become of me? I'm ruined and
undone intirely!"
Shortly afterward, Mrs. Leslie rang for her
phaeton, and at the same time Mr. Campion,
the old bachelor, ordered his horse. The pony
came round to the front door, and the young
widow stepped lightly into the phaeton, and
took the reins.
"All right," she said, nodding, with a smile,
to Patrick. "Give him his head."
"Och! it's all wrong, my lady," replied the
hostler, keeping tight hold of the reins. "Your
carriage is in the stable."
"Very well; but I came alone."
"You've got to take a passenger."
"What do you mean?"
"Och! warr! your brother's been stalin' a
horse."
"Stealing a horse?"
"Yes, this gentleman's, and he said you were
to take him to the villa to get the horse back
again."
"Very singular," said the widow. "But
William always was very eccentric."
"At this crisis, Mr. Campion appeared.
"My horse ready?"
"Jump in, sir!"
"I didn't come in a carriage."
"In wide year," shouted the hostler.
"Take a seat beside me, if you please, sir,"
said the widow, with her most fascinating
smile.
Mr. Campion approached the step to inquire
the meaning of all this, when the hostler,
seizing him with a vigorous hand, thrust him
into the phaeton, while the pony, started at
the movement, dashed off at a run.
"Poor Captain Campion!" Here was a situa-
tion! A confounded old bachelor bodily ab-
ducted by a fascinating young widow. The
captain had to lend his assistance to the lady
in managing the pony, who was shortly reduced
to his usual slow and quiet pace, and then,
after thanking her companion for his assistance,
Mrs. Leslie told him that in a few minutes he
should be put in possession of his horse, which
had been borrowed by a gentleman. This
was all the explanation that she vouchsafed.
She required, in turn, to be made acquainted
with the name of her companion, after giving
her own.

In a few minutes the captain began to feel
somewhat more at ease—in fact, he began
rather to like his position. He had never sat
so near a pretty woman in his life; and he be-
gan to ask himself whether, if the proximity
was so pleasant for a few moments, a constant
companionship might not prove an agreeable
When her attention was engaged upon her
pony, he had an opportunity to study her fea-
tures. Her large, dark and lustrous eyes
seemed to be literally swimming in liquid lustre.
Her cheek was as soft and blooming as the
sunny side of a peach. Her profile, as she
was strictly Grecian, and her parted lips showed
a row of tiny pearls as white as snow. The
most delicate of taper fingers, encased in French
kitt, closed upon the reins, and the varnished
tip of a dainty boot indicated a foot that Cin-
drella might have envied.
"Do you live far from here, madam?" asked
the captain.
"Not very far. The pony can mend his
pace if you are in a hurry."
"Not for the world. The pace seems to be
a very fast one."
The widow turned those witching black
eyes of hers upon the old bachelor, and smiled.
It was over with him. When he sprang out
at the gate of the villa, and touched the fairy
fingers of the widow, as he assisted her to alight,
his heart was irrevocably lost.
A red-faced old gentleman, in a dressing
gown, received them at the hall door.
"My friend, Captain Campion, uncle," said
the widow. "Excuse me for a moment, sir."
"Very happy to see you, sir," said the old
gentleman. "Walk in—warm day."
"Very," said the captain. And indeed his
looks seemed to corroborate the statement, for
he was as red as a peony.
The captain and the old gentleman were
soon chatting together familiarly, and the former
felt himself completely at home. After half an
hour spent in this manner, his host ex-
cused himself, and the old bachelor was left
alone.
A dreamy reverie was interrupted by the
sound of voices in the hall. The captain easily
recognised the widow's, and a glance thro' the
half-opened door showed him that her com-
panion was a very handsome young gen-
tleman.
"There, dear Bell!" said the young man,
"don't scold me any more. I won't do so
again, I promise you. Give me a kiss."
A hearty smack followed. It was a verita-
ble, genuine kiss—the captain saw and heard
it. A pang shot through his heart.
"The only woman I could ever love," he said
to himself. "And she's engaged."
The widow tripped into the room. If she
was pleasing in her carriage-dress, she was
perfectly bewitching in her drawing-room at-
tire. Campion could now see the whole of
that delicate, fairy look.
"My dear sir," said she, "your horse is at
your service now."
"But," she added, "if you will stay and take
dinner with us, my uncle will be very much
gladified, and I shall be highly pleased."
"The coquette!" thought Campion. "I am
obliged to you, madam," he said, "but I have
another engagement."
"Then we cannot hope to detain you, sir—
but you must first allow me to present you to
my brother."
The handsome young man had now made
his appearance, and shook hands with the
bachelor.
"That's the horse thief, captain?" said the
widow, laughing.
The young man apologized, and explained
the circumstances which had impelled him to
take the liberty. I am very sorry, he added,
that we cannot improve the acquaintance thus
casually made, by enjoying your company at
dinner. I am sorry you are otherwise engaged.
"Why as to that," said the captain, drawing
off his gloves, "your offer is too tempting and
I feel compelled to accept it."
So his horse was remanded to the stable
and he stopped to dinner. After dinner they
had music, for Mrs. Leslie played and sang
charmingly. Then he was persuaded to stay
to tea; and in the evening the family rambled
in the garden, and the captain secured a ten
minutes *à tête* with the widow, in a sum-
mer house, overgrown with Madonia vines and
inhabited by a spider and six centipedes. It was
ten o'clock when he mounted his horse to re-
turn to Boston, but it was bright moonlight,
and he was romantically inclined.
The next morning he repeated his visit, and
the next—and the next. In short, the episode
of the borrowed horse produced a declaration
and though years have passed away, the cap-
tain has no occasion to regret his ride with
the widow in the pony phaeton.

The lower counties of New Jersey are pro-
bably barren, being covered with immense
forests of pine, interspersed with cedar swamps.
During the dry summer months, these latter
become parched to an extent that is incredible,
and the accidental contagion of a fire-brand
often wraps immense tracts of country in
flames. The rapidity with which the confra-
gation, when once kindled, spreads through
these swamps, can scarcely be credited except
by those who know how thoroughly the moss
and twigs are dried up by the heat of the sun.
Indeed, scarcely a spot can be pointed
out in West Jersey, which has not, at
one time or another, been ravaged by a confra-
gation. It was but a few years since that an
immense tract of these pine barrens was on
fire, and the citizens of Philadelphia can re-
collect the lurid appearance of the sky at night,
seen at a distance of thirty or even forty miles
from the scene of the conflagration. The
legendary history of these wild counties is full
of daring deeds and hair-breadth escapes which
have been witnessed during such times of per-
il. One of these traditional stories is its
purpose to relate. The period of our tale
dates far back into the early history of the
sister state, when the country was even more
thickly settled than at present.
It was a sunny morning in midsummer,
when a gay party was assembled at the door
of a neat house in one of the lower counties
of New Jersey. Foremost in the group stood
a tall manly youth, whose frank countenance
at once attracted the eye. By his side was a
bright young creature, apparently about eight-
teen years of age, whose golden tresses were
a fit type of the sunny beauty of her counte-
nance; but now her soft blue eyes were dim
with tears, and she leaned on the shoulder of
her mother, who was apparently equally af-
fected. The dress of the daughter, and her atti-
tude of lamentation, told that she was a bride,
going forth from the home of her childhood,
to enter on a new and untried sphere of life.
The other members of the group were com-

posed of her father, her brothers and sisters,
and the bride and bridegroom.
"God bless you, my daughter, and have you
in his holy keeping," said the father, as he
gave her his last embrace—"and now fare-
well!"
The last kiss was given, the last parting
word was said, the last look had been taken,
and now the bridal party was being whirled
through the forest in one of the sweetest
mornings of the present month of July.
It was indeed a lovely day. Their way lay
through an old forest which was rarely trav-
eled, and that it had become overgrown with
grass, among which the thick dew-drops, glitter-
ing in the morning sun, were scattered like
jewels in the trees or slung gaily from branch
to branch, while the gentle sighing of the wind,
and the occasional murmur of a brook cross-
ing the road, added to the exhilarating influ-
ence of the hour. The travelers were all
young and happy, and they gradually forgot
the sadness of the parting hour, and ere they
had traversed many miles the green arched
of that lovely old forest were ringing with
merriment. Suddenly, however, the bride
passed her innocent mirth, and, while a
shroud of paleness overspread her cheek, called
the attention of her husband to a dark, black
cloud, far off on the horizon, and yet gloom-
ier and denser than the darkest thunder-
cloud.
"The forest is on fire!" was his instant
exclamation; "think you not so, Charles?"
and he turned to his groomsmen.
"Yes, but the wind is not towards us, and
the fire must be miles from our course. There
is no need for alarm, Ellen," said he, turning
to the bride, his sister.
"But the roads are altogether through the
forest," she sadly rejoined, "and you know
there isn't a house or cleared space for
miles."
"Yes—but my dear sister, so long as the fire
keeps its distance, it matters not whether our
road is through the forest or the fields. We
will drive on briskly, and before noon you
will laugh at your fears. Your parting from
home has weakened your nerves."
No more was said, and for some time the
congregation was evidently spreading with
great rapidity. The dark, dense clouds of
smoke which had at first been seen hanging
only in one spot, had now extended in a line
along the horizon, gradually edging onward
so as to head off the travelers. But this was
done so imperceptibly, that for a long time,
they were not aware of it, and they had jour-
neyed at least half an hour before they saw
their danger. At length the bride spoke
again:
"Surely, dear Edward," she said, addressing
her husband, "the fire is sweeping around
us, and I have been watching it by your
blasted pine, and I see it slowly creep-
ing across the trunk."
Every eye was instantly turned in the di-
rection in which she pointed—and her brother,
who was driving, involuntarily checked the
horses. A look of dismay was on each coun-
tenance as they saw the words of the bride
verified. There could be no doubt that the
fire had materially changed its bearing since
she last spoke, and now threatened to cut
off their escape altogether.
"I wish, Ellen," he had listened to your
fears, and turned back half an hour ago,"
said the brother; "we'd better do it at once."
"God help us! that is impossible!" said the
husband looking backwards; "the fire has
cut off our retreat!"
It was as he said. The flames, which at
first had started at a point several miles dis-
tant and at right angles to the road the party
was travelling, had spread out in every di-
rection, and, finding the swamp in the rear of
the party parched almost to tinder by the
drought, had extended right down towards
them, so that at that quarter, and that a
handful of smoke, beneath which a dark lurid
veil of fire, surged and rolled, completely cut
off any retrograde movement on the part of the
travelers. This volume of flame, moreover, was
evidently moving rapidly in pursuit. The cheeks,
turned ashy pale at the sight.
"There is nothing to do but to push on,"
said the brother; "we will yet clear the road
before the fire reaches us."
"And I, remember," said the husband,
"there is no road leading off to the right,
save half a mile ahead, and we can gain that
easily when we shall be safe. Cheer up, El-
len—there is no danger. This is our wedding
morn—let me not see you sad."
The horses were now urged forward at a
brisk pace, and in a few minutes the bridal
party reached the cross-road. Their progress
was now directly from the fire; all perils seemed
at an end; and the spirits of the group rose
in proportion to their late depression. Once
more the merry laugh was heard, and the song
rose up gaily on the morning air. The con-
flagration still raged behind; but at a distance
the places all seemed bright and cheerful, and
the fire, although edging down towards them,
approached at a pace so slow that they knew
it would not reach the road until perhaps
hours after they had attained their journey's
end. At length the party absided again into
silence, occupying themselves in gazing on the
magnificent spectacle presented by the lurid
flames, as, rolling their huge volumes of smoke
above them, they roared down towards the
travelers.
"The forest is as dry as powder," said the
husband. "I never saw a conflagration travel
so rapidly. The fire cannot have been kind-
led many hours, and it has already spread for
miles. Little did you think, Ellen," he said,
turning fondly to his bride, "when we started
this morning, that you would so narrowly es-
cape such a peril."
"And, as I live, the peril is not yet over!"
suddenly exclaimed the brother. "See—see
—a fire has broke out on our right, and is com-
ing down on us like a whirlwind! God have
mercy on us!"
He spoke with an energy that would have
started his hearers without the fearful words
he uttered. But when they followed the di-
rection of his quivering gaze, a shriek burst
from the two females, while the usually bold
husband turned ashy pale, and, for a moment,
forgot to breathe. A fire, during the last few
minutes, had started to life in the forest to their
right, and, as the wind was from that quarter,
the flames were seen to be shooting down
towards the road which the bridal party was
travelling, roaring, hissing, and thundering as
they drew near.
"Five stars for heaven's sake!" on the gal-
lop exclaimed the husband, as he comprehended
the imminency of the danger.
The brother made no answer, but he well
knew their fearful situation, and whipped the

horses into a run. The chaise flew along the
narrow forest-road with a rapidity that neither
of the party had ever before witnessed; for
even the animals themselves seemed aware of
their peril, and strained every sinew to escape
from the fiery death which threatened them.
Their situation was indeed terrible, and
momentarily becoming more precarious. The
fire, when first seen, was, at least, a mile off,
but nearly equidistant from a point in the
road the bridal party was traversing; and, as
the conflagration swept down towards the road
with a velocity equal to that of the travelers
it soon became evident that, they would have
barely time to pass the fire ere it swept across
the road, thus cutting off all escapes! Each
saw this; but the females were now paral-
yzed with fear. "Only the husband spoke."
"Easter—for God's sake, faster!" he heart-
ily cried; "see you not that the fire is making
for your tall pine! We shall not be able
to reach the tree first, unless we go faster."
"I will do my best," said the brother, lash-
ing still more furiously the foaming horses.
"Oh, God! that I had turned back when El-
len wished me!"
On came the roaring fire—on in one mass
of flames—with a velocity that seemed only
equalled by that of the flying hurricane. Now
the flames caught the lower limbs of a tall
tree, and in an instant had hissed to its top—
now the shot out their forked tongues from
one huge pine to another far across the interme-
diate space—and now the whirling fire whistled
along the dry grass and moss of the
swamp with a rapidity which the eye could
scarcely follow. Already the fierce heat of the
conflagration began to be felt by the travel-
ers, while the horses, feeling the increase of
warmth, grew restive and terrified. The peril
momentarily increased. Hope grew faint.
Behind and on either side the conflagration
roared in pursuit, while the advancing
flame in front was cutting off their only
avenue of escape. They were girdled by fire!
Faster and quicker roared the flames towards
the devoted party, until at length despair
paralyzed on the hearts of the travelers. Pale,
speechless, silent, inanimate as statues, sat
the females; while the husband and brother,
leaning forward in the carriage and urging the
horses to their utmost speed, gazed speechless
on the approaching flames. Already the fire
was within a hundred yards of the road
ahead, and it seemed beyond human proba-
bility that the travelers could pass it in time.
The husband gave one last agonizing glance
at his inanimate wife. When again he looked
at the approaching flames, he saw that during
that momentary glimpse they had lessened
their distance one-half. He could already
feel the hot breath of the fire on his cheek.
The wind, too, suddenly whirled down with
fiercer fury, and in an instant the forked tongues
of the advancing conflagration had shot across
the road, and entwined themselves around
the tall pine which had been the goal of the
traveler's hopes. He sank back with a groan;
but the brother's eye gleamed wildly at the
sight, and, gathering the reins tighter around
his hand, he made one last desperate effort to
force the horses onward; and with one mad
leap, they lifted the carriage from the ground
as if it had been a plaything, plunged into the
fiery furnace, and the next instant had shot
through the pass.

Charley gave one look backwards, as if to
assure himself that they had indeed escaped.
He saw the lurid mass of fire roaring and
gathered the signs of our Independence, as the
most effective kind, to battle him successfully.
The founders of our Institution saw all
this, many of them fell in; and their
Philanthropic hearts and energies of purpose
brought forth the standard under which thou-
sands and ten thousands are now battling.
Here before us are many warm hearts pledged
to the work, and with the veterans of '76, are
ready to stake their all upon this our common
altar. Who shall say that our one common
object is not as great as that which bound to-
gether the signers of our Independence, as the
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