THE FORTY ACRE FARM.

BY JOHN B. YATES.

I'm thinkin', wife, of neighbor Jones, that man with stalwart arm—
He lives in peace and plenty on a forty acre farm;
While men are all around us, with hands and hearts asore,
Who own two hundred acres and still are wanting more.

His is a pretty little farm, a pretty little house;
He has a loving wife within, as quiet as a mouse;
His children play around the door, their father's life to charm,
Looking neat and tidy as the tidy little farm

No weeds are in the cornfields, no thistles in the oats,
The horses show good keeping by their fine and glossy coats;
The cows within the meadow, resting 'neath the beechen shade,
Learn all the gentle manners of the gentle milking maid.

Within the field, on Saturday, he leaves no cradled grain
To be gathered on the morrow, for fear of coming rain;
He keeps the Sabbath holy, his children learn his ways;
And plenty fills his barn and bin, after the harvest dove.

He never saw a law-suit to take him to the town.
For the very simple reason there is no line fence down,
The bar-room in the village does not have for him a charm;
I can always find my neighbor on his forty acre farm.

His acres are so very few, he plows them very deep;
'Tis his own hands that turn the sod—'tis his own hands that reap;
He has a place for everything, and things are in their place;
The sunshine smiles upon his fields, contentment in his face.

May we not learn a lesson, from prudent neighbor Jones,
And not, for what we havn't got, give vent to sighs and moans?
The rich aint always happy, nor free from life's alarms.
But blest are they who live content, though small may be their farms.

Mrs. Bland.

Rippling Beach some three years ago, had the advantages of quiet and seclusion. It was an out-of-the-way place on the Sound, which I believed then I had almost discovered. There was a modest countryfied hotel, where *food and mosquitoes might be had at a minimum of cost. With two weeks* holiday and an exceedingly moderate amount of money to devote to my pleasures, after due consideration, I had selected Rippling Beach for my fairing. As a third clerk in the bank my vacations were few and far between, and I had determined to make the best of the occasion. when Mr. Howland, the assistant teller, whose business it was to pay the employees their salaries, had given me my check he had casually asked me where I was going, and I had expatiated on the charms of Rippling Beach, and its being one of the lost places on Long Island.

Visitors at the Beach House were, though goodish people, not congenial. I was indifferent however, to society. Boatmen and fishermen were my boon companions. I had been a week at Rippling Beach, when I became acquainted with Mrs. Bland. This lady was a late arrival. How I came to talk to Mrs. Bland I can hardly tell. I rather think that, hearing the lady express a desire to see a city paper, I had handed her a *Times*, and in this way some common-place conversation had commenced. A certain pleasant way the woman had, a fairly well-bred manner, a disiuclination to indulge in tittle-tattle with the rest of the boarders, made her society rather agreeable than otherwise. Mrs. Bland was diminutive, had a graceful figure and dressed in quiet taste. Though Mrs. Agnes Bland was fully thirty, she impressed me with a certain childishness of expression, in which vague description I trust I am not paraphrasing Mr. Bret Harte. The lady's eyes were of a pale blue, without fixity of glance. No one would have been rude enough to even attempt to stare Mrs. Bland out of countenance. It would have been apparently, too easy a thing to do. without having evasive eyes, they seemed subdued, and the least bit furtive. An immense volume of fair, blonde hair, which she wore in one big braid, added most essentially to her charms. For any trait of fixity of purpose in Mrs. Bland's regularly oval face, the only indication of it was a slight wrinkling of the forehead between the eyes. Such furrows, had however, no permanence. You might see such little winrows on a child's face when some passing matter for a brief moment had engaged its scattered wits. Conversationally, Mrs. Bland was fairly amusing. Educated she was not, but having a good amonnt of intuitive perception, her remarks were clear and defined. It was the day after I had given her the paper, when I said to Mrs. Bland, "Has your budget failed to reach you? It is one of the annoyances of an out-of-the-way place. Mails are dilatory or come in batches."

"What do you know about my mail?" asked Mrs. Bland, the little wrinkles roughing her forehead.

"Why, Mrs. Bland, I replied, "if you do not receive many letters, at least you have a famous collection of newspapers coming to you every day—at least a dozen.

"How do you know that?"

"The only grocery man in the little town, who sells me fish-hooks, is the post-master. I go there early in the morning, before the mail is sent to the hotel. The grocer generally runs the whole mail before me into a bushel basket prior to handing me my occasional correspondence. I see Mrs. Agnes Bland on ever so many jonrnals. Have I the honor of addressing a lady correspondent—a literary woman?"

"Nonsense! What an idea! My husband sends the papers to me. It is a delicate attention on his part. Time passes away in reading them during his absence."

"Then there is a Mr. Bland," I said to myself.

"I expect Mr. Bland will be here in a few days. Hope you will like him. He is a great fisherman. Now I notice you carry a fishing pole to the water-side every morning. My husband has sent his fishing tackle down, so if you want hooks or lines I can spare you some. You come here every season, do you not?"

"No; this is the first time in my life. Good morning Mrs. Bland, and thanks for your offer."

"Good morning, sir; but excuse me a moment. Would you kindly look at this bill of mine the office clerk has sent me? I am an idiot about accounts. Here are some items which, no doubt are correct, with express charges on some trunks and things paid for at the office, and the sum[illegible] Then the hand-writing is so bad. Would you, now, just make the addition for me? Oh, I aint afraid of your looking at the bill. There are no cherry cobblers on the account, and one does not trust muslin dresses to sea-side washerwomen." Mrs. Bland had hanging from her neck a delicate chain, and among numerous rattling appendages there was a dainty, golden pencil. With as pretty a dimpled white hand as I ever saw, she bent over and offered the pencil. The calculation was so simple that I ran it over in my mind without the use of the pencil, and gave the total. It differed a few cents, the advantage being in Mrs. Bland's favor.

"It is a trifle in error, Mrs. Bland, but the people are honest. The bill should be $28.67, instead of $28.65."

"I never could remember the figures: pray set them down. It will give Mr. Bland so much pleasure to know that my bill is exactly right. He is such a strict man of business."

"Willingly," I replied, and wrote at the foot of the bill "$28.67, Korrect."

"Thanks," said Mrs. Bland. "What a wonderful head you have for figures." She scrutinized the bill closely. "And what queer way of making sevens!"

"Oh, in the bank I am in, I do little else than add up figures for hours on a stretch. There is nothing queer about my sevens. I always cross my sevens. Then they do not look like ones. In a great many banking houses in New York that is the rule. Scientific calculators always use the crossed seven."

"Ah, indeed! If you want to see a ludicrous 3 or 5, look at mine—such wormy twisting things. Look," and Mrs. Bland drew the numerals.

"They are quite ludicrous, indeed," I said. "There make your 3 this way, and don't bring the tail of your 5," and I made the figures.

"Thanks, for the lesson. I must go now and pay the bill, $28.67, you say?"

With a bow I left Mrs. Bland, and burrying to the water side, got my boat, and was off after blue-fish, I had better luck than usual, and brought home that afternoon some fine blue-fish and weak-fish. I had the best fish cooked for supper, a portion of which I sent to Mrs. Bland, who seemed to partake of it with relish. I was not idiot enough to think, though it was three years ago, that the lady was especially pleased with with me for the attention, but in the evening, a fine moonlight one, Mrs. Bland lingered on the veranda. I was smoking a cigar on the bottom of the steps, within speaking distance of her.

"You very kindly offered me the use of Mr. Bland's tackle. Now, you have not congratulated me on my good luck," I said.

"I do, I do," said Mrs. Bland, quickly, with a certain amount of expansiveness. She rose from her chair and held out her hand, and it fairly trembled. I was surprised. What possible sympathy could there exist between us? I did not care to have even a passing flirtation with her. How the duce had my fish called for so marked an expression on Mrs. Bland's part?

"Five blue-fish, which would weigh thirty pounds, not counting weak-fish, and a dab or so," I said in the most commonplace way.

"Yes, yes," said Mrs. Bland, apparently absorbed.

"But I have broken my squid, my best one, and I would really like to borrow a hook or so from you to make another. Could you really lend me some hooks until I go to New York?"

"Willingly. Wait here a moment," and Mrs. Bland arose aud went down the hall to her room. Just then David, the colored waiter came in with a telegraphic message for Mrs. Bland. She returned at once, took the message, read it under the hall lamp and went to her room.

"David," I asked the waiter, "I did not know that you could telegraph to such an out-of-the-way place as this?"

"It ain't done often, sir. The telegraph station on the road is fourteen miles from here, but you can get message sent by the coach—tho' Mrs. Bland's messages come on horseback with a man kiting."

It was none of my busines how Mrs. Bland's messages came, though there was quite a number of charges for telegraphic messages. In a moment more Mrs. Bland was down stairs holding in her hand quite a number of large hooks. It was not my fault, but the lady had taken up with the package a small fly-hook, which, as she opened the parcel, punctured a rosy first finger, so that a drop of blood started. "I am so sorry, may I not tie this handkerchief around it?"

"What with a hook in my finger? Pull it out. Please, no fuss." Here Mrs. Bland's face looked rigid, and the wrinkles between her eyes made a series of archings.

"But, but," I exclaimed, really disturbed, "I can't pull it out. Can you bear the merest cut with my penknife?"

"Can I? Nonsense; of course I can," and she held out a taper white finger, and I felt my heart sink within me as I made a careful probe, and fortunatly extricating the barb, drew out the hook, which I deliberately put in my pocket book. "Would Mrs. Bland faint now?" I asked myself.

"A glass of water?" I said anxiously "What for? To dip my finger in? Ridculous! I will put it in my mouth. Please do not destroy your pocket handkerchief. You will excuse my sucking my thumb like a baby while I talk. There, it is all over now yung gentleman. I never scream at a mouse, go into hysterics over a caterpillar, and do not blink at lightning."

"You are a very brave little woman then. Here take this telegraphic message which you've just dropped," and I handed the message to her.

"I heard the waiter tell you I received ten messages a day. Now can you count that together with my dozen newspapers?"

"I can—do not care to; it is not any of my business, Mrs. Bland. I am not curious," I replied.

"Well, I am—very much so—and my business is to—ah!" here she stopped to David just then rang a bell, which meant that the stage coach with the passengers from the railroad was coming. This coach stopped at the house first, then continued its journey to a small tavern further on the coast.

"You were saying, Mrs. Bland—pray continue."

"All can tell you is this sir, that in that coach you will find a man you hardly expected to see. Go and look." With that Mrs. Bland fanned herself quite composedly and went to her room.

I went to the coach, not understanding what the woman meant. Some three women got out of the vehicle, followed by an old gentleman who had to be helped out—evidently an invalid. On the box by the driver was a man who, as I approached, lit a fuze, and with it his segar. His face I did not recognize, I then felt some tittle curiosity to find out what Mrs. Bland meant about the man "I hardly expected to see." I did peer into the coach. I was aided by David, who with a lantern was looking for a parasol one of the lady passengers had left. There was a man, apparently asleep. Though it was summer a handkerchief was thrown over his face. One glimpse was enough. Though his whiskers had been cut, and his reddish hair stained black, it was the face of George Harland, the assistant teller of our bank. He looked at me in an agonized way, then put his fingers to his lips and said in a low, broken voice; "My God! Henry, I am a thief, trying to escape—to escape. I know they are after me! then he shuddered. I am mad—crazed—have lost my head. You here? Do not betray me!"

"To Dickerson's," cried the driver and off went the coach. From Dickerson's I knew that small fishing boats ran to Martha's Vineyard, and the Massachusetts coast. I stood appalled, dazed and speechless.

Mrs Bland met me on the verandah with some flowers in her hand which exhaled a deep luscious perfume.—The odor quite sickened me. "Ladies and gents," cried the good natured familiar landlord in his shirt sleeves. "It isn't down on the bill of fare, but we have been quite short of fruit, peaches and sich, for the last three days, and nary a boarder has grumbled. I came across a fine lot of fruit this arternoon, and they is sot in the dining room, and do you all jess go in and help yourself." Mrs Bland was near me, and clapped her ing her pricked finger. Will you take me in? she asked quite naturally.

I had no heart for peaches, still I offered the woman my arm. There was a group of noisy boarders at a long table, but through David's care Mrs Bland secured a long kitchen table on which was placed a dish of peaches, flanked with huge half moons of watermelon.

"You saw him," asked Mrs. Agnes Bland, paring a peach with a silver pocket fruit knife which she drew from her pocket. "Dear me! the juice of the peach gets into my cut finger and really stings."

"Saw him, Mrs. Biand. For God's sake, what does this all mean?"

"I like cling-stones better than free-stones. I should be so much obliged to you if you would pare a peach for me. My finger makes me so awkward."

"Are you a Nemesis, Mrs. Bland?"

"A what? I don't know what that means."

"Explain!"

"Oh! the man in the coach? Now sir, listen. The '$28.67. Korrect,' you wrote on that bill of mine gave me the clue to your handwriting. Mr. Bland—there is a Mr. Bland—sent me down here after you. Those figures and K-o-r-r-e-c-t cleared you. There were no figures like yours in the altered accounts. George Harland was a thief. I was glad when I could congratulate you on your luck."

"Luck, Madam! what do you mean?

"You were the only gentleman here—all the rest of them were cads and muffs. Your society was not unpleasant to me, and I should have so disliked to be the means of bringing a theft to your door. Mr. Bland was on that coach with the driver. You may have noticed first a blue splutter and than a red splutter from his match. That meant, 'All right, Mrs. Bland.' George Harland has misappropriated $72,000 belonging to your stupid old bank, and did it, clever as you are in figures, right under your nose, sir. The papers for the past week have had an inkling of it—not where you would look for the news, but in personals and advertisements. That is why I read the papers. Please don't go; any sympathy I might have had—and I have not much to waste—was really that of thankfulness that quite a decent young man like you was safe. Mind, I never suspected you, though Mr. Bland might have done so. George Harland ought to have $50,000 in notes, on his person, this very moment." There was a base look of greed in the woman's face.

"You are, then, Madam—?"

"The wife of Mr. Bland. I am afraid," and here Mrs. Bland smiled, showing me a set of white teeth, a single black melon seed increasing their pearly luster by contrast. "that you do not like me as well—at least my society—as you did an hour ago." There was a little bit of killing disdain about the woman. I suppose the scorn on my face was manifest, for I made no effort to conceal it.

"Great Lord save us!" said David, coming in and addressing us, "something dredful has happened—dat man in stage coach—'

"Not run away—escaped?" said Mrs. Bland, springing to her feet with the latent energy of Johnathan Wild. Her eyes had lost their pale blue shimmer, and glinted like cold steel; the furrows between her eyes took strange, arabesque, sinister traceries. It was a dreadful face to see.

"No Ma'm—woss nor that. He blow his brains out, right in the coach."

"David," said Mrs. Bland, now as quiet and unrippled as a dish of milk in a dairy; "David, bring me a napkin, and I will take another bit of melon—if you will help me, sir."

But I did not help Mrs. Bland.

THE STOICS say "Turn in upon yourselves; there you will find repose." Others say, "Go forth from yourselves and seek happiness in diversion." Neither is true. Alas! happiness is neither within us nor without us. It is the union of ourselves with God.—*Pascal.*

RECIPES.

Catskill Milk Potatoes. — Take good, sound potatoes, cut them in [illegible] and put the milk, according to the quantity you wish to make, in a pudding dish; then, after you have put the potatoes in the milk, put in the oven for about twenty minutes, then take out and put the potatoes with the same milk into a saucepan to boil until done; season before you put them to boil.

Rice Pudding.—Boil one cup of rice a little while; beat well together three eggs and one-half cup sugar: add one cup of raisins, one quart sweet milk, and the cup of boiled rice; any seasoning preferred can be added. Bake in a moderate oven an hour. To be eaten cold or hot, with wine sauce or sweet cream.

Fish Fritters.—Take salt codfish, soak it over night. In the morning, throw the water off the fish, put on fresh, and set on the range until it comes to a boil. Do not let it boil, as that will harden it. Then pick it up very fine, season with pepper, mace, and perhaps a little salt. Make a batter of a pint of milk and three eggs, stir in the fish and fry in small cakes. Any kind of cod fish makes nice fritters.

Ginger Snaps.—One teacupful each of molasses, brown sugar and melted lard, two teaspoonfuls of pulverized alum dissolved in a teaspoonful of boiling water (be sure that it is well dissolved,) five teaspoonfuls of soda dissolve in four tablespoonfuls of boiling water, one teaspoonful of salt and two tablespoonfuls of ginger; mix to a stiff dough, roll the same thickness as cookies, and cut into squares, and bake in a quick oven. They are very good.

Oyster Short Cake.—One qnart of flour, three teaspoonfuls of baking powder, one tablespoonful butter, a pinch of salt and enough sweet milk to moisten well. Roll about an inch thick and bake on tin pie plates quickly. While it is baking take one quart of oysters and half a cup of water and put on the stove; then take half a cup of milk and the same of butter, mixed with a tablespoonful of flour and a little salt and pepper; add all together and boil up once. When the cakes are done, split them open and spread the oysters between them, some on the top. Put what oysters that are left in a gravy dish, and replenish when needed.