

TO CORRESPONDENTS

All communications for this paper should be addressed to the editor, and sent to the office of the paper, as early as possible, so that they may be received in time to be printed in the issue in which they are written.

A SONG OF VACATION.

From the mountains, white sparkling
And from the winds, wild and free,
O'er the fields and the hills, a ripple of
And everywhere in the air, in the
And voices of children, sweet voices
And words of love, and words of
Hush for vacation! vacation is here!
The hope and the crown of the beautiful year.

A voice in declamation, a rest from the year,
That glances of peace in tongues which are
A voice of life and love for the herb
And the flowers, and the birds, and the
And away to the ocean, the steam and the
Hush for vacation! vacation is here!
The joyous reward of the diligent year.

A voice to small fountains climbing the scale;
For water, pure and clear, has a
Till the fountain bubbles where the
And the lily fairly long for a race with the
And on for the brookside, and on for the bay!
Hush for vacation! vacation is here!
The merriest time in the fast-fading year.

Turn, brother, awhile from the ledger and tool,
And, mother, put by the torn jacket and
You, too, see, have a play-thing in life's busy
A recess from labor in country or town,
There are months to be filled and we feet to
Yet gather your strength by a stop on the
And when your vacation just ends in the year
Be glad with the birds that vacation is here.

From the shadowy nooks in forest and wood,
From hedge thick set with the berry and
From meadows of peat, and from evenings of
A soft twilight gleam, "Come up higher,
Shade of the world's dust, and forget the
To the bosom of your Father, in peace enter
And thank for vacation! vacation is here.
The charm and the feast of the beautiful year.
—Margaret E. Sangster, in Youth's Companion.

THE FATAL FOURTH.

A Tragedy.
"FREDERIC," said my wife, in the tone
of a dying martyr, "do you really mean
to let our children have fireworks on the
Fourth?"
"I do, my dear."
"Then I know something dreadful
will happen. Think of Tom!"
"Tom is eleven years old. He must
take his chances like other young scamps
of his ilk."
"But, Frederic, there are Frank and
Bertie, and Jennie and Lil, and the
baby. Oh, dear! I know something will
happen." And my wife shook her head
prophetically and sighed.

Here my sister-in-law, Wilhelmina,
broke in.
"Never fear; your children will all
be spared to grow up. Mary, Naught,
children always live. For my part, I
think fireworks are fun," she added.
Now, Mina was a very emphatic young
lady, with the most positive and un-
changeable views on the conduct of life.
Mina Italian, as she was called, because
she was all for emphasis, and yet she
was such a small type of a girl.
"Mina, your tastes are entirely too
loud," my wife said.

The young person tossed her sandy
head, arched a pair of delicate eyebrows,
then bounded up and went to the win-
dow, looking down an avenue that led
up to our country house. Now Mina
never bounded up without jerking down
the skirts of a small jacket she was fond
of wearing. It was a sort of out-of-way
coat arrangement, with buttons behind,
a bit of vest in front, a dash of white
linen bosom, and a hand-up collar.
To-day the rig was brown silk, with bits
of gold-color peeping from mysterious
linings, and cordings. Mina wore her
fair hair short. She shook it out of
cold water every morning, parted it on
one side with masculine precision, and
putting in a pair of turquoise ear-rings,
bought, with feminine coquetry, to
match her eyes, she considered, in
her own concise language, "that top
piece fixed." Now Mina was a girl for
which the days of good Walter Scott,
that maker of lances, would have
furnished no model. Cooper's young
hunters never bore such a maiden as
Mina safely to the arms of her family.
Hannah More would have used my sis-
ter-in-law simply as a frightful example.
A French novelist would describe to her
more wickedness than poor Mina would
even know how to name, and then make
a dazzling study. In short, Mina's con-
tradictions in character would have
battered Shakespeare himself, and ex-
hausted his subtle inversions of lan-
guage in painting her, and on to any
rule and so gentle, so bold, and so shy,
such a jolly fellow and such a very
woman. She was the outgrowth of an
unsettled social state, of a day when
women, having struggled out of their
old places, have not yet quite
found a comfortable position for their
new ones, and so, feeling a little in-
secure, they incline to be defiant.
Mina belonged to a woman's club,
where, in the dimmest of silks and the
sweetest thing in lace, she talked of femi-
nine ability in every department of
severe labor and scientific research. On
returning home she always went to bed
with a headache, but was none the less
ready to declare herself fit for marine
service, or any other work commonly
held proper for men only.

"If McAllister comes to attend the
Fourth," remarked this epistolical
young woman, not disguising that she
was looking out for McAllister down the
avenue.
"Mina," said my wife, "don't speak
of men without a decent prefix to their
names; it isn't pretty."
"I don't want to be pretty," answers
Mina; "I want to be clever and inde-
pendent and strong." Here she shook
all her baggies, and examined a pearl
ring on her slender forefinger.
"You want to be mannish, don't
you?" said I teasingly.
"Quite the contrary—I want to be
sensible." Then, with a careless yawn,
as she had said a matter of course
thing, she added, "I think I shall take
up poetry."
"Better be a nice womanly
girl, and take up a husband," quoth her
sister.
"Zits in, you mean," I suggest, by
way of revenge.

"Not at all," answers the ready little
maid; "she means to say, 'Man can't
arrive at any elevated position unless we
do take 'em up.'"
"Oh, Aunt Billy," screamed Tom,
rushing into the room, followed by Muff,
our old terrier, a sleepy, superannuated
pet, of which the children were very
fond.
"Tom, don't call your aunt Billy,"
says my wife.
"Yes, he shall. My name is Wil-
helmina, or William, and Billy is good
for short. Go on, Tom."
"Aunt Billy, McAllister is coming

from the station, and he's got his arms
full of fire-works—Roman candles, and
rockets, and pin-wheels, and every
thing," says the excited Tom.
"Bravo!" cries Mina.
"And Mr. Worth is with him, and
ain't got so much as a cracker," adds
Tom, with proper disgust.
"Humph! I never did like Mr.
Worth," says Mina, sympathetically.
"He likes you, I bet, Aunt Billy; but
you won't marry him, will you, Aunt
Billy?" asks Tom, who was at that
stage when the small boy is quite
ignorant of the affections of a pretty
sunt.

"Marry! Nonsense, child, I wouldn't
marry any man," answers Mina, with
very marked italics. "I have to make
a career."
"What's that?" says Tom.
"Why, it's a—a—it's writing a great
book, or painting a picture, or going on
the stage, or— Well, it's showing a
woman is just as clever as a man."
"But a woman ain't," says the un-
gallant Muff, who was sitting on the
floor.
"You think so because you're only a
child, and ignorant."
"I ain't ignorant neither," answers
my oldest boy, whose grammar weak-
ness is his sole strength. "I say a
woman can't lift a barrel of flour, and a
man can." So.

"Like your father, Master Tom, you
confound muscle with brains. A woman
can do much better than lift a barrel
of flour."
"Ho! woman get scared," says Tom.
"Don't never mind; you're a brick, Aunt
Billy, when you shan't marry any body
—not McAllister neither."
"Ah, now, Tom, I might marry Mc-
Allister."
"Gus McAllister is a fortune-hunter,"
I remarked, gravely.
"He's very handsome," says my per-
verse sister-in-law, "and has very in-
dignous views on the Woman Question—
hasn't he, Muff?" At this she pulls old
Muff's ear, but having gone to sleep, he
makes no sign.

"Humph!" I exclaim. "He's try-
ing to please you by humoring your fol-
low. Now Worth is a man that—"
"That undertakes to make all the
world accept his opinions."
"He is very moderate and reason-
able," I say, warily.
"He isn't," Miss Italian contradicts,
flatly. "He staves a solemn disapproval
of what he doesn't like."
"That was when you remarked you'd
like to put on boys' clothes and run
away to sea, wasn't it?"
"Never mind that it was!" and
Mina shakes slightly, for Worth did
suddenly look at her blue eyes. "But I
wouldn't marry a man who hasn't prop-
er views on the Woman Question—a
man like John Worth—if it—"
"If he gave you the chance," I sug-
gest, cautiously.

"How do you know he hasn't given
me the chance?"
"Because he's a man of sense," I
answer, knowing Mina will retort, and I
shall get at the truth.
"Then the 'man of sense' has conde-
scended to nonsense," says Mina, in
scornful mockery.
"Nonsense? Oh, that's yourself, I
suppose."
She noticed the air by a look of in-
effable contempt, and went on, helping
her speech by a dramatic shake of ban-
gled hair, "I don't know he hasn't given
me the chance."
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new-fangled phrase that catches the
trivial ear."
After a moment's pause, Mina flies at
his eyes with a new assertion: "A woman
ought to do every thing she knows
how to do."
"When a woman, a man, or any
other creature does what she, he, or it
knows how to do, the work is worthy of
respect," Worth says.
"Well, sir, and don't women do what
they know how to do?"
"Some of them. A woman who is
willing to learn an art or trade by the
plodding process that insures thorough-
ness is to be respected and encouraged.
But too many women try to jump at re-
sults, and are impatient of discipline in
work, then feel aggrieved because their
unskilled labor commands no reward."
There's a large class, too, who only talk
—talk externally of their so-called in-
ferior place in society, but really make no
patient, continued exertion toward fill-
ing any of the positions that are occu-
pied by men.

"Do you mean me?" asks Mina.
"No, indeed! During the past year
you have studied German one month,
book-keeping two weeks, porcelain-
painting six weeks, botany about as long,
logic—under my tuition—one hour.
You have begun to write a story, and
—"
"I will do," Mina says. "You
mean I am too stupid to succeed with
any thing."
"No, but like many young persons,
you haven't the power of steady and
consistent application."
"I've known boys as bad," Mina re-
marks, tartly.
"But boys are liable to be thrown
upon the world and taught by privations
and hard knocks."
"Perhaps I ought to be thrown upon
the world, and taught by privations and
hard knocks," Mina laughs, nervously,
and tries to look careless.

For once Worth answers inconsis-
tently.
"Women make a grand blunder in
depreciating their own value—in strain-
ing to please you when they have, instead
of cultivating what they have."
"And, in your opinion, have they
anything?" asks the sharp young lady.
"Yes; so much charm and so much
power as women that a man wonders
why she won't worth more inaccurate
in his numbers, and looking full at Mina,
went on—"why she should be eternally
trying to make an anomaly of herself by
aping manners that are against her na-
ture, and that she only keeps up in a
spirit of bravado." Worth helped him-
self quietly to green peas; there was a
little awkwardness in a barrel," and
Mina's chances were over, and Mina smiled
sweetly on McAllister, who was flatter-
ing her most transparently.

At four o'clock the next morning,
the Fourth of July—my son Frank,
with a red soldier cap on his head, ex-
ploded a torpedo by his bedside, and
"I say, papa, it's Fourth of July!" then
danced out of the room like a wild in-
dian, poor old Muff barking madly at
his heels. Bertie, aged five, and Jennie,
a wise little woman of eight, I heard in
a loud quarrel about fire-crackers on the
front piazza.
"Oh dear!" sighed my wife, "some-
thing dreadful is sure to happen."
By breakfast-time Tom had become
an ungovernable young brute, and could
talk nothing but "soldiers," and "can-
nons," and "crackers in a barrel," and
"powder to-night." He had a face
pale as a rhapsodist, and very dirty hands.
The younger imps followed his lead,
and little Lil's pinafore was burned
through in three places. Muff caught
the spirit of the day, and jumped and
barked as well as his infirmities per-
mitted, retiring at intervals under the pi-
ezza steps and into shady corners to
enjoy his frequent naps.

At the height of noonday heat the
children formed a grand parade. Mina
encouraged them from the midst of a
heap of colored paper, which she had
cut into caps and belts and warlike rigging
of all sorts. An express wagon brought
Worth's contributions, in the shape of
wooden swords, drums, flags and endless
fire-works.
"We thought you wouldn't come to
bring us nothing," Mr. Worth," says my
eldest son, with that charming frankness
and in that pure English peculiar to the
gentle youth.
"Aunt Billy said you were 'too dis-
gustingly prudent,'" says Jennie, who
can spell long words.
"And Aunt Billy that," screams
Master Bertie, with all his curls in his
eyes—"Aunt Billy said you with an
awful goot."
"You see," answered Mr. Worth,
pleasantly, and heading out the play-
things, "how foolish and mistaken child-
ren can be."

Mina winced under his calm good-
nature, then retired to a shady corner
of the piazza, pinned a rose in McAllis-
ter's button-hole, and asked him to fan
her. This appearing to have no effect
on Worth, she called for fire-crackers,
and with several bunches open in her
lap, she held a fuse over them, and
nonchalantly lighted single ones in her
fingers.
"You'll set fire to your dress," said
Worth.
"I'll take care of her," answered Mc-
Allister, sharply.
"If that dress should catch," contin-
ued Worth, "it wouldn't be easy to put
it out." She wore a white muslin jacket-
to-day, with a sky-blue vest. Mina, by
way of response, fired a cracker from
her fingers.
"Bravo!" exclaimed McAllister.
Worth turned away to answer Bertie,
who whined, "When is we doin' to fire
all the fings off?"
"When you take off all that paper
stuff, you may come down to the foot of
the garden, and I'll put some crackers
in a barrel for you."
"There's a hoghead down there,"
shouted Tom—"a big dry hoghead
lyn' on its side. Let's put lots in it."
"As many as you like," said Worth;
"but take off those paper caps. They're
dangerous."
"Nonsense," Mina interferred; "let
the poor things wear their caps."
"Poor fings wear their caps!" echoes
Bertie, looking aggrieved.
"Children," I ordered, "take off
every bit of that paper immediately; and
Mina, you ought to be ashamed of
teaching them to be fool-hardy and
stubborn."
Miss Italian laughed, threw up a rose-
bud, and caught it shillyally, while the
whole troop of young imps, led down
the garden path at Worth's heels.

Passing near Mina and McAllister a
few minutes later I overheard her say,
archly, "I should be a very hard wife to
manage."
"You shall have your own way in
every thing," the young fellow an-
swered.
In desperation, I called Mina away.
Taking her aside, I said, "Mina, Mina,
take care what you do."
She laughed again in my very face,
and answered, "I shall marry the man
I like best in spite of every body." Then
she jerked down that jacket with cur-
siveness, and marched straight back to
McAllister's side.

My wife shed tears of vexation, and
declared, "Mina will make us all
wretched if she marries that man. He
wants her money."
I could only call the girl a perverse
and silly creature, who deserved her
fate. She had chosen a position where
Worth, from the foot of the garden,
could see her side face as she coquetted
openly with McAllister.
After a little, Tom came tearing at
full speed toward the house. Out of
breath, he bounded up the piazza steps,
crying, hoarsely, "He's killed, he's
dead. Where's the ice-water?" then
rushed for the dining-room.
"It's Bertie," I cried, "and my wife;
"it's my darling. Oh, I know some-
thing would happen." With the word
Mary raced down the garden path. I
was scared enough to run too, but Mina
glanced up with and passed as both. At
a glance I saw the children were safe,
though Mary still called wildly for
Bertie, who was roaring lustily under
her very eyes, "He's dead, he's dead."
Jenny explained through her sobs,
"He's dead inside the hoghead."
Then, for the first, I noticed the old
empty hoghead lying on its side, and
from the open and protruded the feet of
Mr. Worth, while smoke and the smell
of powder poured out all around them.

Mina rushed to the fatal spot, and
helped me to lay hold of Worth and
drag him out. She had turned pale as
death, and cried out, with delightful
feminine logic: "You're dead, dear. For-
give me." Then, "Don't die, John
dear, don't die. I love you."
"I was stooping over the body from
the hoghead, and she was just
emerging from the hoghead, and my
face was turned toward me. It was un-
commonly radiant for a corpse, and I
heard the dead man whisper, "Hush!
it's a blunder. I'm not hurt. Don't want
to frighten her. Put me to bed," and
John became quiet.

McAllister drawing near, Mina cried
out, savagely: "Don't touch him. No
body but me shall touch him. John,
dear John!" Then, sobbing, she bathed
his face in the ice-water that Tom had
brought.
Bertie all this time never stopped
howling, "He's dead, he's dead," and
Jenny heaving a profound but de-
corous sigh, said, "Yes, papa, our poor
Muff is dead."
"Muff?" I questioned; "where?
"In the hoghead," answered Tom.
"We put crackers in it, and didn't
know Muff had crawled inside for a
nap. Mr. Worth went in to get him
out."
"Oh!" sobbed Mina, "and killed
himself with the powder smoke. Why
don't you send that man for the doc-
tor?" This last was to me, and indi-
cating McAllister.

The suggestion cleared the situation
for me, and, after drawing out the woolly
end of my pipe, I represented our deceased
Muff, I politely requested McAllister to
run for a doctor. He did so, but with a
very bad grace.
Under the scare of seeing Worth ly-
ing still and speechless, the children
were awe-struck. Only Bertie grieved
and wept as well as his infirmities per-
mitted. Covering John's face, I called Dennis,
the gardener, who was safely stupid,
and we carried the dead-weight to a
couch in an upper room. Then John
whispered, "Send her away," for Mina
had followed close, all pale and grief-
stricken, and as well as his infirmities per-
mitted, and let me use means to restore him
to consciousness; but she declared, with
all her emphasis turned to a new use:
"I won't leave him! I won't! I'll die
with him. Oh, I know he's dead. I know
it."
"You go away," whispered outside.
I went, and listened from outside.
There were sobs and moans for a while;
then came a great cry of joy, followed
by a silence. Soon Mina appeared, all
rosy and glad. "He's come to con-
sciousness, she said, "and he's ready to
go to bed."
"We are going to be married," ad-
ded John, in a voice too strong for a
man who had just escaped death.
The doctor arriving, of course found
all the symptoms of recent asphyxia,
while John cast queer glances at me
over his shoulder.

McAllister caught a pleasure-train,
and returned to the city with other lit-
tle sad and disgusted excursions.
Later John felt able to sit on the pi-
ezza in the moonlight, depending on a
firm grip of Mina's hand to keep him
from a relapse.
My wife said, "I knew something was
going to happen if the children had fire-
works."
"But it's nothing dreadful," says
Mina, in the softest of voices. "I
sold you that man I liked best,
and all the time I liked best the one
I told me the truth, and didn't make a
fool of me."
"But you refused him," I reminded
her.
"Fshaw! that's nothing. I quarreled
with him too, but I didn't mean it."
On the spot I gave up every effort to
understand the real feelings or real mo-
tives of any creature of Mina's sex.

They were married last week, and
Mina has just been told that it was her
own hasty outburst of affection that led
to the fatal asphyxia and his happy
consequences. She says she wouldn't
have married if she had known it. Ar-
guing from precedents, of course she
doesn't mean that.
The children knew nothing but the
apparent facts. To insure prudence
and obedience on festive occasions, they
have only to say, "Remember poor Uncle
Worth and the Fourth of July." Like
little Cæsars at mention of the
deed of March, they all become sad
and thoughtful, and consequently tract-
able.—Harper's Bazar.

The Novellet's Secret.
A NOVEL in which the characters are
carefully drawn, in which they set upon
one another as they might do in familiar
social life, is felt to be same—the stim-
ulus is wanting. The more contrasts we
get between appearances and realities,
prosperity and adversity, virtues and
vices, happiness and misery, wealth and
poverty, joy and despair, between yes-
terday and to-day, the more the tale
answers to a demand; for whereas the
happiness of real life consists in the few-
ness and moderation of these contrasts,
the harmony of circumstances, the fit-
ness of the man for his work and place,
the gentle sequence of events, the novel
pleases by showing life in directly op-
posite aspect by crowding it with
startling transitions, setting every con-
dition cheek by jowl with its opposite,
vulgarity with high place; virtuous
seeming with inward depravity; by
exaggerating the instability of earthly
things, reducing the most assured pos-
sion to a mere house of cards; by the
constant contrast between what seems
and what is. Of course contrasts, as
stock in trade, cost the inferior artist
little. He regards them as self-
acting; they are to impress by their own
force and weight; but they are not the
less a supreme test of power. The
writer who can apprehend and portray
all the features of a strong contrast of
action and feeling is master of his craft.

HOME AND FARM.

PAPER WALLS are cleaned by being
wiped down with a flannel cloth tied
over a broom or brush. Then cut off a
thick piece of stale bread with the crust
on and rub them down with this. Begin
at the top and go straight down.

TAPIoca CUP PUDDING.—This is
very light and delicate for invalids. An
even tablespoonful of tapioca, soaked
for two hours in nearly a cup of new
milk; stir into this the yolk of a fresh
egg, a little sugar, a grain of salt, and
bake it in a cup for 15 minutes. A little
jelly may be eaten with it, or a few fresh
raspberries.

COCAINANT CUSTARD.—To one pound
of grated cocoanut allow one pint of
six ounces of sugar; beat well the
yolk of an egg with one ounce of cream
alternately in the milk with the coco-
nut and sugar. Put into a tall or pitcher,
set it into boiling water and stir all the
time till very smooth and thick; as soon
as it comes to a hard boil take it off and
serve in cups or tumblers.

MEAT RISSOLETS.—Chop any kind of
cold meat quite fine; crumb the same
quantity of bread in it, add one egg, and
put a little of the fat of the meat in;
season with salt and pepper and sum-
mer savory to taste; beat up one or two
eggs, according as you need, and form
your patties and bread into a thick paste
with the egg, then roll it into balls,
and fry a light brown color.

ICE CREAMS.—To make lemon ice-
cream take one quart of cream, two
lemons (the juice of one and the grated
peel of one and a half) and two cups of
sugar. Sweeten the cream, beat the
lemon gradually into it, and put it at
once into the freezer. The freezer
should be the best, and the cream
procure, there being several, we believe,
and all very nearly alike in merit.
Freeze rapidly, or the acid will turn the
milk. Ice-cream may be made in the
same way. For blue-ice-cream, take
one quart of cream, one large slice of
pineapple, and one pound of powdered
sugar. Slice the pineapple thin, and
scatter the sugar between the slices;
cover it and let the fruit steep three
hours. Then cut, or chop it up in the
sugar, and strain through a hair-sieve,
or bag of double, coarse lace. Freeze
gradually into the cream, and freeze
as rapidly as possible. Peach ice-cream
may be made in the same way, with
two or three handfuls of freshly-cut bits
of the fruit stirred in when the cream is
half frozen.

A STARVED tree, like a starved man,
must be fed a little at a time. All the
functions are weak in such a condition,
and must be strengthened by exercise.
By degrees the old wood should be re-
placed with new growth. Large limbs
must not be removed until there is a re-
turn of vigor. For blight, or a weak
human limb, and can only be done suc-
cessfully when there is strength enough to bear
the shock. It will take several seasons
to bring about the process of renewal,
but mean time the old trees will bear
more fruit, until they will astonish the
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