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THE RIVER OF LIFE.

There we live, more brief appear
Our life's succeeding stages;
A day to childhood passing a year,
And years like passing a year.
The gladness current of our youth,
Ere passion yet discolors,
Steals lingering like a river smooth
Along its grassy borders.
But as the careworn cheek grows wan,
And sorrow's shafts fly thicker,
Ye stars, that measure life to men,
Why seem your courses quicker?
When joys have lost their bloom and breath,
And life lies in a vapour,
Why, as we near the Falls of Death,
Feel we its tide more rapid?
It may be strange, yet who would change
That's course, if only passing,
When one by one our friends are gone
And left our bosom bleeding.
Heaven gives our years of falling strength,
In manifold freshness,
And those of youth, a seeming length
Proportioned to their sweetness.

CATHERINE.

If you think the lovers I am going to tell
about were a pink and white girl, with
sweet eyes and a fair, and a tall, hand-
some fellow saying soft things to her, you
are greatly mistaken.
We had been at summer hotels, at the
seaside, and among the mountains, where
per Irish girls, and sometimes per Yankee
ones, flaunted around the table in parti-
colored costumes, and with hair frizzled
and pulled over their eyes, a la poodle.
We were tired of people, and wanted to
rest; so we induced a farmer's wife to count
us among her family, and let us share their
fresh butter and sweet cream. These and
the strawberries, and the chickens, were all
very nice, but the most refreshing sight
there was a real genuine servant.
She was a middle-aged woman, with
horny hands, hair touched with gray, and
a patient, sad expression in her eyes. Her
voice was low and pleasant, and her smile
very winning, although she was uncommo-
nly plain, and bore marks of an encounter
with that destroyer of beauty—the small
pox.
Catherine—she answered to no such pet
name as "Katy," or "Kitty"—always wore
a clean, well-starched print, with a frill
of the same at the neck; a checked apron, tied
with tape around her waist, and her hair
was always combed smoothly over her fore-
head. She was one of those rare women
who can get up a dinner, and then, as if by
magic, put herself in perfect order to serve
at table.
Catherine was doing a noble duty at this
time. The boy, whose duty it was to milk
seven cows and feed two hundred hens,
had gone home, and, as the men were all
busy in the harvest-fields, his work came on
her. The farmer had gone down to New
York to get another man, and was expected
home the next day.
That evening, we went out to see Cath-
erine milk, and, as we stood beside her and
the delicate buff-colored Jersey cow she
was milking, we fell into conversation with
her.
She told us she was well acquainted with
her work, having been a farm-servant in
"Hengland." She thought work lighter
and wages better here than there, and re-
marked:
"If servants were willing to be like ser-
vants here, and not be always struggling to
look like ladies, they might lay by a good
bit for a sick day, or for old age."
I said that I was cheering to meet one
who was contented with her lot; upon
which she heaved a deep sigh, and I saw
that it was the same old story—"an aching
void," if no deeper sorrow.
She did not look up, nor court sympathy,
but I could not help saying:
"I suppose you left your parents behind,
and your brothers and sisters?"
"No; my parents died when I was a bit
of a child. My brother died ten years
ago."
"Well, one sighs for the very green earth
of his native land," I said.
"Oh, well, I don't know about that,
ma'am; I never think of that. It's just as
green and sweet here. God's earth is about
the same all over; and again there was a
dear, young man."
We followed Catherine as she bore the
shining pails into the dairy, and there we
met the lady of the farm.
Yes, we mean just that, for she was a
lady as well as a farmer's wife. She met
Catherine with a smile, and said:
"Be patient one more milking, Catherine.
The master's coming to-morrow with a man
who will be twice the help to you Joe was?"
Catherine smiled and replied: "I'm not
a-weary, and neither am I impatient,
ma'am."
We left the brick-floored dairy, and as
we passed into the sitting-room, I said to
the lady, "That woman has some great sor-
row."
"Oh, no; only perhaps a little 'onesick
for bold Hengland,'" was the reply. "She
has been with me two years, and has
never spoken of any trouble."
"I have had my suspicions, however,"
she added, "that she might have a husband
somewhere, although she passes for an old
maid. The worthy man in our cottage,
who has a nice home and some money,
wanted to marry her, last winter, to secure
a good mother for his boys. But she said,
'No, that she 'ad no cart for marrying.'"
When the open wagon came up from the
depot, about sunset next day, we all went
to the kitchen door to welcome "the mas-
ter," and to take a peep at the new man.
Catherine stood in the doorway, the pic-
ture of neatness. She was dressed in one
of her "Hengland gowns," in which good-
sized cowpails reposed on a ground of re-
freshing lilac color.
I complimented her dress, and her high-
topped comb, and her broad muslin collar,
when she smiled and replied:
"These all were given me at a fair at
'ome, years ago, and I have worn them
out twice. Some way, I just felt like dress-
ing up this afternoon. Perhaps it was to
please you, who have spoke so kind to me."
"Thank you, Catherine. Here comes
the wagon. See what a great muscular
fellow the master has brought!"
The master gave the reins to one of the
hay-makers who was just coming in to
take another "box" into the barn-shed,
and then he walked into
the kitchen with his new girl, saying:
"Come in and get your supper, so as to

feel at home before you go to your room, Catherine!"

Catherine had fled; and the man, who
had caught a glimpse of her, stood looking
at the door through which she had vanish-
ed, his eyes and mouth wide open.
"Catherine, come now and give your
countryman a good supper!" called the
farmer.
In a moment she appeared in the door-
way, as pale as marble; and the great, good-
looking, middle-aged man made a bound
for her, and caught her in his arms, and
showered kisses—which sounded like the
report of patent pop-guns—on her pale
face.
He then held her off at arm's length and
cried:
"Is it you, indeed, Catherine, that I thought
dead, found by a miracle?"
"O Timothy!" gasped Catherine, "I'd
long thought ye dead in Hengland!"
"I never set foot on it, sinner as I was to
tell ye I was gone!"
Here we all withdrew from what should
be a strictly private conference.
That night Catherine tapped at my door;
and, when admitted, she said, with a cour-
tesy:
"I couldn't let ye sleep, ma'am, till I'd
explained, lest ye might think me an om-
niscient girl that a stranger would dare be
kissing."
"Timothy and me were 'trotted to each
other at 'ome, and for four years we were
struggling to get up a bit to come to Ham-
burg with a plan to buy a bit and sell it
for the merriest lad in the town. 'e
'e would tease me at times, telling me 'e'd
found a fairer nor me, and would marry
her, and so used to fret me.
"But we'd always make up, and 'e'd say 'e
wouldn't change me for any girl in the land.
But 'e tried to once to hoffer 'e 'e came in,
saying 'e was goin' to Hengland, and
wouldn't be back for ten years, and bid me
farewell. I couldn't bear the mortification,
and I made up my mind to leave Heng-
land.
"When night came, I put my lox in the
wagoner's 'ands, and went to Laverpool,
and took ship for 'ere. I halfways thought
'im in Hengland, and 'e thought me crazed
or dead when I was not to be found. But
'e's suffered enough, poor dear lad.
"Aye, though such long years 'a gone
by, 'e's never loved another, and 'is 'eart is
just broken wi' gratitude to God for bring-
in 'is safe to me. 'e's promised, sol-
emn as an oath, never to tease me more,
and 'e's pledged me never to be a silly loon,
but a wise, sensible woman, worthy to be
'is wife. 'e's asked leave of the mistress
to go to the minister with 'im to-morrow,
and the master 'imself offered to drive us
'over in 'is best wagon."
"But you have no wedding dress," I
said.
"O dear lady, if I 'ad a thousand 'o 'em,
I'd throw them all aside and wear the cov-
erly cloth that Timothy gave me at the fair!"
The next evening, we had a wedding
supper in the dining-room; and we all
waited on Catherine and Timothy. We
gave them wedding-presents, and wished
them joy, and made them the happiest
couple in town.

The Toad Market of Paris.

By the Jardin des Plantes, in the old and
quiet quarter of St. Marcel, Paris, you
will find, every Wednesday morning, from
spring to autumn, a very curious market
place. From seven to nine A. M., your
attention is called to an open space of
ground, separated by a boardwalk from the
street by a noise like unto that which erects
the ears of tired Senators when the sun of
day is meeting the twilight hour, and all
frogdom on the banks of the Washington
canal is chorously joyous and loud! We
approach this market place so full of sim-
plicity and sound. Young men in blue
suits, black silk caps, neat faces, jaunty
airs, big finger-rings, handsy boots, greasy
hair—parted down the middle—and prim
moustaches, are the vendors. In one hand
they hold a little stick, and when the
sounds alluded to grow leathenish, whack!
They go the stick on the top of a barrel whence
these diabolical noises emanate, and silence
reigns. The toads are momentarily dumb.
We know there is a great deal of unvolun-
tary sentiment arrayed against toads, yet toads
are full of love sentiment. A toad carries
all its young in a most loving and senti-
mental manner, and why should not like
beget like, if there be any truth in the doc-
trine of Aristotle? Much bad blood and
malignity is got up against toads. This
one of the young men in blouse tells me, in
a foppish, half-philosophical way. Barrels
of toads! Think of it! Barrels packed like
barrels of potatoes! "Selling at 2 francs,
40 to 6 francs a dozen, prime toads nice
toads!" Who buys them? Vegetable gar-
deners. Why? For the reason that toads
devour the insects that otherwise would de-
vour the vegetables. Who devours the
toads? The contrary to some ideas—not the
French people. But toads are being sold
now, not devoured, and it is with the sell-
ing we are interested. How do you vend
them? Young men in blouse bares his arm
and thrusts his open hand into the slimy
swim and brings up two, three or four yam-
nastic toads, wriggling and writhing. He
points out their merits and delivers them a
bit by the dozen to the eager market
gardener who takes his choice and pays his
price. The buying and selling is done ex-
peditiously and quietly. The license ven-
der to the Government is great, while the
profit to the vendors is greater, arising from
this other peculiar Parisian business, the
selling of toads. I addressed myself to one
of the merchants. "Permit me to ask if you
have been long in the business?" "Forch-
an! looks at me and laconically replies:
"Born in it!" Then I resume and say, en-
couragingly: "You know a good deal about it?"
He looks at me again and replies:
"All!" I am uneasy as to his feelings,
therefore change the attack by asking:
"Does it pay well?" He deigns not to look
at me now, but replies: "It does!" "Do
you suffer much loss by death by packing
the toads all in a mass in a barrel?" "No,
not!" "Is it expensive to cultivate them?"
"It is!" "How do you care for them and
propagate them?" "We don't care much,
and they propagate themselves!" "Where?"
"Marshes and rockeries!" "Do you ever
feed them?" "Never!" "How do you live
on 'em?" "Pretty well!" "Have you a large
supply?" "Too large!" I look upon him
at the concentrated assemblage of many
toads, and I leave him.

The New Ocean Cable.

North Eastham, where the shore end of
the new cable has been laid, is near "Fras-
hacottown, Cape Cod. From North East-
ham the land lines of the American Union
Telegraph Company will afford transmission
to all points in the United States and
Canada. The Puyyer-Quarter Company is
composed mostly of French and American
capital, the former holding the bal-
ance of power, and soon to be increased
by an additional amount of \$2,000,000.
Its officers are practical men, experienced
in telegraphy and in the management of
telegraphic business with the outside world.
The cable was constructed by Siemens
Brothers, of England, who also built the
cable used by the Direct Company. It is
considered heavier, stronger, and more
nearly perfect than any now used by other
companies. The process of its building is
especially adapted to secure those results.
A central wire of copper is surrounded by
two copper wires, twisted, insuring abso-
lute conductivity in all weather. For insu-
lating purposes three envelopes of gutta
serena surround the wire, and outside of
the gutta serena is placed a wrapping of
manilla hemp treated with Chatterton's
compound. An armor of steel wire for
protection is placed outside the hemp, the
wires composing the armor, being laid in a
peculiar manner, side by side, so that frac-
tures seem almost impossible to occur.
Surrounding the armor is another covering
of manilla hemp, treated with an anti-
corrosive compound, which makes the sur-
face doubly sure that the cable will be
always be ready for use. The cable ex-
tends from Brest, France, to St. Pierre,
Miquelon, and from St. Pierre to North
Eastham. At its completion the Parady
will return to Brest, when another cable of
the same construction will be laid from Brest
to Land's, England, and another cable
with that country. The distance across is
only about two hundred miles, and, as the
water is shallow, the electricians regard this
as an easy task. Next year the company
will lay still another cable from Land's End
to St. Pierre, thus establishing a double line
between this country and Europe. The
cable, which is well adapted to the lay-
ing of sea cables, was in the charge of
the cyclone in the North Atlantic Ocean,
but paid no attention to the unruly element,
keeping on about its business of cable lay-
ing just as if nothing else was going on.
To secure a landing-place in the United
States the company gave the United States
Government a guarantee that the company
will consolidate or amalgamate with
any other line, or contract therewith for
the purpose of regulating rates.

A Married Widow.

It was just before the opening of the rail-
way from Tanager to Kharok in 1859, and
I was driving these dreary distances in au-
tumn. For the first two days and nights
the weather was lovely, but on the third
morning, soon after sunrise, the sky became
covered with heavy, torn and jagged clouds;
a northerly wind arose, and with thunder,
rain, cold, and snow, the winter
burst of our cold yearly broke on Southern
Russia. In half an hour the rich, black,
rolling plains had become an ocean of ink,
and we reached the post station of
Donski only to find the order, "Impossible
to proceed."
I called for tea, and the samovar was
brought in by a fine, upright, gray bearded
man, whom I had seen in a black velvet tunic
and slashed sleeves, I took to be the post-
master himself. He was followed into the
room by a noble looking Cossack woman of
his own age, who said, "Little husband,
why don't you ask the little lord if he will
eat a partridge and a bit of bread?" The
kurupalka is plump, and the day will be
long before his troika can be harnessed to
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