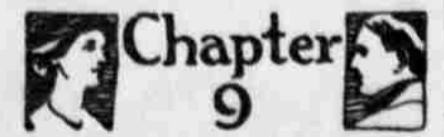




The Riverman

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By Stewart Edward White



I THINK I'll go see Jane Hubbard this evening," Orde remarked to his mother as he arose from the table.

Every Sunday Jane Hubbard offered to all who came a "Sunday night lunch," and the refreshments were served by the guests themselves. Orde found about the usual crowd gathered. Jane herself, tall, deliberate in movement and in speech, kindly and thoughtful, talked in a corner with Ernest Colburn, who was just out of college and who worked in a bank. Orde, standing in the doorway, looked upon quite the usual thing, only he missed the Incubus. Searching the room with his eyes, he at length discovered that incoherent, desiccated, but persistent youth vis-a-vis with a stranger. Orde made out the white of her gown in the shadows, the willowy outline of her small and slender figure and the gracious forward bend of her head.

"So you're back at last, are you, Jack?" drawled Jane in her lazy, good natured way. "Come and meet Miss Bishop. Carroll, I want to present Mr. Orde."

Orde bowed ceremoniously. The girl inclined gracefully her small head with the glossy hair. The Incubus, his sallow face twisted in a wry smile, held to the edge of his chair with characteristic pertinacity.

"Well, waiter," Orde addressed him genially, "are you having a good time?"

"Yes, indeed!" His chair was planted squarely to exclude all others. Orde surveyed the situation with good humor.

"Going to keep the other fellow from getting a chance, I see."

"Yes, indeed!" Orde bent over and, with great ease, lifted Incubus' chair and all, and set him facing Mignonne Smith and the croquet ball.

"Here, Mignonne," said he, "I've brought you another assistant."

He returned to the lamp to find the girl, her dark eyes alight with amusement, watching him intently.

"Waiter is a very bright man in his own line," said Orde, swinging forward a chair, "but he mustn't be allowed any monopolies."

"How do you know I want him so summarily removed?" the girl asked him.

"Well," argued Orde, "I got him to say all he ever says to any girl, 'Yes, indeed!' so you couldn't have any more conversation from him. Besides, I want to talk to you myself."

"Do you always get what you want?" inquired the girl.

Orde laughed.

"Any one can get anything he wants if only he wants it bad enough," he asserted.

"Some people," she amended. "However, I forgive you. I will even flatter you by saying I am glad you came. You look to have reached the age of discretion. I venture to say that these boys' idea of a lively evening is to throw bread about the table."

Orde flushed a little. The last time he had supped at Jane Hubbard's that was exactly what they did do.

"They are young, of course," he said, "and you and I are very old and wise."

"Now, tell me, what do you do?"

"What do I do?" asked Orde, puzzled.

"Yes. Everybody does something out west here."

"I'm a river driver just now."

"A river driver?" she repeated. "Why, I've just been hearing a great deal about you from Mrs. Baggs."

"Oh!" said Orde. "Then you know what a drunken, swearing, worthless lot of toughs we are, don't you?"

"There is Hell's Half Mile," she reminded him.

"Oh, yes," said Orde bitterly, "there's Hell's Half Mile! Whose fault is that? My rivermen's—my boys? Look here! I suppose you couldn't understand it if you tried a month. But suppose you were working out in the woods nine months of the year. Suppose you slept in rough blankets on the ground or in bunks, ate rough food, never saw a woman or a book, undertook work to scare your city men up a tree, risked your life a dozen times a week in a tangle of logs, with the big siver rafter behind just waiting to swallow you; saw nothing but woods and river, were cold and hungry and wet and so tired you couldn't wiggle. And then suppose you hit town, where there were all the things you hadn't had, and the first thing you struck was Hell's Half Mile. Say, you've seen water behind a jam, haven't you? Water power's a good thing in a mill course, where it has wheels to turn, but behind a jam it just rips things. Oh, what's the use talking? A girl doesn't know what it means. She couldn't understand."

"I think I begin to understand a little," said she softly. "But they are a heartless class in spite of all their

courage, aren't they?"

"Heartless!" exploded Orde. "There's no kinder lot of men on earth. There isn't a man on that river who doesn't chip in five or ten dollars when a man is hurt or killed, and that means three or four days' hard work for him. And he may not know or like the injured man at all. Why?"

"What's all the excitement?" drawled Jane Hubbard behind them. "Can't you make it a to be continued in our next? We're most starved."

"Yes, indeed!" chimed the Incubus. The company trooped out to the dining room, where the table, spread with all the good things, awaited them.

To Orde's relief no one threw any bread, although the whole hearted fun grew boisterous enough before the close of the meal.

In spite of her half scornful references to "bread throwing" Miss Bishop joined with evident pleasure in the badinage.

After the meal was finished Orde, with determination, made his way to Miss Bishop's side. She turned to the piano, struck a few chords, and then, her long hands wandering idly and softly up and down the keys, she smiled at them over her shoulder.

Song followed song, at first quickly, then at longer intervals. The girl still sat at the piano, her head thrown back idly, her hands wandering softly in and out of melodies and modulations.

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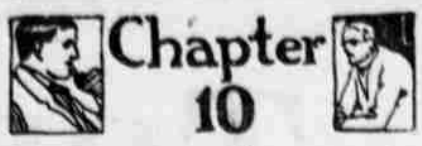
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THE next evening on reaching home Orde found that Newmark had preceded him by some few moments.

After supper Orde led the way up two flights of narrow stairs to his room.

"Well," said he, "I've made up my mind today to go in with you. It may not work out, but it's a good chance. I don't know who you are nor how much of a business man you are, but I'll risk it."

"I'm putting in \$20,000," pointed out Newmark.

"And I'm putting in my everlasting reputation," said Orde. "If we tell these fellows that we'll get out their logs for them and then don't do it I'll be dead around here."

Newmark pursued the subject. "I've no objection to telling you about myself. New York born and bred; experience with Cooper & Dunne, brokers, eight years' money from a legacy. Parents dead. No relatives to speak to."

Orde nodded gravely.

"Now," said Newmark, "have you had time to do any figuring?"

"Well," replied Orde, "I have a rough idea." He produced a bundle of scribbled papers from his coat pocket. "I take Daly as a sample, because I've been with his outfit. It costs him to run and deliver his logs 100 miles about \$2 a thousand feet. He's the only big manufacturer up here. I suppose it costs the other nine firms from two to two and a half a thousand."

Newmark jotted down figures.

"Do these men all conduct separate drives?" he inquired.

"All but Proctor and old Heinman. They pool in together."

"Now," went on Newmark, "if we were to drive the whole river, how could we improve on that?"

"In the first place we wouldn't need so many men. I could run the river on 300 easy enough. That saves wages and grub on 200 right there. And, of course, a few improvements on the river would save time, which in our case would mean money. We would not need so many separate cook outfits and all that. Then, too, if we agreed to sort and deliver we'd have to build sorting booms down at Monrovia."

"Suppose we had all that. What, for example, do you reckon you could bring Daly's logs down for?"

Orde fell into deep thought.

"I suppose somewhere about a dollar," he announced at last. He looked up a trifle startled. "Why," he cried, "that looks like big money! A hundred per cent!"

Newmark smiled.

"Hold on," said he. "I don't know anything about this business, but I can see a few things. In the first place, close figuring will probably add a few cents to that dollar. And then all our improvements will be valueless after we've got through using them. You said yesterday they'd probably stand us in \$75,000. Even at a dollar profit we'd have to drive 75,000,000 before we got a cent back. And, of course, we've got to agree to drive for a little less than they could themselves."

"That's so," agreed Orde, crestfallen.

"However," said Newmark briskly as he arose, "there's good money in it, as you say. Now, how soon can you leave Daly?"

"By the middle of the week."

"That's good. Then we'll go into this matter of expenses thoroughly and establish our schedule of rates to submit to the different firms."

Orde came to her.

"That was a wonderfully beautiful thing," said he. "What was it?"

She turned to him, and he saw that the mocking had gone from her eyes and mouth, leaving them quite simple, like a child's.

He hesitated and stammered awkwardly. "It was so still and soothing it made me think of the river sometimes about dusk. What was it?"

"It wasn't anything. I was improvising."

"You made it up yourself?"

"It was myself, I suppose. I love to build myself a garden and wander on until I lose myself in it. I'm glad there was a river in the garden—a nice, still, twilight river."

At this moment the outside door opened to admit Mr. and Mrs. Hubbard, who had, according to their usual Sunday custom, been spending the evening with a neighbor. The company began to break up.

Orde pushed his broad shoulders in to screen Carroll Bishop from the others.

"Are you staying here?" he asked.

"I'm visiting Jane."

"Are you going to be here long?" was Orde's next question.

"About a month."

"I am coming to see you," announced Orde. "Good night."

He took her hand, dropped it and followed the others into the hall, leaving her standing by the lamp. She watched him until the outside door had closed behind him. Jane Hubbard, returning after a moment from the hall, found her at the piano again, her head slightly one side, playing with painful and accurate exactness a simple one finger melody.

Reaching his home, Orde walked confidently to the narrow stairs and ascended them. Subconsciously he avoided the creaking step, but outside his mother's door he stopped, arrested by a greeting from within.

"That you, Jack?" queried Grandma Orde.

For answer Orde entered. He made out the great square bed and divined the tiny figure of his mother.

"Mother," said he abruptly, "I've met the girl I want for my wife."

Grandma Orde sat up in bed.

"Who is she?" she demanded.

"Her name is Carroll Bishop," said Orde, "and she's visiting Jane Hubbard."

"Yes, but who is she?" insisted Grandma Orde. "Where is she from?"

Orde stared at her in the dim light.

"Why, mother, blest if I know that!"

IS YOUR 'THINKER' IN WORKING ORDER?

Is your thinking cap on straight? Are you sufficiently familiar with the business firms of the city to be able to tell who they are by the descriptions that will be given of them in the "Knowledge Competition" which is to be printed in the Mail Tribune on Thursday.

Considerable curiosity has been engendered by the announcement made a few days since, and as the time approaches for the publication of the unique feature the curiosity is growing. All the curiosity in the world is not wrapped up in the female population, either. There seems to be just as much of it in the sterner sex in this instance, as in the sisters.

The sketches are well on the road to completion and they will be ready for publication Thursday. Some valuable prizes are to be given away to the parties who are fleet enough in their thought to identify these people readily, and since time is the essence of this proposition, it would pay those who are expecting to enter to win to watch the ads of the paper closely, so that they may be the more able to discern the popular characteristics that belong to the various business firms of the city.

The competition will be open to all except employees of the Mail Tribune and their families.

NOTICE.

On account of the increased cost of feed, we, the undersigned dairymen of Medford, find it necessary to raise the price of milk to ten cents a quart, retail, and 25 cents a gallon, wholesale, on and after December 1, 1909.

WARNER & SNIDER, J. C. CALHOUN, J. M. SCHMIDT, H. H. CALHOUN, J. V. KEEZER.

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495 Washington Street, Portland, Or. Telephone Main 3690.

MEDFORD TIME TABLE.

SOUTHERN PACIFIC RAILWAY

Northbound.	
No. 20 Roseburg Pass.	7:41 a. m.
No. 12 Shasta Limited.	9:25 a. m.
No. 16 Oregon Express.	5:24 p. m.
No. 14 Portland Express.	8:39 p. m.
Southbound.	
No. 11 Shasta Limited.	5:50 a. m.
No. 15 California Express.	10:35 a. m.
No. 13 S. F. Express.	3:32 p. m.

Medford to Jacksonville.

Motor car leaves	8:00 a. m.
Train leaves	10:45 a. m.
Train leaves	3:25 p. m.
Train leaves	6:00 p. m.
Motor car leaves	9:30 p. m.

Jacksonville to Medford.

Motor leaves	7:00 a. m.
Train leaves	8:45 a. m.
Train leaves	2:30 p. m.
Train leaves	4:30 p. m.
Motor car leaves	7:30 p. m.

PACIFIC & EASTERN RAILWAY.

No. 1 Leaves Medford.	8:00 a. m.
No. 3 Leaves Medford.	2:20 p. m.
No. 2 Arrives Medford.	10:10 a. m.
No. 4 Arrives Medford.	5:00 p. m.
No. 1 Arrive Eagle Pt.	8:45 a. m.
No. 2 Leaves Eagle Pt.	9:05 a. m.
No. 3 Arrives Eagle Pt.	3:05 p. m.
No. 4 Leaves Eagle Pt.	4:15 p. m.

MAIL CLOSURES.

Northbound	8:55 a. m.	8:10 p. m.
Southbound	9:00 p. m.	3:00 p. m.
Eagle Point.		2:00 p. m.

Important addresses will be made by representatives of the U. S. department of agriculture, department of good roads; Prof. Philip S. Rose, Madison, Wis.; B. B. Clark, editor American Thresherman; Hon. Lionel R. Webster, Portland, Or., and others, on subjects of importance.

Two hundred dollars in gold will be given as prizes for the best wheat raised in Oregon.

Silver cup for outfit threshing \$100 prize bushel of grain.

For further information call on any Southern Pacific agent, or write to William McMurray, general passenger agent, Portland, Or.

A Methodist Minister Recommends Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy.

"I have used Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy for several years for diarrhoea. I consider it the best remedy I have ever tried for that trouble. I bought a bottle of it a few days ago from our druggist, Mr. R. R. Brooks. I shall ever be glad to speak a word in its praise when I have the opportunity."

—Rev. J. D. Knapp, pastor M. E. Church, Miles Grove, Pa. Sold by Son. B. Haskins' Pharmacy.

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3 Billion Feet of Timber, must be well located for operating and logging. Transportation facilities near by. Land with some white pine preferred. Furnish cruising by 40,s and maps. Only principals need apply.

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Goods Less Than Cost

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Bootblack Parlors

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In harness, saddles, whips, robes, tents, blankets, wagon sheets, axle grease and gail cure, as well as all kinds of custom work, see

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