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## HARVEST IN THE HILL COUNTRY.

BY WILLIE W. CARPENTER.

The dew lies heavy on the uncut grass,  
And dapples in bright drops from the beading  
And from the vines through which the reapers  
pass  
With tramping feet along the cool, wet  
leaves  
The amaranth lifts its faint, sweet flush  
again;  
Some Indian crosses flourish in the hedge;  
The poison-sumac lets its shame be seen  
In scarlet letters, where the wood's brown  
edge  
Is brightened with the hemlock's tender  
green.

These late red currants glow like ruby beads  
In clusters tempting to the robin's taste;  
The yellow mustard sows its fine brown seeds  
Along the sod in rare excess of waste.  
Meanwhile, the reapers to their work make  
haste,  
And through the pasture, where the red-oak  
stands,  
The hewl goes whimpering 'mid the grass and  
leaves  
Where the tired field-boy lives his sun-burnt  
hours,  
Or in the shade a line of Homer learns.

Here, thou and I, O friend of earlier days!  
May sit and listen while the reapers sing;  
About our feet the cardinal flowers blaze,  
And honey bees go by on whirling wing.  
Out of our listening, music seems to spring;  
And, floating softly on the clear sunshine,  
These sweet and alien voices in the corn  
Recall old times that echoed by the Rhine,  
And jodels heard upon the Matterhorn.

Not much like these, dear friend, were those  
first days  
Of freedom, when the wide world seemed  
our own,  
And we went wandering 'long bewildering  
ways,  
From Gravel meadow to the Bois Boulogne,  
Now all that sad, sweet folly is outgrown;  
Our work is done. Not much—was it?—for  
these  
Who were so strong, who saw so much to do,  
Who felt so brave to right a whole world's  
woes,  
And tear the mask of vain conceit in two.

The reapers sing; the saddened hours creep  
on  
The grain is garnered, sweet and clean and  
dry;  
The long, straight sun-shafts flicker faint and  
wan,  
And primrose clouds slip down the western  
sky.  
We talk of common things—the corn, the  
eye;  
You stand betwixt the sunlight, dear, and me,  
With shaded eyes (a pensive, New-World  
Rue),  
And, oh, your face grows beautiful to see,  
Grown with these memories of our vanished  
youth!

THE BACHELOR'S MISTAKE.  
BY AMY RANDOLPH.

Squire Popham was short and stout,  
with a shining bald head, and a nose in-  
clined to be *retroverse*—which we take  
to be the French for pug. All heroes  
can't be tall, Greek featured, and named  
Montmorency; and our hero was mount-  
ed after an exceedingly every-day sort  
of pattern; nevertheless, there was no  
inconceivable spark of romance in his  
soul.

Forty-five years had the squire dwelt,  
mattress and forlorn, in the world; and  
now, as he entered upon the forty-sixth,  
it struck him that he was following up  
a wrong theory. Some people wake to  
the great mystery of their lives through  
the glance of a soft eye, a beam of moon-  
light, a half-open rose-bud, a bit of  
ribbon. Squire Popham was aroused  
through the instrumentality of a tooth-  
ache!

"It's all very well for a man to be an  
old bachelor, long as he's well and  
sound," grumbled the squire, dolefully  
regarding the cold mustard-draughts  
and clammy pop-plasters that his land-  
lady had sent up for innumerable  
delays and excuses, "but when you begin  
to get achy and shaky, a married man  
has the best of it. It'll be a married  
man! Ugh! how cold these confounded  
puddings are! why couldn't she have  
warned 'em a little? Now the tooth  
begins to jump—why the deuce ain't I a  
married man, with a little, soft, peachy  
cheek to lay mine against, and hands  
that know how to hold a pop-plaster  
without losing three-fourths out of the  
velvet vest. I'll go to some watering-  
place other and get married, as soon  
as this swelling goes down—I will, as  
sure as my name is Paul Popham!"

And that was the way our squire came  
to contemplate matrimony.

The Seaweed hotel was crowded full  
that season, with old girls, young girls,  
middle-aged gals, widows, matrons, and  
old maids; in fact, the very multiplicity  
of the article puzzled Squire Popham in  
making his selection.

"For I can't marry 'em all," argued  
the squire; "and what between waltzing  
and croquet, and the German, they don't  
any of 'em stand still long enough for  
me to make up my mind. Perpetual  
motion, indeed! it's nothing to a live  
woman!"

Now the Seaweed hotel was a huge  
brick building, with a colossal wing ex-  
tending out at right angles and enclosing  
a sort of court; and the window of  
Mr. Popham's room, the last in the main  
building, looking directly into those of  
Mrs. Martin, who occupied the first ad-  
joining, in the wing. So that if there  
was such a thing as having your next door  
neighbor opposite to you, Squire Popham  
and Mrs. Martin enjoyed that para-  
doxical felicity.

Mrs. Martin was a widow—a plump,  
rosy widow, with red cheeks, peart  
teeth, and big blue eyes, full of wicked  
glances—a widow who liked a joke, and  
had, at the same time, an exquisite ap-  
preciation for a bit of whispered senti-  
ment. And one day the business was  
finished for Squire Popham by the deaf  
way in which the charming widow  
mixed some salad dressing at the din-  
ner-table.

"I like that widow," thought the  
squire, holding his knife and fork admiringly  
in mid-air as he watched the skillful  
operation. "I'll marry that widow  
—if she'll let me."

So that evening the squire sat at his  
window with the newspaper for a flimsy  
excuse, and looking unutterable things

at the widow, who, pretending to be en-  
tirely unnoted, homed away at her  
dainty frills, or read small volumes in  
red and gold, sending now and then an  
electric ray of her blue eyes to keep up  
the flames in the squire's heart.

"I think I'm in love," said the squire  
to himself. "I must be in love! I  
never saw such blue eyes in my life;  
and as for lobster salad, they couldn't  
get it up better at Delmonico's. Then  
again a widow has had experience—she's  
not like one of those girls who know  
nothing but the waltz and a pack of  
Italian songs. I dare say she could  
make a delightful mustard-plaster; and  
as for water-gruel and milk-punch, I  
see 'em in her eyes! Yes, I'm undoubt-  
edly in love."

The moon—a full harvest shield of  
mellow silver—rose. The squire still  
smoked his cigar and ruminated on the  
delicious possibilities in store for him,  
until the Widow Martin's kerosene lamp  
glowed into brightness on the table.  
Through the dusky screen of the flut-  
tering muslin curtain he could see her  
moving to and fro like a fair vision of a  
dream!

"I wish I was a good hand at poetry,"  
soliloquized the squire. "I know I  
could get in something about a star be-  
hind a cloud. Crowd—proud—loud—  
hang it, they don't hitch at all. 'Star  
behind the cloud'; but it isn't midnight.  
Shroud—shroud—might as well say  
skeleton at once and done with it.  
Vowed—how could a fellow lug in  
vowed? 'Star behind a midnight cloud,  
to worship thee I have vowed'—some-  
how that seems to go limpety-catch.  
Shades of the Nine muses! I hadn't  
my idea, poetry put me into such a per-  
fession. I think perhaps I was a lit-  
tle intended for a poet; but that idea of  
the star behind the cloud was a pretty one,  
if I could only have hit upon a rhyme  
that didn't hobble on three legs! Hallo!  
hallo! what's that she has in her arms?"

For through the floating muslin drape-  
ry which the squire's fancy had in-  
vented with the poetic fulness of a  
cloud, he could see the bewitching little  
widow peering up and down the floor,  
her brown ringlets drooping above her  
face, and her dulcet tones murmuring  
some sweet lullaby.

"Po—my—word," ejaculated the  
puzzled squire, "it's a second  
husband—unless he's a smaller man  
than the average; it must be—a baby!  
Deceitful enchantress, false as fair! do  
she intend to pass herself off as posses-  
sing no innumerable? Does she mean  
to keep the existence of her child a  
secret? Good Cupid, how fortunate I am  
to have penetrated her machinery before  
—before the fatal word was spoken!  
Fancy me, Paul Popham, married to a  
woman with a baby! I'd rather live on  
cold mustard-plasters and stewed hops  
for the rest of my life! Ush-sh-sh! it  
is asleep now! what's that she is calling  
it? 'Her precious darling, sweetest-  
pot.' Ah! little does she know  
who listens to her honeyed accents!  
Now she's putting it in its crib—a  
deuced unhealthy place to keep a  
child, that unventilated closet; but I  
suppose it would be discovered anywhere  
else. She must do it with Duffy's  
Elix and Soothing Syrup all day, and  
it comes out like a bat at night!  
Heavens! what cold-blooded heartless-  
ness! Now she has gone out with a  
pitcher in her hand—the opportunity is  
here; I'll investigate this thing, or my  
name isn't Paul Popham! Ah, Melissa  
Martin! who could ever have dreamed  
this of me!"

Squire Popham waited until the rus-  
tles of the widow's half-mourning  
had died away in the hall, and then  
crept softly across the threshold of his  
own apartment, entering hers with  
noiseless, slipped tread.

The light burned with soft, steady  
flame on the table; the dainty, half-  
burned frill lay beside it, with a tiny  
pink Bohemian vase, in which Squire  
Popham recognized a bouquet of white  
roses he had that afternoon presented  
with a pretty speech to the widow. And  
close beside the big arm chair lay a pair  
of tiny slippers, rosseted and buckled,  
and a white canibrio *peignoir*, enough to  
melt the heart of any bachelor  
whose nature had not entered with  
his poisoned dart.

But Paul Popham, being forewarned,  
was consequently forearmed. He paused  
not to linger round the bewitching  
insignia of the female presence, but stole  
on tiptoe, with hushed breath and lips  
apart, to the closet, where lay *per se*  
the secret of the widow's martian life.

Well, there were dresses, and shawls,  
and round hats with saucy birds' wings  
in them, and crinolines, and snowy rust-  
ling skirts, and even a twin pair of In-  
dia rubber boots hanging to a peg—but  
no crib.

"Is there a trap door through which  
the—baby has vanished?" the squire  
asked himself, staring vaguely about the  
closet. Hallo! there comes the widow's  
crinoline down on my head! and by all  
the powers, I've kicked over a saucer  
of milk! A queer way she has of provision-  
ing her garrison, and—"

The squire uttered a short, sharp ejacu-  
lation; in groping round the floor to  
replace the overturned saucer, his hand  
came in contact with something warm  
and soft—something decidedly alive!

"It's the baby, by Jove!" he exclaimed,  
making a rush at it, but the next in-  
stant a short, shrill bark and the agoniz-  
ing sensation of sharp teeth closing to-  
gether over his epidermis dispelled the  
brief dream of triumph, and a plump  
little poodle, abandoning the invaded  
fastness of the basket, rushed past him  
out of the room, and down the stairs,  
howling at the top of its voice.

"Only a puppy-dog!" reflected the  
discomfited squire, rubbing his wounded  
hand; "but it is just the season for hy-  
drophobia, and there's no knowing what  
may happen. Serves me right for not  
attending to my own business. But  
I'm glad it wasn't a baby, as that Me-  
lissa isn't a saint after all. I'll propose  
to that widow—to-morrow morning—if  
I'm not running on all fours and barking  
with hydrophobia!"

As Squire Popham formed this men-  
tal resolution he was struggling to free  
himself from the bondage of Mrs. Mar-  
tin's crinoline, which clung with almost

human malice to his manly form. At  
the same moment the sound of footsteps  
reached the ear.

"She's coming back, as sure as my  
name is Paul Popham, she's coming  
back!" gasped our hero, struggling  
more widely than ever, "and here I am  
in her closet like a caged bear!"

He shuffled half-way across the room  
with the crinoline clinging round his  
ankles; but it was too late—Mrs. Mar-  
tin was almost on the threshold, and he  
staggered back, just regaining the friend-  
ly shelter of the closet as she entered  
with the villainous little poodle in her  
arms, and a young lady following her.

"Come in, Laura," chirped the widow,  
and then laid her plump cheeks in  
the dog's woolly hair. "Poor little Pet-  
sy, did it get frightened and run away?  
Never mind, its own, own mistress has  
come back, so she has. There, lie still  
on the cushion, like a darling mousey-  
kins as it was, and be good. Here are  
the poems, Laura," she added, changing  
her tone.

"O, thank you," said Miss Vernon,  
whose voice Popham recognized from his  
stifling retreat. "By the way, Me-  
lissa, do you know what has become of  
your fat adorer? I haven't seen him  
on the piazza to-night."

"Do you mean that bald-headed old  
bachelor? I'm sure I don't know, nor  
care."

Squire Popham broke into a chill  
perspiration, notwithstanding the fever  
heat of his hiding place. "Fat adorer!"  
"Bald-headed old bachelor!" It was  
enough to set any man's blood circulat-  
ing to hear himself misnamed in that ri-  
diculous manner.

The idea of his presuming to ad-  
mire a woman, Melissa! laughed Miss Ver-  
non. "Do contrive to contrive me some-  
where when he makes his declaration—  
it will be such fun. How Harry will  
laugh when he hears of it! By the way,  
have you written to Harry to-night?"

"Harry, indeed!" gasped Squire Popham.  
"No, I don't think he will laugh  
—not if I know it."

Here the bachelor changed his cramped  
position, and two or three pairs of  
gaiters rattled about his ears, down on  
the floor.

"Mercy upon us, what is that?"—  
shrieked the widow.

"It's Popsy," soothed Miss Vernon.  
"No indeed, it's not Popsy, for he's  
here on his cushion, and some of your  
other nationalities!"

"Then it's a ghost!" screamed Laura.  
"It's a burglar!" shrieked Mrs. Mar-  
tin, and Popsy added to the tumult by  
barking furiously at the closet door.

"Help! Murder! Help! Thieves!  
Help!" shouted Laura at the top of her  
voice, while the widow clung round her  
neck chattering hysterically.

"Ladies, allow me to explain," began  
the squire, opening the door three-  
quarters of an inch, whereupon Popsy  
redoubled his barks and the widow  
screamed louder than ever.

"Villain! stand back!" commanded  
Laura, dragging two rocking-chairs and  
an embowered foot-stool in front of the  
door. "Oh, thank goodness, here is help  
at last. There, there!" she waved her  
hand tragically toward the closet door,  
"the band of desperadoes is secreted  
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an embowered foot-stool in front of the  
door. "Oh, thank goodness, here is help  
at last. There, there!" she waved her  
hand tragically toward the closet door,  
"the band of desperadoes is secreted  
there!"

The gentleman boarders gathered  
round with all the pokers, tongs, pistols,  
croquet-mallets and rulers they had been  
able to collect at such short notice—the  
ladies stood back, shaking in chorus.  
"I'll open the door, Jenks," said the  
landlord to the head waiter, "and you  
be ready to collar the first one that  
rushes out. One—two—three—and here  
goes!"

But to the surprise—and to confess  
the truth, disappointment—of the as-  
sembled boarders, nobody appeared save  
Squire Popham, in a flowered dressing-  
gown and a very red face, shrinking  
back among the widow's silk dresses.

"Why, bless my soul!" exclaimed the  
landlord, "it's Mr. Popham! How came  
you here, sir?"

"It's—a mistake," stammered the  
miserable bachelor, creeping out with  
sheepish countenance.

"It's a confounded queer-looking mis-  
take," muttered two or three of the more  
belligerently inclined boarders. But  
mine host good-naturedly interfered in  
Mr. Popham's behalf.

"I am quite sure Mr. Popham is no  
burglar," he said. "Mrs. Martin, you'll  
bear witness to it's being a mistake, I  
am sure."

And Mrs. Martin, with "Popsy" still  
backing irrespectively in her arms, de-  
clared that "she was so sorry such a  
misunderstanding had taken place."

"And I am sorry too, madam," said  
the old bachelor, stiffly bowing as he  
marched out between the lines of silent  
and amazed spectators.

"My dear," whispered Laura Vernon,  
"you may depend he has heard every  
word we said!"

"But how on earth do you suppose he  
came in there?"

"I am sure I haven't the least idea,"  
said the puzzled young lady.

Nor did they ever discover a clue  
to the mystery. Squire Popham resolutely  
kept at bay the curiosity of the whole  
hotel by obstinately reiterating his first  
statement, "that it was a mistake," and  
nothing more. And the next morning  
he packed his valise and left the Sea-  
weed House.

We are sorry to record the fact that  
he is an old bachelor still, and likely to  
remain so, his first adventure in the ser-  
vice of the little dog having proved so  
disastrous that he will never pluck up  
courage to hazard another! Perhaps  
L-s-p may yet do something for him;  
but it is a forlorn hope, at best!

This is the era of taxing luxuries,  
and the constant demand is to raise the  
tax on articles of this nature and abol-  
ish it on others. The province of  
Quebec responds nobly to this demand.  
Heretofore the cost of a marriage license  
in that region has been six dollars, but  
it is now intended to increase the re-  
venue from this tax by making it two  
dollars higher, and the additional sum  
is to be added to the public school fund.  
Truly a wise application of the money,  
and evidently an appropriate one.

Strange Sights at the Mormon Taber-  
nacle.

The San Francisco Chronicle says—  
What a dense mass of humanity is to be  
seen at the great Mormon Tabernacle on  
a Sabbath morning! The congrega-  
tions vary from three to ten thousand,  
according to the bill of fare offered. If  
Brigham is advertised to speak there is  
certain to be a full house, and if the  
times are lively and exciting, standing  
room will be scarce. Next to Brigham,  
Elder John Taylor, the best of the  
Twelve Apostles, draws the best, and  
then comes George Q. Cannon, another  
of the Apostles. Orson Hyde and the  
Pratts were formerly big guns; but if  
they do not take a very active part  
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