### HOOKING MELONS.

es, 'twas forty year ago, But the time does leg it so Somehow, it don't seem a year. I remember jest as clear How the shiney moonlight streamer Through the apple-trees and gleamer On the river and the pond And the medder jest beyond. Twas a night brim full of joys, Made fer angels and fer-boys.

Sam and me and Luther Pence, Settin' on the Deacon's fence. Was as full as we could be Of our boyish deviltry. "Say," says Lute, "I tell yer what! Uncle Nathan Hall has got In his watermelon patch Jest the finest lookin' batch. Gee! you'd hardly see the ground Fer them melons layin' round."

"Boys," says Sam. "It's melon time Bet yer they're jest ripe and prime Say, I stump yer fer some fun; S'pose we help ourselves to one." Well we never took a stump: So we started on the jump, Through the pasture, by the mill, Down the lane and up the hill Where the watermelons grew. Brippin' with the evenin' dew. "There," says Lute, "Now, wa'nt right?

Hain't them beauties jest a sight? Hain't them striped ones the kind Make yer eat plum to the rind?" Well, I'm free to own, by gum! That our mouths was waterin' some; And I says to Sam, "Now you Hook the melons, while we two Watch around the corner here, So's to see the coast is clear."

"No, yer don't," says Sam; "I say, We don't fix it no such way. Drawin' straws would be my plan-Shorfest straw's the melon man." So we done it, and my fixek Hung right on, and I was stuck. Now them other daffers gridned When they see that I was sinued! But I never raised a ylp,-Only Staffeld on my trip.

Creepth' Sver by the wall, Through the rosb'ry briars and all,-Never mindin' tear or scratch,-Till I resched the melon patch. Well, I took my knife to pick Out a ripe one, when as quick-Yes, and quickern I can tell. Come the first outrageous yell: "Sic 'emi! Ter thievin' crew, I'll jest farn ye, 'fore fim through!"

Was I scared? Well, jest a bit; Götte I almost had a fit. "But." says I. "I won't be left. Here's a big one, by the heft, Dog or no dog, this one's mi So I yanked her from the vine. Picked thy feet up off the ground. Cleared the patch in jest a bound. Bust the rosbry bushes through, Reached the lane and fairly flew.

Thunderstion!—what a run! Bet that melon weighed a ton! Tumbled down and split my vest, Ripped my trousers galley west; Fact I used myself all up 'Fore I shook that snarlin' pup. But at last they lost the chase, And I reached a hidin' place Where we rascals allers met When in scrapes we used to get.

Then I says to Sam and Lute: "Want a melon? There's your fruit Can't scare me and make me quit; What I go to git I git." I was that puffed up with pride Strange I hadn't bu'st and died. Well, they praised me out of sight, Till I says, "Let's have a bite Of that melon that, by jing! I was smart enough to bring.

Sam he cut, then lookin' queer, Tasted; then he says, "See here, Ef you hain't the darndest fool!" "Gosh!" I says, "That's mighty cool. When I come nigh gittin' caught So's that melon could be brought." "Melon nuthin"! Gosh all whiz! Dad-blamed citron's what it is. "Citron!" I says, feelin' faint, Well! I'm jiggered ef it aint!"

# THE CAPTAIN'S STORY.

It was just after the scandal at our, way with the regiment." slub and a little group of us were talking in a very animated way of the af- to Captain Joubert's story, and when fair. Captain Joubert did not join in the stopped speaking there was silence and did not even seem to be listening for a few minutes.

"What will you take for your thoughts?" I said to him at last. "Oh, they're not worth much. I was thinking just then of an incident

small provincial town where I happened to be staying."

"Tëli us about it!" exclaimed one of the other men, and the captain lighted a cigarette and, putting his effow on the mantel shelf against which he had been leaning, he began his story:

"Well, it was when I was in garrison at M-, one of the dullest and most stupid of provincial towns. "When I was off duty I gradually

cot into the habit of turning in to the Union club, which, by the bye, was he only one the town possessed.

"There was very little play at this slub, except at the time of the three innual fairs, each of which lasted a week. One autumn afternoon, just at the opening of one of these fairs, I happened to go to the club rather mrly.

"They are playing high to-day." aid one of the habitues of the club to ne. I turned round towards the table watch the game, and was so surprisid at the sight of one of the players hat I almost exclaimed.

"It was a young man of some twenty-two or twenty-three years of age. whom I knew by sight. I was very much interested in him, for his father had fought courageously at Magenta frowning wickedly. They had been and had been skilled on the field of battle leaving his widow and son by failen in love with her pliquant brunno means well provided for. The young some beauty. She had married him fore. I was stupified, therefore, to set by far the best parti of the sex. him holding the bank, and a good bank it was, too, for there were plenty of notes and gold coins heaved up in notes and gold coins heaped up in front of him.

"'How much?' cailed out one of the players.

"'Oh,' laughed a wealthy farmer 'M. de Mertens is in luck's way; he can safely keep his bank open. "I noticed that the young man's fact was deadly pale, and that there was ar

excited look in his eyes. ." 'Open bank!' he said, and it seemed as though the very words had changed the luck.

"Ten times running Mertens lost and in a quarter of an hour his bank his preferable bank account had had his place, and the play went on. It for him. got so exciting that I, too, was fasci. But he had put the thought behind nated and joined in. There was no mim as a man imprudently will when room to sit down at the table, so I he is in love. Nevertheless, it had confinued standing, holding my hat in been an inexpressible relief to learn my hand, and throwing my winnings loved him with a love that absorbed into it. I had a run of luck, and went every thought of her mind, every on playing in the most excited way pulse of her heart. intil I was startled by someone calling

" You are being robbed. Captain!" "I started, and instinctively seized a hand which had knocked against of his bride's being. She could not mine through my sudden movement, pear to have him out of her sight. It was M. de Mertens' hand, and he held the forty pound note which he on his lap an train his fellow curls had just taken out of my hat. The over her subrown fingers, to feed him wretched man's face was convulsed in cream and candied violets. with emotion. Our eyes met; his were res; then she was happy. dilated with terror, and there was a was going away—going to shoot with spellbound.

" M. de Mértens is thy partner." said, haughtily, to the man who had I fasts. warned me; 'and I am surprised that you should dare to bring such an accusation against a gentleman whose reputation is so well known."

The fiddvidual who field called out had never been to the each of an ever been to the each of an ever been to the each of a man's life—the difficulties of and all been standing round the ner "whole existence" is of man's life. table close to each other, and on see- but a part-of teaching her this withing another player put his hand into sut hurting her. to warn me. On Hearing my Explans. the black eyes were so beautiful man—the lover, in fact, of Mertens, and several of the acquain. The hunting party and stay with get through with it befores of the latter actually. tances of the latter wathered round

"We then continued our play, and trms. He was going away more of the young man. In this of it him as I had done, my first thought

was going out to pay some visits, my foom and there I found a woman of bave you? Don't you be dull, girly, about forty-five years of age. She was very dignified looking and there was an open, honest expression about her face which fascinated me.

"I am Madame de Mertens, she said simply. 'My son told me everything about the affair at the club, and I have come to thank you with all my tact the honor of our name."

"'Madame ----,' I began, but she interrupted me in her emotion and nervousness.

"'My son had got entangled in various ways, and in desperation had tak. Fred, darling," she said. en to play. It appears he had lost with a half-controlled sob, "remember You know the rest, alas!'

"I felt very much embarrrassed, for to witness. She was standing there in apon having prepared, and which she front of me, her face was deadly pale now insisted upon inspecting.

She sent the servant for something and the tears were trembling on her long dark eyelashes.

"'He is young, madame; you must It was just a moment's weakness. will see your son, and---

"'No, Captain,' she said, shaking her head sadly, 'he is no longer here He has enlisted, and is already on his

We had all been listening attentively

"And what happened to M. de Mertens, Captain?" asked one of the group. "Did you ever hear?"

"He is dead. Six months ago I received a letter from Kelung-a pitiwhich occurred once at a club in a ful little letter-written with very pale ink, on a sheet of paper that was all crumpled and yellow with age. There were only a few lines for me to were as follows:

"I am mortally wounded. Admiral Coudert has just brought me the cross; but \* \* \* I am dying. I am sending it to you, my poor cross \* \* you Wear it \* \* \* "

ceived from the chancellor, you always ate wrap and he helped her into it in ee me with the sergeant's cross which a dazed way. poor Mertens sent me. Poor boy! To think that he started as a thief and something to eat," she said, carelessly, died a hero's death at Kelung."

"What a remarkably energetic we so closely to his will a side. man that Mrs. Glitter is?" "Isn't she? I never knew her thow slugishness but once."

When was that Why, after she got her first divorce and sorrows, and to shere with her she let two whole days go by before the blessiage of the beoppy married he married again

## THE REMEDY.

She was sobbing bitterly. L. was married six months.

man came very rarely to the club, and because she liked him as well as any I had never seen him touch a card be of her hair dozen suitors, and he was

confugal felicity and constantly expressed affection, that he almost faniled himself tired of her.

She, on the other hand, had fallen in love with her dusband. And this unexpected, burning, eager love had! grown and grown with every hour of aer wifehood.

Fred had been intensely pleased, at arst, when he saw the big love grow up in his wife's heart. He had tiad grave misgivings once or twice before the marriage.

He knew that Mabel had flirted sady with Hylard, and with other men. He had felt "a cold, faint fear" that something to do with her preference

that of a certainty his wife loved him

The first intoxication of love gratided had passed away and left him temporarily disinclined for further irafts of the sweet liquid.

To have him in her boudoir, to sit

look in them that seemed to hold me some men in Scotland. And Mebel's neart was broken, it she thought it 1 was, which harts quite as much while

"Mabel, dear, do be reasonable," he inid. "I'm only going away for two

"If you loved me you wouldn't go

my hat, it was very natural that the "It's only a stag party," he began, man should have thought it his duty The girl sprang to her feet, and her

"Only a stag party?" she cried. and expressed their regret that such should hope so. If you were going an frisult should have been offered without me to a place where there were other women I'd kill you."

He caught his pretty wife in his Three days passed and I heard nothing love-making. He simost felt inclined

"Mrs. Othello! Mrs. Othello!" name of the brave soldier of Magenta. Desdemonia. I want you to have the Now for my part, I'm as trustful as "One evening, however, just as I best possible time while I'm away." "Accept all your invitations special orderly informed me that a lady wish. heaps of money-you haven't bought ed to see me. I went into the drawing a new frock since we've been married. because I've gone for a two weeks shoot at the beginning of the season. To everywhere; see everything.

"I'm sure Hylard will be delighted to play escort to you anywhere. You see I'm not jealous. And I haven't lorgotten how keen Hylard was to

Mabel drew back indignantly. Then the did what every woman does when heart for having preserved for us in- it comes to an issue between her said man she loves. She yielded—as Reopatria yielded when Anthony left her at the bidding of Caesar. threw her arms about Duncan's neck

and kised him. "I hope you'll have a lovely time, "And oh?" every penny he possessed that night every moment you're away that Mabel loves you-Mabel loves you."

Then the butler came in with the lunch basket, which Duncan did not the poor mother's grief was terrible want, but which Mabel had insisted seldom sat out an evening together at advice he would lines to

She sent the servant for something she thought was necessary for its completeness. While he was gone she took from her desk a box of marrons not take it to heart so. I stammered places. It was a satin-covered box and it was hand-painted.

She pressed it into the wicker basket and Fred, watching her, felt very vicious. How was he to get rid of the foolish, ridiculous thing before he met Stewart McMillan at Euston?

Duncan stayed in Scotland three weeks instead of two. Then a great. sudden longing to see his wife caused aim to catch the first train for London. When he entered his own hall the first thing he saw was a wonderful opera cloak that lay across the table. Then Mabel came out of the drawing com door. Mabel, in a marvellous vellow dress, all satin and chiffon! The great Duncan diamonds findied from every conceivable and inconcelvable part of her person.

"You!" she cried. "I'm afraid the dinner is cold. But you can tell them read. I know them by heart. They going out. I've three receptions and to get you something quickly. I'm a ball. Don't sit up. Lord Hylard will see me home. Don't crush my flowers, she added, almost avoiding his kiss.

She held up a magnificent bouquet. "Wasn't it files of Lord Hylard to send me such a beauty? Did you have saved me, and I should like you to a good time, dear? Isn't my gown incomparable? I hope you wearing the decoration which I re-

> "Blinks, see that your master has and passed out.

That was three years ago. Duncan as a little laughed at now for clinging But they are very thoppy, and both have tearned the secret of true love. She has direction those foolish and he has tellend to come to his devoted wife with both his joys

### SIX BY SEVEN.

the had thought lerve in a cottage Would be line; I will help you wash the dishes. My divine

And we two will just be happy. Rain or shine." She, entranced, enraptured, heard him And was glad.

She had read a lot of novels, So she had. And she knew love in a cottage Wasn't bad.

He and she: Then they hunted for a cottage, But, ah me!

So they stood before the preacher,

There was none they'd live in, even Though 'twas free!

She has given up her novels And all that. She has farmed out both her parrot

And her cut-

They are living in a six by Seven flat. -Cleveland Leader.

# CLARENCE'S LYDIA.

"How about that other wongerful dismond of yours; that wasn't a diamend?" I asked Clarence one rainy Mornoon when we were witting together in Buisey's cafe.

"Oh, the ring with the other Garnier diamond?" he said. "Well, it wouldn't be quite fair to tell you that story now. I promised to tell Homen and the other fellows who were there that night when I was telling you about old disc

"Yes," I said, "but they don't was to hear it. Homan and those etter. fellows don't appreciate your stories **25** Î (70,\*\*

"You think so?" said Clarence, looking at me very gravely.

"Sure of it," I said. "I saw them furtively yawning before you were through with old Garmier."

"You don't say so? Well, then, I believe I will tell you that story all to had sint her that wing that apperb yourself alone. It has one strongly ring. marked peculiarity about it, too." "And what is that, Clarence?"

"It's the only story I have ever told you-or ever will-in which I myself figure as the hero—the leading young

"Good." I said. "Then hurry up and get through with it before Homan or any of the others come dropping in." bounds of possibility, I will do the "Did I say figured an the lover" "Oh," she said, is it somethic. Clarence broke out, after a few min- can answer for that much. Have the utes' silent thought. Wet, obene to seen much of father lately? I wanted think of it, that isn't strictly true. Or, you to become a great friend of the the club, minutes. He could stand a bit more really being. I was perfect that nothing love-making. He simost felt inclined you know. But, Lord! We wanted the standard of the a man gets to my age, one of the had been of his father, and I find de-whispered, lifting the lovely tear-stain. things he learns—gleans out at his enfermined to save from disgrace the lower transfer of the lo

fancy himself in love when he isn't. "I certainly thought myself in love with that girl. I took it to be a case of love at first sight, in which I had not believed until then and have not believed since. I met her quite by acance one afternoon. That night I went young man, I may may that stood at last fallen a victim to the malady taken it for an absent brother, for which I had so often studied in others don't know whether I was sorry for Lydia about the fact.

myself, or proud of myself, or both. that she was in love with me!

"Things were progressing beauti- withdraw his objections. So was months. I used to take that girl every where; in fact, our association was make father give in,, and I way chiefly in going somewhere. We very you are just the sort of person who we had heard together.

"One evening a grizzaly-headed old veteran poked his head into the room lately stopped and called out, Come don't believe Lydia ever suspected the in. father-I want your

"Then she introduced me to her fa- gory out of that Garnier diamond.

the old gentleman. I thought it was about that ring. just as well for us to become acquaint. "It's awonderful diamond, isu tatt ed early in the game.

fore. I've heard a good deal of you one can't always be sure. from mutual acquaintances. The liter and his dismont mill and trem

smally didn't want this old person to ner meaning of it.

"I don't know whether my industries." I don't know whether my industries. Me home way and set to work talking went for much with her father, but he to me. That's what he did, She went on playing and the old villain went her cousin. on talking about half the people I "It was at the wedding that I found knew, and about half my life, too. He out what I told you at the beginning seemed to know all about me. The test I had not been really in love with end of it was that he asked me to dine the girl. with him at his club. Then he wound up, 'Now, don't let me drive you away, felt when I saw her and Maurice, at Mr. Clarence. You haven't got to get the alter together. If I had ever been up as early in the morning as I have, really in love with her that caim real-I dare say. I must say good night ling of satisfaction would have been an

cordial and civil. But, somehow, I didn't like the old fellow's way. I If you want to make friends with don't know just why, but he seemed to dog you will find that there is nothing treat me just me if I were a new crony that this animal likes better than he had picked up at his club. I didn't have some one cub his ears. If you want him to regard me as a man of his will take a dogs cars and curl the

seemed really very placed that her far very soon. If the dos weers ther and I got on so well together. I fou can add greatly to the wanted for so much to meet him the by sorstching the partial. To have introduced you wan a specific the sound pour quite a feather in my day."

To year to see T Fast all that made recording to the control of the seld. Bit ibere ert je

reasons that I may led you of spinis nays—way I should want to stand particularly well with father just now, You'll know in time. "And you expect me to be a particular

ularly pleasing secrificat Task ... "Yes, she laughed. You see fu-ther goes to his club regularly, but still I don't think he wets emough of the society of men of his own are Most of the clubmen are young backetors, with nothing in particular in their heads. Now, you are just the sort of man he delights in. You can talk to him about all sorts of things. He al-Ways says he wishes he could have

spent half his life in traveling "All this was very flattering indeed and yet the flavor of it did not seem to mult my tame. "I did dine with that old codger, and a very good dinner be gave me, at his

club, tate-a-tate. Then I felt it right to give him a dinner. But I can't say I enjoyed any of these festivities very "By and by it was Lydia's birthday, and I not ready to put in a powerful

stroke for myself with my present-my "I wouldn't say anything about an enragement, I thought I would send the And Funeral Purnishe ring with a bouquet of Mayers and a

little note. "The messenger had to bring me back a receipt, of course, because, as you know, I valued that diamond, made by old Garnier's magic art, Just as highly as if it had been due from the mines of Goloods. With the receipt, the messenger brought me a lovely little note from Lodie, most insetly toviting me to call that afternoon. The was going to have a birebilay party that night, she said, and I would not care to come to that as there would be no one there but allly young popple. "How do you think I liked that? Not

much, I can tell you. "However, I called in the afternoon and found Lydie waiting for me, alone. She said that she was rather sorry

"Why?" I naked, all fluctering. "Flecamen, who maid looking down in her most bewitching fambles, it is stick a magnificent present that it also mos wates nie afraid to set the other favor I have been counting on. "Ask me anything you date think of. I mid, "and, if it is within the

"Then," she said, you much

your industries with him. I've told I about Maurice, haven't IT No? "I said that she never had. " Haven't Il" she went out . Strange It seems almost impossible that me should have been such good friends

all this time without my kalling you about him. There he is. She pointed to a pointing on china cident, calling on a mutual acquaint. of a young man-a very handsome to bed under the impression that I had framed on the plano. I had always there was a decided reversiblemen to

"You see, Mr. Clarence," the late. "Anyhow, it seemed at first that I rustuily, father is strongly opposed to was going to be a happy lover, for the marriage between consins. Maurice is young woman was frankly glad to see my coulin, you know, He had been me at her home. I ought to have away in California for over two years known better than to interpret that now, making his fortune. Before the as a sign that my feeling was recipro- went, father nativay and cated, but I didn't. I actually thought we still cared for each other at the fully-so I thought-for the next three got back two days ago. And I really think that it wouldn't take much to

hard hit for an ardent lover?" "Sure," I said. "The wonder of it was," he conwhile she was playing, and she immed. thed, "that I got over it so quickly, I

truth until I began to make an alle-"Til to all I can for you! I said. "Well, I was very pleased to meet. But just at present I want to tell you

she said, because it isn't a dismand at "I am very pleased indeed to meet all. Oh, yes, any jeweler in Mew Nork you, Mr. Clarence, he hald; very would tell you it was a true diamond, pleased indeed. Sorry I haven't hap dug out of the earth. But I know it pened to be in when you were here he isn't. And now you know it. You mean

"Yes. I knew the Browns. But I ber expression, I think the new the I did finally consent to Lydia's marrying

"How do a know! By the var Hope to see you again, soon! Impossibility My one fey, "Now you know that was all very a sort of Garnier stair." mpossibility. My one there affalls was

own standing.
"She—suppose we call her Lyris— gently you will make a cantine triese



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