

THE PASSING OF A DREAM.

A wan and wistful hope was mine,
Whist thou on earth didst hold thy
place,
That somehow the long whirl of years
Would some time bring us face to face.

While that dim hope clung to my heart,
Some purple gleams lit up life's sea;
The sirens sat beside the surge
And sang—ah! how alluringly.

—Hattie
One day you drank that poppy draught
Which all must drink who well would
sleep.
I dream no more, no more I sing,
No more will pulses thrill and leap.
Tyng Griswold, in Boston Transcript.

A WAGON-LOAD OF FIRE.

By Lewis B. Miller.

ON a pleasant day in early win-
ter, about a year after we
had settled on the Little Pe-
can Creek, I yoked up Lep
and Coaly, the oxen, and put them to
the wagon. I was going for a load of
straw to Johnson place, six miles
north, toward the head of the Little
Pecan.

Two miles from home I came to the
house where Sinclair McCarty, a boy
of my own age, lived. As he was a
good hand at stacking or loading straw
father had suggested that I stop and
get him to go with me. But his moth-
er told me that he had gone hunting,
and had been out an hour.

I drove on. Johnson would help me
load the straw; but while jolting
through the woods, I saw McCarty's
dogs run across the road, and knew
that Sinclair was near. A few shouts
brought him to the wagon. He was
very tall for a boy of sixteen, very
thin, and had a prominent nose.

"Well, what do you think of my new
gun?" was his first remark, as he
held the weapon up for inspection.
"Traded my saddle for her," he ex-
plained.

Sinclair's "new" gun was an old
army musket, but he had never owned
a gun before, and was very proud of
it.

"How does it shoot?" I asked.
"Don't know. Just got my ammuni-
tion this morning, and haven't seen
anything to shoot at yet. She's all
right, though; you can tell that by
looking at her."

He consented to go with me, and as
we jogged along, he showed me his
new powder-horn, which he had made
himself. It was a large one, now nearly
full of powder. It hung on one side
of him, and an ammunition-bag of un-
dressed deer-skin on the other.

Scarcely had we left the woods when
a mule-eared rabbit jumped out of
the prairie grass by the road and went
leaping off, but sat down about thirty
yards away.

"Now just watch her tumble the
mule-ear!" said Sinclair, for with bor-
rowed guns he had become a fair
shot.

Stopping the oxen, I went and stood
at their heads to keep them from run-
ning away. At the report of the mus-
ket the big rabbit darted off like a
streak. Sinclair stood staring after it,
as if expecting every moment to see it
drop dead. When it had disappeared
over the ridge, he rubbed his shoulder,
looked into the muzzle of the gun,
and finally squinted his eye along the
barrel.

"She looks all right, and the barrel's
straight enough," he remarked, in a
puzzled, serious way. "Don't see why
she don't shoot straighter. Nearly
kicked my shoulder off, too." Later,
while reloading, he said: "She's a little
hard on the trigger. Guess I must
have pulled her up when I pulled her
off."

But after three more fruitless shots
at "mule-ears" as we drove along he
threw the musket on the ground.

"If that was what the Confederate
soldiers had to fight with, no wonder
our side got licked!" he exclaimed an-
grily.

"Pick it up and bring it along," I
said, laughing. "You'll need it Christ-
mas. It makes a terrible noise," for
it is at Christmas time Texas boys set
off their fireworks.

Sinclair took up the musket. "I'll
trade her off the very first chance I
get!" he declared, angrily. "Somebody
has got to pay me for that saddle."
Sinclair was a born trader. He had
a reputation among the boys for get-
ting the better in swappings, but for
once he had been badly cheated, and
was angry over it.

"What'll you take for it?" I asked,
skeptically.
"Never you mind. That saddle was
worth \$10, and I'll get something just
as good."

"Let's be traveling. We'll soon be
where I saw the deer last week. You'd
better put in a load of buckshot," I
suggested.

He poured nearly a handful of pow-
der into the gun. "I'll put in a load
that is a load—one that'll scatter all
over the country!" he declared. "If
there's a deer between here and the
Big Pecan, I'll get it." Then he wad-
ded up a piece of newspaper and
rammed it down on the powder.

"You'll get kicked heels over head,"
I remarked, from some experience
with a musket.

"Let her kick," was his reply, as he
hammered the powder till the ramrod
bounced out of the barrel. "I'm going
to put in ammunition enough to kill
something, if she kicks me clean out
of the county!"

Then Sinclair went on ahead and
walked all the rest of the way, but
saw neither deer nor anything else at
which he cared to shoot.

Johnson helped us put the straw on
the frame. We threw off our coats
and worked and worked, till the wa-
gon disappeared and the straw on it
rose high above the oxen. When
finished the huge load looked like a
strawstack on wheels. The straw was
so very dry and light that it would
not pack well.

"It's got two pounds in it," said Sin-
clair. "The musket wasn't a patchin'
to what that powder'll do when it goes
off. It'll blow everything sky-high."
"O goodness! The oxen will be
killed and the wagon blown to pieces!"
Since the explosion Lep and Coaly
were running faster, and the flaming
load of straw was bouncing and sway-
ing down the road. We ran after it,
keeping as close behind the dangerous
load as we dared. The prairie around
was brightly lighted. Wisps of blaz-
ing straw had begun to fly off behind.
Sinclair's two dogs were racing along
by the wagon.

The powder horn had been pretty
deeply buried in the straw. The oxen
must have run nearly a mile and Sin-
clair and I were both panting loudly,
and I was beginning to hope that in
some way there might not be an ex-
plosion when the flames, which had
been leaping high, shot far higher,
spreading out as they rose. An instant
later we heard a terrific report. The
air far above the wagon was full of
fire and blazing straw.

Fortunately the powder, being high
up in the load and confined only in the
thin horn, had exerted its force up-
ward. Aside from scattering the sur-
face straw and making a loud noise
and a big flash it did nothing at all.

Poor Lep and Coaly! They had been
panicked before, but now they were
left the road and broke into mad flight
across the prairie. The wagon load of
fire bounding along behind them
seemed no encumbrance.

"No danger—now!" cried Sinclair,
breathlessly. "Let's catch 'em—if we
can!"

We increased our speed. The blaz-
ing straw scattered by the wagon was
setting fire to the prairie, and we had
to keep on one side. Soon the oxen
circled to the right, making straight
for the ridge. We cut across the
prairie, saving a few hundred yards,
and were again near the wagon.

"If we can—only—only—over-
take 'em!" I gasped, as we ran.
"Wagon's gone—I guess—but we can
—we must—must—save—the oxen!
Won't do to—to let 'em—bur—to
death!"

"No—that it—won't!" panted Sin-
clair. "And if we can—only—get—
her out—before she's—she's burnt—
too much—I can—trade her—for—a—"
He did not say what he wanted to
trade the musket for.

Soon the wagon passed over the
ridge and started down the sloping
prairie beyond. On reaching the high-
est ground we stopped, puffing loudly.
As we stood resting, with gasping
lungs and pounding hearts, we
watched the wagon rush down the
slope. It certainly made a brilliant
spectacle. The rope which had cut so
deep into the straw that the fire could
not get to it at first, had by this time
burned in two, so that the straw had
jumped loose and blazed fiercely. The
rocking and plunging wagon threat-
ened every moment to turn over, but
always righted itself. The dogs still
kept near it. Fire enveloped the whole
load now, and the flames were leaping
many feet skyward. A rain of blazing
straw fell from the wagon upon the
dry grass, which quickly flamed up,
making a fiery trail behind that ex-
tended comets.

At that time I was afraid that Lep
and Coaly were scorched, but as after-
ward appeared they were only panic-
stricken. Even the hair on their tails
was scarcely singed. The upright
pieces in front prevented any of the
straw from falling forward, and so
fast did the wagon keep going that
the flying wisps and the heat, too, must
have been swept backward by the
rushing air.

Presently Lep and Coaly swung to
one side. The wagon was running too
fast to turn short. Up rose the hind
end in the air, and over it went, hur-
ling fire many yards beyond! The
frame stopped on its side, leaning
against the straw, and the wagon
rested on the frame.

The oxen had been nearly jerked off
their feet. They struggled wildly,
tearing the wagon loose from the
frame and dragged it on its side till it
turned entirely over. They might
have dragged it to pieces, but the
twisting broke the tongue loose from
the yoke. Once free they plunged
away across the prairie at breakneck
speed.

Sinclair and I were already running
down the slope. We did not bother
about the oxen; they could take care
of themselves now. The prairie grass
was burning all around the straw in
a widening circle, so that he could not
get near the straw and frame, but he
righted the overturned wagon and kept
drawing it back till the circle was
large enough. Then we gave it a
push through the blazing grass and
left it standing on the burnt ground.

We then took a running start, jump-
ed over the prairie fire into the black-
ened circle and drew near to the burn-
ing straw and the hay frame. Sinclair
gazed sorrowfully into the fire and
thought of his loss.

"She was a good gun—a mighty good
gun," he sighed. "If we'd only saved
her I could have got a fine trade for
her from somebody. Cues, though,
I'd have kept her to hunt with. Oh,
you needn't laugh! I know she didn't
shoot so overly well the first few
times, but that must have been be-
cause I didn't know how to load her.
I'd never loaded a musket before.
That last shot sounded mighty like it
would have killed something if it had
half a chance."

"That's so, Sink," I said, "but don't
worry about the old thing. Eunt up
another one. The owner will be glad
to trade it to you for a pocket knife.
It was a pity, though, that you lost so
much good powder. What tickles me
is the way that wagon was saved. If
we'd stopped the oxen before they up-
set it, as we tried to, we couldn't have
got the load off, and straw, wagon and
all would have burnt up before our
eyes, in spite of everything we could
do. Lucky turnover for me."
A little later, after we had rested
and after the prairie fires had opened
a way for us, we turned and trudged
off toward home.—Youth's Companion.



A Wonderful Maid.
She gave me the marble heart,
She gave me a frozen stare,
She gave me an icy hand to shake,
With a frightful frigid air.
Oh, she was a maiden cold,
And I was in deep despair,
Till she gave me a shock when she gave
me a lock
Of her flaming, fiery hair!
—Philadelphia Record.

A Bald Assertion.
Barber—"Your hair will be gray if it
keeps on."
Scantlocks—"Well, I hope it will
keep on."—Baltimore World.

A Tendency of the World.
"Why don't Bloomingboy give up
his bad habits?"
"He's afraid people would quit talk-
ing about what a bright fellow he is
and what wonderful things he would
do if he weren't dissipated."—Wash-
ington Star.

The Girl Behind the Goggles.
First Automobile Girl—"You don't
seem much put out by your automob-
ile breaking down."
Second Automobile Girl—"No; I am
always so nervous expecting it to
break down that I am actually re-
lieved when it does!"—Puck.

Very Probably.
"What would you do if you had a
million dollars?" said one plain every
day man.
"Oh," replied the other. "I suppose
I'd put in most of my time comparing
myself with some one who had a
billion, and feeling discontented."

Well Done.
"In designing his tombstone," said
the widow of the late Wall Street
broker, "I was thinking of this in-
scription: 'He did well by his friends.'"
"Ah!" remarked the man who knew
him, "I would suggest 'He did his
friends well.'"—Philadelphia Press.

Bitterness.
"There's that girl singing 'A Bird
in a Gilded Cage,'" said the nervous
man.
"Yes," answered the boarding house
wag. "If I had a bird that couldn't
sing any better than that, I'd open the
cage and let it fly away!"—Washing-
ton Star.

He Enjoyed Them.
"Yes," said the weather man, "I very
much enjoy these dialect cowboy
stories."
"You would naturally be interested."
"Of course. Whenever I read one
of them, it makes me everlastingly
grateful and comforted to think that
we don't really act and talk like that."

A Business Inspiration.
"I suppose," said the duke, "that you
will look about for an American girl
as a wife for your son?"
"Yes," answered the earl; "and if
the present tendencies of commerce
continue, I shouldn't be surprised if
we had better look out for some hus-
tling American young men as husbands
for our daughters."
—Their Pet.

A little man who pretended to be
very fond of his horse, but kept him
nearly starved, said to a friend:
"You don't know how much we think
of that horse; I shall have him stuffed
so as to preserve him when he dies."
"You'd better stuff him now," re-
torted his friend, "so as to preserve
him living."—Tit-Bits.

A Theory.
"I wonder why children are so quick
to pick up slang?" said the small boy's
mother, disconsolately.
"Probably," answered the serious
person, "it is because the constant
repetition of such words as 'goo goo'
and 'tely kitchy' in infancy gives
them a deep-rooted contempt for
words that are in the dictionary."

Meat.
They were speaking of the billion-
aire's insufferable pretensions.
"Upon what meat does this our
Caesar feed, that he has grown so
great?" exclaimed Mordant Bitterly.
"Mint's meat, possibly," observed
Metravers, trying to be cheaply witty
while yet preserving the easy grace
of a man of the world.—Detroit Free
Press.

Catching a Feminine Fish.
"Do you really think there are mer-
maids in the sea?"
"Certainly," said the dime-museum
man.
"Then why hasn't anybody besides
you succeeded in catching one?"
"Because nobody else was smart
enough to bait a hook with the latest
style of Paris hat," was the answer.
—Washington Star.

An Advantage of Matrimony.
"I don't believe," said Mr. Meekton,
pensively, "that married men ever get
to be burglars."
"Have you looked up the statistics?"
"No. But it seems impossible that a
married man would ever dare to
walk into a house the way a burglar
does, without stopping at the front
step to wipe his feet."—Washington
Star.

Admiration.
"What do you think of the new
cook I sent you?" asks the caller.
"Well," said the young housekeeper,
"she has made us admire you very
much."
"Why I didn't train her. I found I
had no use for her after four days."
"Yes; but you sent her from your
house to ours. We have been trying
for two weeks to send her from our
house to some other place, but she
just laughs at us!"—Washington Star.

ELEPHANT RACING.

**Queer Indian Sport Which Also Has Its
Derby Day.**
An elephants' Derby sounds dis-
tinctly sensational, but the idea can-
not sound more sensational than such
a contest actually is.

The Briton is nothing if not a
sportsman, despite Napoleon's historic
sneer about our being a nation of
shopkeepers; and wherever John Bull
goes there you may be sure to find
him indulging in one form of sport or
another.

Thus, in India elephants are often
impressed into the service of our
sporting enthusiasts, and an elephants'
Derby recently took place up country.
Steeplechasing with horses is excit-
ing enough, but when you have ele-
phants engaging in the form of sport—
well, you somehow forget that life
ever seemed dull to you.

Naturally, the course is not so per-
fect as at Epsom. Nevertheless, there
are plenty of colons of vantage from
which crowds of eager spectators, na-
tive and white, watch the progress of
the contest and encourage the riders
by their small shrieks and constant
shouting.

By the din alone you would know
that you were in the East, even if you
did not see the spectators and com-
petitors. The mahouts, as the native
drivers are called, cling to the necks
of their mounts, urging them on by
means of their sharp goads, which
they apply to the elephants' ears. To
see the huge, lumbering creatures being
driven over the course at their
utmost speed is at once one of the
most comical and exciting sights im-
aginable.

Barriers and ditches are constructed
at intervals across the track, and,
though a novice would in nine cases
out of ten regard the elephants'
efforts to negotiate these with convul-
sions of laughter, devotees to this
form of racing become far too ab-
sorbed in the fortunes of the contest
for the ludicrous side of it to appeal
to them. Besides, it is just these ob-
stacles which provide the critical
points of the race, for as the elephants
attempt to get over or out of them a
racer goes down and many a mahout
is thrown to the ground at imminent
peril of being crushed by the elephant
which is immediately following.

Take it as a whole, an elephant
steepchase is a sight to remember,
and one you should never miss seeing
if ever you get an opportunity. It out-
derbs all the Derbies within living
recollection as far as excitement is
concerned.—London Express.

What Bothered the Cook.
A lady had a cook who gave her
every satisfaction and she was under
the impression that the cook was
equally satisfied with her place. But
one morning, to the lady's intense
surprise, the cook gave her the usual
month's notice.

"What do you want to leave me for,
Jane?" asked the mistress. "I am
very much pleased with you, and I
thought you were quite comfortable
here."
"Yes, mum, I'm quite comfortable
enough in a way, but—"
The cook hesitated and fidgeted
about.

"But what?" queried the mistress.
"Well, mum," she blurted out, "the
fact is the master doesn't seem to
'preciate my cookery, and I can't stop
in a place where my efforts to please
are wasted; so I'd rather go, mum."

"But what makes you think that
your master doesn't appreciate your
cookery? Has he ever complained to
you?" asked the lady.

"No, mum, but my late master was
always being laid up through over-
eating—he said he couldn't help doing
so because my cookery was so deli-
cious; but master here hasn't been
laid up once all the three months I've
been with you, and that's just what
bothers me so, mum!"—Tit-Bits.

Will Mangosteen Surpass Orange?
There is every reason to suppose
that before long a most delicious fruit,
new to America, will dominate our
markets; already a few specimens
have found their way to the seaboard
cities.

This is the mangosteen—native to
the Moluccas and extensively culti-
vated in Ceylon and Java, and latterly
introduced to Jamaica and other por-
tions of British West Indies. It is
about the size of a small orange,
spherical in form, and when the rind
is removed a juicy pulp, white and
cloud as snow, is revealed, possess-
ing a most delicious flavor—some-
thing like a nectarine, with a dash
of strawberry and pineapple combined.
It ripens, in a few years, to super-
sede the orange in popular favor, and
attempts are already being made to
introduce it into the Southern United
States.—Southern Clinician.

England's Youthful Minister.
Mr. Chamberlain at sixty-five is
among the youngest men in the House
of Commons. He could very well pass
for ten years younger; in broad day-
light and at times he looks positively
youthful. The last two or three years
have touched his raven locks with
gray but his figure is as slim and alert
as ever. The Colonial Secretary is a
striking proof of the truth that every
man is a law unto himself. He boasts
of never having taken any physical
exercise, and walks only when it is
impossible to ride. Yet he always
appears to be in perfect "training,"
and a touch of gout now and then is
the only reminder the right honorable
gentleman gets that flesh is mortal.—
London Chronicle.