HARRIET and the PIPER

by Kathleen Norris

SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I.—Harriet Field, twenty-eight years old and beautiful, is the social secretary of the flirtatious Mrs. Isabelle Carter, at "Crownlands," Richard Carter's home, and governess of 17-year-old Nina Carter. Ward, twenty-four years old and impressionable, fancies himself in love with his mother's attractive secretary. Mrs. Carter's latest "affair" is with young Anthony Pope, and the youth is taking it very seriously.

CHAPTER II.—Presiding over the tea-cups this summer afternoon, Harriet is profoundly disturbed by the arrival of a visitor, Royal Blondin. Next day, at a tea party in the city, Blondin makes himself agreeable to Nina, and leaves a deep impression on the unsophisticated girl.

CHAPTER III. — Harriet's agitation over the appearance of Blondin at "Crownlands" is explained by the fact that he had been a disturbing element in her life ten years before, and she fears him. The man is an avowed adventurer, living on the gullibility of the idle rich. He frankly announces to Harriet his intention of marrying Nina, who, as the daughter of the wealthy Richard Carter, is a highly desirable "catch," and urges her to aid him. She is in a sense in his power, and after pleading with him to abandon his scheme agrees to follow a policy of neutrality.

CHAPTER IV.—Harriet visits her married sister, Linda Davenport, with whom she had had her home during her unfortunate acquaintance with Blondin, and tells her of his reappearance. The two women, realizing the unscrupulous nature of the man, view the future with apprehension.

CHAPTER V. — Knowing the tender feeling she has inspired in Ward Carter, Harriet is tempted to marry him for the position and wealth he can give her, though realizing she does not love him. Blondin has ingratiated himself with Madame Carter, Richard's mother, and she is whole-heartedly in favor of his marriage with Nina. Ward urges Harriet to marry him at once. She procrastinates.

CHAPTER VI.—Angered at his wife's too open flirtation with young Anthony Pope, Richard Carter markedly shows his resentment. Isabelle, ardently returning her youthful lover's attachment, elopes with him on his yacht, and pursuit is useless. The news of the sensational affair, exaggerated, of course, by gossip, is kept as much as possible from being public property.

CHAPTER VIII.

Sudden peace and confidence flooded her spirit. She sat on, dreaming and planning, but with no more mental distress. With the prayer she had gained, in some subtle fashion, a new self-respect. She would not let him frighten her again; after all, while she commanded her own soul, Royal Blondin could not hurt her.

"And he shall not marry Nina, either!" Harriet decided, going in, stiff and cold, but full of resolution. She looked at a clock—it was almost four. Three hours' sleep was not to be despised, but Harriet was in no mood for it. Instead she took a bath, and just as the dawn was beginning to flood the world with mysterious half-lights and long wet shadows, she crept out into the dew-drenched garden and, with a triumphant sense of being alone, went into the wood. Early walks were one of her delights. It was almost seven o'clock when she came back, glowing, beginning to feel warm and headachy, beginning to realize that the July day would be hot, beginning to be conscious of the eight mile tramp. In the garden at Crownlands she met Royal, leaving the house.

He studied her approvingly.

"Harriet, do you know that you are extraordinarily easy to look upon? What gets you up so early?"

"I've been walking," she said briefly and unresponsively. His social pleasantries instantly antagonized her, and he saw it.

"Well, I thought perhaps I had better get out. I'm at the club for a day or two. Ward tells me," he added, giving the girl a sharp glance, "that you and he—eh?"

Harriet flushed.

"I'm sorry he told you!"

"Oh, my dear child!" Blondin made a deprecatory motion of his hands. "Of course, I think you're very wise," he added.

This smote upon her new-born self-respect, and all the glory departed from the day. The man saw her breast rise and fall with some quick emotion as he half-smilingly watched her.

"The lad gets a beautiful and wise and very discreet wife," he was beginning, but Harriet silenced him angrily.

"He loves me. I don't know what a boy's love is worth; he's only twenty-two, after all. But he does love me! But believe me, Royal, you couldn't hurt me—as you are hurting me!—if there was no truth in what you say. Ward has had three years at college—I've not been a member of the family all that time without knowing that he is not a saint! He has lived as other men do—as women permit decent men to live, I suppose. Nina's different. She's younger. She has never had an affair—"

"We were not discussing Nina!"

"No, I know it. But you reminded me that what I object to in you, with her, I myself am doing with him—or something very like it! Except that—" Harriet floundered a little, but regained her thread—"except that he does care for me," she repeated; "he loves beauty—I can say that to you without your misunderstanding!—and then, he knows me, we have been intimate for years, we are congenial!"

"He knows everything about you," Royal repeated, innocently, as if the defense she made were perfectly acceptable. But again she was stung to silence.

"I am going to tell him frankly, exactly what you have said to me," Harriet said, presently, with decision and relief in her voice. "I shall remind him that I have always been poor, and that it is utterly impossible for me to separate the thought of him from the thought of what my life as his wife would gain."

"Be careful how you play your hand alone!" the man said. "Half confidence isn't much more than none at all!"

A moment later they parted; the woman entering the house for a cup of coffee, and some conference with butler and housekeeper, and the man starting off briskly for his early walk. But Blondin was smiling, as he went upon his way, and Harriet was white with anger and impotence.

"I'll put everything else I have in this world in the balance, Roy!" she said to herself, in the sunshiny silence of the breakfast room. "But I'll hold no more stolen conversations with you! I'll break my engagement with Ward, I'll go to Richard Carter and humiliate myself, I'll go back to Linda's house without a penny in the world—but I'll be done with you! Thank God, however the story may sound, especially with your interpretations on it, you haven't my honor in your keeping, though you may seem to have!"

The house was absolutely quiet; the clock on the stairs struck a silvery seven. Harriet went noiselessly to her own room; Nina was sleeping heavily. She flung off her clothes, sank into bed. And now at last sleep came, deep, delicious, satisfying.

A day or two later there was a family conference in the library, and Harriet realized more clearly than ever that it was impossible to forecast the march of events. Richard announced that after consideration he had decided that it would be wiser for the family to weather the storm of talk that would follow Isabelle's disappearance in some neighborhood less connected with her. He had therefore leased an establishment on Long Island, where the children could have their swimming and tennis, and his mother her usual nearness to town, but where they would be comparatively inaccessible to a curious press and public, and might disappear for a grateful interval. The life at Huntington would be less formal than at Crownlands, but the house he had taken was comfortable and roomy; there would be plenty of room for Nina's girl friends and Ward's guests. Miss Field, Bottomley and Hansen would please see to it that the move was made with all possible expedition. "I have explained to my mother and the children," he said, quietly, to Harriet, "that Mrs. Carter has asked for a divorce, which will, of course, be immediately arranged. Now, Miss Field, you will understand that you are in charge from now on. My mother will—well, you know how to handle her! She is old—enjoys her little bit of mischief sometimes! Anything unusual you can refer to me; I shall be there every week, anyway."

He paused and ruffled the scattered papers that were on the flat-topped desk before him. Harriet watched him anxiously. She thought he looked tired and old, and her heart ached at the troubled attempt he was making to simplify the tragedy for them all. He was not handsome, she reflected, but surely there had never been keener or pleasanter gray eyes, and a mouth so strong when it was in repose, so honest when it smiled. Not like Ward's ready and incessant laughter, not like Royal Blondin's carefully calculated amusement.

Reaching this point in her thought, facing him with her whole beautiful face alive with emotion and interest, Harriet smiled herself, involuntarily and faintly. It was a smile of almost daughterly sympathy and comradeship, friendly and innocent, and wholly irresistible.

Richard, catching the look, was perhaps unconsciously cheered by it. Even at forty-four, and under his present difficulties and harassments, he must have been dead not to be refreshed by the vision of earnest youth and beauty that was so near him in the tempered summer light of the great library.

"Thank you!" he said, as if she had spoken. "There is one more thing, Miss Field," he added, idly rumpling his papers again, and then moving his fine hand to his thick brown hair, whose shining order he rumpled too. "About this man Blondin. Do you know anything about him?"

A more direct shot at her innermost fastnesses could hardly have been made. Robbed of breath and senses by the suddenness of it, and with dry lips, Harriet could only falter a repetition:

"Know anything about him?"

"I don't know much, and what I do know I don't like," Richard continued, noticing nothing amiss in her manner, perhaps because he was so deeply absorbed in what he was saying. "He's a handsome fellow; he knows his subject, I guess. But I don't like him. Now, I don't know how he feels to Nina, or she to him, but as you know, she will come into her uncle's fortune in a few months, unless the trustee, who is myself, decides to defer payment for another three years. I merely want to say that it might be as well to intimate to this young fellow that there are conditions under which I would see fit to defer it, and anything that brought him into that connection would—well, would constitute one!"

"I didn't know of that!" Harriet exclaimed, in such obvious relief that the man smiled involuntarily.

"Then you agree with me?" he asked, eagerly.

Here in the somber sweetness of the library, with the man she admired and respected above all others looking to her for confidence and counsel, what could she say? Even had Royal Blondin been present, Harriet might have cast every secondary consideration to the winds as readily. As it was, she could only tell him the truth.

"Oh, yes—yes! I told Ward that I would rather see Nina dead!"

"Why do you say so?" Richard asked. "Now, I'll tell you why I do," he added, as Harriet was, not unnaturally, groping for definite phrases, "I've been watching this man. I had his record looked into. There's nothing extremely bad in it—he seems to be a gentleman adventurer. I don't want him mixed up with my family. I'm going to speak to Ward about it, warn him that his sister's happiness mustn't be risked by having the fellow about at all. You're tired," said Richard, abruptly.

"Indeed I'm not!" the girl protested, with white lips.

"You don't imagine the man is serious?" Richard asked, alarmed by her manner.

"I don't know!" Harriet answered at random. "They've—they've hardly known each other three weeks!"

"Ah, well! And she is only seventeen," her father said. "Distract her, amuse her—if she's inclined to mope a bit. Get riding horses!"

No time to think—no time to trim her course. Harriet must plunge blindly ahead now.

"Mr. Carter, would you—if you think wise—give your mother a hint of this? Madame Carter is romantic, you know—"

"Oh, certainly! Certainly!" he said, approvingly. "I'll speak to her. We must keep Nina a little girl this summer. And, Miss Field—"

It was said with only a slight change in the pleasant voice. But it brought a sudden change in their relationship, a tightening of the bonds that were all Harriet's world now.

"—Miss Field, I may say here and now that it is an unmixed privilege, in my estimation," Richard Carter said, simply, "that my daughter, and my son, too, for the matter of that, should have the advantage of your influence, and your example, at this time. I have never been unappreciative of the value of a simple, good, unspoiled woman in my household. I have seen the effect in a thousand ways. But at the present moment, I hardly know where I could turn without you. I can only hope that in some way the Carters may be able to repay you!"

The secretary's shining head dropped, and she rested her elbow on the table, and pressed a white hand tight across her eyes for a moment of silence. When she faced him again her face was a little pale, and her magnificent eyes heavy with tears.

"I love all the Carters," she said simply. "I only wish I were—half what you say!"

And without another word she stood up, folded into a tiny oblong the paper upon which she had been making a few notes, and went slowly to the library door. More deeply stirred than she had been since the days of her passionate girlhood, she turned on the threshold for a look of farewell. But Richard Carter had left the desk, and was kneeling on one knee before his safe; he had forgotten her. Harriet went across the hall, mounted the stairs, and found her own room. She was hardly conscious of what she was doing or thinking.

"Oh, what shall I do?" she whispered. "He trusts me to protect her! Oh, why didn't I—the moment I knew that Royal was thinking of her—why didn't I go to him then, and make a clean breast of it all! Now—now I've promised! And they trust me and love me—and what shall I do! Oh, God," whispered Harriet, sinking on her knees beside the bed, "You know that I am good—You know that I can really help them all—can really protect the girl! You know how I have chosen what was fine and good, all these years, how I have longed for an opportunity to be useful and happy! Don't let him come into my life again, and spoil it again. Don't let Richard Carter lose faith in me, and despise me! I don't know what's the matter with me," sobbed Harriet, burying her brimming eyes in the pillows "I never cry, I haven't cried like this for years and years! I think I'm losing my mind!"

(To be continued.)

"The Lad Gets a Beautiful and Wise and Very Discreet Wife," He Was Beginning, But Harriet Silenced Him Angrily.

—The collection of United States internal revenue taxes is a big job. More than 20,000 government employees are engaged in this work, 7800 of whom are attached to the income tax unit. Several hundred more auditors are needed for this department and an examination to fill these positions will be held in Baltimore, Md., Salisbury, Md., and Easton, Md., on March 8. The entrance salaries offered range from $1800 to $3000 a year. Advancement will depend upon demonstrated efficiency.

—Business men of Philadelphia, it is reported, have purchased a site in Kennedyville upon which they will erect an electric light plant that will supply current for that and surorunding towns. They also contemplate the erection of a steam laundry there.

How Long Animals Will Live

The following table shows the longevity of the various animals, fish, birds, etc., living in this county:

	Years
Jack	25 to 50
Bee	4
Bugs	1 to 4
Birds	3 to 30
Carp	100 to 150
Cat	18
Cow	20
Crow	100
Deer	20
Dog	23 to 30
Eagle	100
Elephant	200
Goose	50
Hare	7 to 8
Hog	20
Horse	25 to 30
Lark	18
Lion	60
Monkey	18
Ox	19
Parrott	100
Peacock	24
Pigeon	20
Pike	100
Rabbot	8 or 9
Salmon	10
Sheep	10
Sparrow-hawk	40
Spider	1
Squirrel	7
Swan	100
Toad	30
Tortoise	over 100
Wren	3

Rate Schedule P. S. C. No. 9

Rate Schedule No. 9 Made and Filed by

Chestertown Electric Light and Power Company

in accordance with

Public Service Commission Order No. 246, of April 19th, 1911, described in Circular No. 8A.

The following rates are to become effective as called for by the Maryland Public Service Commission orders No. 6386 and 6445.

Prices are on a monthly basis unless otherwise stated.

Town Lighting—32 C. P. street lamps, $21.00 per year each.

Lighting Rates (applicable to all classes of lighting customers except for town lighting, as set forth above):

For the first 50 K. W. H. per month 20 cents per K. W. H.

For all in excess of 50 K. W. H. per month 19 cents per K. W. H.

Discount lighting rates to be subject to a discount of 5 per cent, provided bill is paid within (10) ten days after its date of presentation.

Minimum Bill—$1.25 per month.

Power Service—For 110 and 220 volt 60 cycle, two phase. For 110 volt, single phase, 60 cycle, of one (1) horse power or less:

For the first 200 K. W. H. per month 10 cents per K. W. H.

For the next 300 K. W. H. per month 8 cents per K. W. H.

For all in excess of 500 K. W. H. per month 6 cents per K. W. H.

Discount—Power rates to be subject to a discount of 5 per cent provided bill is paid within ten (10) days after its date of presentation.

Minimum Bill—$1.00 per month per connected horse-power.

Power rates is not applicable to customers having a total connected motor load of less than two horse power.

Same general rules applied to the rates above as previously filed.

Rate Schedule P. S. C. No. 9A.

The following rates are to become effective on and after March 1, 1922: Prices are on a monthly basis unless otherwise stated.

Off Peak Summer Power Service—Applicable only to customers whose use of energy is limited to the period commencing on or after March 1 and ending on or before October 31, and whose connected load is ten (10) horse power or more.

Rate—The Power Service Rate less a discount of 15 per cent.

Minimum Bill—Twelve ($12) dollars per horse power of connected load.

This minimum bill is payable in advance and covers the entire period up to and including October 31. The minimum bill will be applied as a credit to monthly payments made under this rate during the calendar year in which the minimum payment was made.

Rules—The general rules now in force are applicable to this rate and in addition thereto the following rules will apply to this rate only.

(1st) Customers using this rate must discontinue their service for a period of two hours during the lighting peak whenever they may be required to do so by the company.

(2nd) Customers using this rate and who use their service beyond the period specified above will be required to pay immediately to the company an amount of money sufficient to bring all their previous bills for the calendar year up to the charges which would have been made under the Power Rate set forth in Rate Schedule No. 9.

This rate is not applicable to lighting service.

Breakdown or Standby Service—Power and lighting Rates are not applicable to customers having their own source of electric power or who purchase electric energy from outside sources other than this company. For customers of this class the following rates and rules will apply:

Lighting Rates—The rates as set forth in schedule P. S. C. No. 9.

Power Rates—The rates as set forth in schedule P. S. C. No. 9.

Minimum Bill—Applicable to either Power or Lighting Customers.

One ($1.00) dollar per month per amphere at 110 volts single phase.

Two (2.00) dollars per month per ampere at 110 volts single phase.

Two ($2.00) dollars per month per ampere at 220 volts single phase.

Four ($4.00) dollars per month per ampere at 220 volts single phase.

Rules

The general rules now in force are applicable to this rate and in addition thereto the following rules will apply to this rate only.

(1st) The minimum amount of service is ten amperes at 110 volts or five amperes at 220 volts.

(2nd) Customers must make written application for the service and set forth the voltage, phase and ampere requirements in their application.

(3rd) Service will be supplied for periods of not less than twelve months.

(4th) Payments covering minimum bills must be made in quarterly installments in advance. No discount will be made on minimum bills.

(5th) when energy is used under this rate credit will be allowed for only the minimum bill for the month in which energy was used.

(6th) Customers must provide and install at their expense an automatic circuit breaker capable of adjustment for the amount of service required. The breaker must be mounted in a metal cabinet fitted with a lock and key. The metal cabinet is to be supplied at the customers expense and the lock and key will be supplied by the company at the customers expense. All of this equipment must be approved by the Company and the arrangement must be such that the circuit breaker can not be adjusted to a new setting when the cabinet is locked. All keys to the cabinet lock shall be held by the company and no one but authorized representatives of the company shall have access to the cabinet during the term of the contract. All wiring within the customers premises and on the company's side of the circuit breaker shall be installed in metal conduit.

(7th) Circuit breakers will be set by the company at the amperage specified in the customers application.

(8th) Application for a change in the setting of the circuit breaker must be made in writing by the customer at which time he must agree to continue the service for a minimum period of twelve months from the date of the new setting of the breaker.

(9th) Service will not be supplied in parallel operation with other sources of power under this contract.

(10th) No claim for rebate due to discontinuance of service caused by the automatic operation of the circuit breaker on overloads will be allowed.

(11th) The company reserves the right to withdraw this service on twenty-four hours notice when in its judgment the further supply of this service might endanger its service to regular customers.

Rates for energy (but not minimum bills) supplied under schedule P. S. C. No. 9A are subject to the 5% discount for payment within ten days after their date of presentation as set forth in schedule P. S. C. No. 9.

CHESTERTOWN ELECTRIC LIGHT & POWER COMPANY

Railroads Ask Repeal of Burdensome Law

SO-CALLED FULL CREW REGULATION IS COSTLY TO THE PUBLIC

TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND:

The undersigned Railroad Companies, all operating in the State of Maryland, join in a petition to your honorable body to act favorably on Senate Bill No. 74 introduced by Hon. Walter Mitchell which repeals the so-called full crew law enacted in 1908. This burdensome and wholly unnecessary law requires railroads to man all freight trains of 30 or more cars with crews of six men; viz: I Engineer, 1 Fireman, 1 Conductor and 2 Brakemen and 1 Flagman (3 Brakemen). This crew comprises one more Brakeman than the railroads need.

The petitioners respectfully urge the abolition of this extra Brakeman

BECAUSE, the employment of this useless Brakeman is an unnecessary burden on the railroads, and therefore, on the public, which after all "pays the bill." In 1919 the cost was $314,204, in 1920 $496,890, in 1921 (a year of business depression) $367,282, a total, during the past three years, of $1,179,076. During the last ten years this law has cost the Railroads operating in Maryland approximately TWO AND ONE-HALF MILLION DOLLARS, without a single cent in return compensation.

BECAUSE, the extra Brakeman is not needed in the operation of trains. The Federal Government requires automatic couplers and air brakes on all cars and prohibits the use of hand brakes on trains. Two brakemen are sufficient. Then why a third Brakeman?

BECAUSE, the railroads are vitally interested in the safe and economic operation of trains, and are fully qualified to decide upon the size of the crews.

BECAUSE, this law places an unnecessary burden on the railroads and leads to high passenger and freight rates, in which the public is vitally interested. Industry and trade must be revived, which is possible only by removing unnecessary burdens and lessening of overhead charges. The stringency of the times will be partially relieved by the repeal of this law. This repeal does not mean more unemployment; it does mean the transfer of men from useless to useful occupations in other departments, where the money paid them will be more profitably expended in repairing locomotives, cars, tracks, etc.

BECAUSE, Pennsylvania and other states have repealed similar laws. The West Virginia Legislature refused to pass a bill enacting such a law. Virginia and Delaware are without such a law. Therefore, Maryland, alone in this group of States, is hampered by a full crew law.

We, therefore, appeal to your honorable body to repeal this burdensome and unnecessary law.

THE BALTIMORE AND OHIO RAILROAD CO.
THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD COMPANY
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General Manager,
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