

O. Henry Stories

III.—The Enchanted Profile

By O. HENRY

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HERE are few calligraphers. Women are Scheherazades by birth, predilection, instinct and arrangement of the vocal chords. The thousand and one stories are being told every day by hundreds of thousands of viziers' daughters to their respective sultans. But the bowstring will get some of 'em yet if they don't watch out.

I heard a story, though, of one lady calligrapher. It isn't precisely an Arabian Nights' story, because it brings in Cinderella, who flourished her dishrag in another epoch and country. So if you don't mind the mixed dates (which seem to give it an eastern flavor, after all) we'll get along.

In New York there is an old, old hotel. You have seen wood cuts of it in the magazines. It was built—let's see—at a time when there was nothing above Fourteenth street except the old Indian trail to Boston and Hammerstein's office. Soon the old hotelery will be torn down. And as the stout walls are riven apart and the bricks go roaring down the chutes crowds of citizens will gather at the nearest corners and weep over the destruction of a dear old landmark. Civic pride is strong in New Bagdad, and the wettest weeper and the loudest howler against the iconoclasts will be the man (originally from Terre Haute) whose fond memories of the old hotel are limited to his having been kicked out from its free lunch counter in 1873.

At this hotel always stopped Mrs. Maggie Brown. Mrs. Brown was a bony woman of sixty, dressed in the rustiest black, and carrying a handbag made, apparently, from the hide of the original animal that Adam decided to call an alligator. She always occupied a small parlor and bedroom at the top of the hotel at a rental of \$2 per day. And always, while she was there, each day came hurrying to see her many men, sharp faced, anxious looking, with only seconds to spare. For Maggie Brown was said to be the third richest woman in the world, and these solicitous gentlemen were only the city's wealthiest brokers and business men seeking trifling loans of half a dozen millions or so from the dingy old lady with the prehistoric hand bag.

The stenographer and typewriter of the Acropolis hotel—there, I've let the name of it out—was Miss Ida Bates. She was a holdover from the Greek classics. There wasn't a flaw in her looks. Some old timer in paying his regards to a lady said, "To have loved her was a liberal education." Well, even to have looked over the back hair and neat white shirt waist of Miss Bates was equal to a full course in any correspondence school in the country. She sometimes did a little typewriting for me and, as she refused to take the money in advance, she came to look upon me as something of a friend and protegee. She had unfailing kindness and good nature, and not even a white lead drummer or a fur importer had ever dared to cross the dead line of good behavior in her presence. The entire force of the Acropolis, from the owner, who lived in Vienna, down to the head porter, who had been bedridden for sixteen years, would have sprung to her defense in a moment.

One day I walked past Miss Bates' little sanctum Remingtonium and saw in her place a black haired unit—unnisistakably a person—pounding with each of her forefingers upon the keys. Musing on the mutability of temporal affairs, I passed on. The next day I went on a two weeks' vacation. Returning, I strolled through the lobby of the Acropolis, and saw, with a little warm glow of auld lang syne, Miss Bates, as Grecian and kind and flawless as ever, just putting the cover on her machine. The hour for closing had come, but she asked me in to sit for a few minutes in the dictation chair. Miss Bates explained her absence from and return to the Acropolis hotel in words identical with or similar to the following:

"Well, man, how are the stories coming?"

"Pretty regularly," said I. "About equal to their going."

"I'm sorry," said she. "Good typewriting is the main thing in a story. You've missed me, haven't you?"

"No one," said I, "whom I have ever known knows as well as you do how to space properly belt buckles, semicolons, hotel guests and hatpins. But you've been away, too. I saw a package of peppermint pepsin in your place the other day."

"I was going to tell you about it," said Miss Bates, "if you hadn't interrupted me."

"Of course, you know about Maggie Brown, who stops here. Well, she's worth \$40,000,000. She lives in Jersey in a \$10 flat. She's always got more cash on hand than half a dozen business candidates for vice president. I don't know whether she carries it in her stocking or not, but I know she's mighty popular down in the part of

the town where they worship the golden calf.

"Well, about two weeks ago Mrs. Brown stops at the door and rubbers at me for ten minutes. I'm sitting with my side to her, striking off some manifold copies of a copper mine proposition for a nice old man from Tonopah. But I always see everything all around me. When I'm hard at work I can see things through my side combs, and I can leave one button unbuttoned in the back of my shirt waist and see who's behind me. I didn't look around, because I make from \$18 to \$20 a week, and I didn't have to.

"That evening at knocking off time she sends for me to come up to her apartment. I expected to have to typewrite about 2,000 words of notes of hand, lens and contracts with a 10 cent tip in sight, but I went. Well, man, I was certainly surprised. Old Maggie Brown had turned human.

"'Child,' says she, 'you're the most beautiful creature I ever saw in my life. I want you to quit your work



"Well, she's worth \$40,000,000."

and come and live with me. I've no kith or kin," says she, "except a husband and a son or two, and I hold no communication with any of 'em. They are extravagant burdens on a hard working woman. I want you to be a daughter to me. They say I'm stingy and mean, and the papers print lies about my doing my own cooking and washing. It's a lie," she goes on. "I put my washing out, except the handkerchiefs and stockings and petticoats and collars and light stuff like that. I've got \$40,000,000 in cash and stocks and bonds that are as negotiable as Standard Oil preferred at a church fair. I'm a lonely old woman, and I need companionship. You're the most beautiful human being I ever saw," says she. "Will you come and live with me? I'll show 'em whether I can spend money or not," she says.

"Well, man, what would you have done? Of course I fell to it. And, to tell the truth, I began to like old Maggie. It wasn't all on account of the forty millions and what she could do for me. I was kind of lonesome in the world too. Everybody's got to have somebody they can explain to about the pain in their left shoulder and how fast patent leather shoes wear out when they begin to crack. And you can't talk about such things to men you meet in hotels; they're looking for just such openings.

"So I gave up my job in the hotel and went with Mrs. Brown. I certainly seemed to have a mash on her. She'd look at me for half an hour at a time when I was sitting, reading or looking at the magazines.

"One time I says to her: 'Do I remind you of some deceased relative or friend of your childhood, Mrs. Brown?' I've noticed you give me a pretty good optical inspection from time to time."

"'You have a face,' she says, 'exactly like a dear friend of mine—the best friend I ever had. But I like you for yourself, child, too,' she says.

"And say, man, what do you suppose she did? Loosened up like a Marcel wave in the surf at Coney. She took me to a swell dressmaker and gave her a la carte fit me out—money no object. They were rush orders, and madam locked the front door and put the whole force to work.

"Then we moved to—where do you think? No; guess again. That's right—the Hotel Bontou. We had a six room apartment, and it cost \$100 a day. I saw the bill. I began to love that old lady.

"And then, man, when my dresses began to come in—oh, I won't tell you about 'em! You couldn't understand. And I began to call her Aunt Maggie. You've read about Cinderella, of course. Well, what Cinderella said when the prince fitted that 3½ A on her foot was a hard luck story compared to the things I told myself.

"Then Aunt Maggie says she is going to give me a coming out banquet in the Bontou that'll make moving vans of all the old Dutch families on Fifth avenue.

"I've been out before, Aunt Maggie," says I. "But I'll come out again. But you know," says I, "that this is one of the swellest hotels in the city. And you know—pardon me—that it's hard to get a bunch of notables together unless you've trained for it."

"Don't fret about that, child," says Aunt Maggie. "I don't send out invitations—I issue orders. I'll have fifty guests here that couldn't be brought together again at any reception unless it were given by a king or a trust busting district attorney. They are men, of course, and all of 'em either owe me money or intend to. Some of their wives won't come, but a good many will."

"Well, I wish you could have been at that banquet. The dinner service was all gold and cut glass. There were about forty men and eight ladies present besides Aunt Maggie and I. You'd never have known the third richest woman in the world. She had on a new black silk dress with so much pascenerie on it that it sounded exactly like a hall storm I heard once when I was staying all night with a girl that lived in a top floor studio.

"And my dress! Say, man, I can't waste the words on you. It was all hand made lace—where there was any of it at all—and it cost \$300. I saw the bill. The men were all baldheaded or white sidewalked, and they kept up a running fire of light repartee about 3 per cents and Bryan and the cotton crop.

"On the left of me was something that talked like a banker, and on my right was a young fellow who said he was a newspaper artist. He was the only—well, I was going to tell you.

"After the dinner was over Mrs. Brown and I went up to the apartment. We had to squeeze our way through a mob of reporters all the way through the halls. That's one of the things money does for you. Say, do you happen to know a newspaper artist named Lathrop—a tall man with nice eyes and an easy way of talking? No, I don't remember what paper he works on. Well, all right.

"When we got upstairs Mrs. Brown telephoned for the bill right away. It came, and it was \$600. I saw the bill. Aunt Maggie faints. I got her on a lounge and opened the bedwork.

"'Child,' says she when she got back to the world, 'what was it—a raise of rent or an income tax?'

"Just a little dinner," says I. "Nothing to worry about—hardly a drop in the bucketshop. Sit up and take notice—a dispossess notice, if there's no other kind."

"But say, man, do you know what Aunt Maggie did? She got cold feet! She hustled me out of that Hotel Bontou at 9 the next morning. We went to a rooming house on the lower west side. She rented one room that had water on the floor below and light on the floor above. After we got moved all you could see in the room was about \$1,500 worth of new swell dresses and a one burner gas stove.

"Aunt Maggie had had a sudden attack of the hedges. I guess everybody has got to go on a spree once in their life. A man spends his on highballs, and a woman gets woozy on clothes. But with \$40,000,000—say, I'd like to have a picture of—but, speaking of pictures, did you ever run across a newspaper artist named Lathrop, a tall—oh, I asked you that before, didn't I? He was mighty nice to me at the dinner. His voice just suited me. I guess he must have thought I was to inherit some of Aunt Maggie's money.

"Well, Mr. Man, three days of that tight housekeeping was plenty for me. Aunt Maggie was affectionate as ever. She'd hardly let me get out of her sight. But, let me tell you, she was a heiser from Hedgersville, Hedger county. Seventy-five cents a day was the limit she set. We cooked our own meals in the room. There I was with



"I am no worshiper of money," says I.

a thousand dollars' worth of the latest things in clothes doing stunts over a one burner gas stove.

"As I say, on the third day I flew the coop. I couldn't stand for throwing together a fifteen cent kidney stew while wearing at the same time a \$150 house dress with valenciennes lace insertion. So I goes into the closet and puts on the cheapest dress Mrs. Brown had bought for me. It's the one I've got on now. Not so bad for \$75, is it? I'd left all my own clothes in my sister's flat in Brooklyn.

"Mrs. Brown, formerly 'Aunt Maggie,' says I to her, 'I am going to extend my feet alternately, one after the other, in such a manner and direction that this tenement will recede from me in the quickest possible time. I am no worshiper of money,' says I, 'but there are some things I can't stand. I can stand the fabulous monster that I've read about that blows hot birds and cold bottles with the same breath, but I can't stand a quitter,' says I. 'They say you've got \$40,000,000—well, you'll never have any less. And I was beginning to like you, too,' says I.

"Well, the late Aunt Maggie kicks the tears down. She offers to move

into a swell room with a two burner stove and running water.

"I've spent an awful lot of money, child," says she. "We'll have to economize for a while. You're the most beautiful creature I ever laid eyes on," she says, "and I don't want you to leave me."

"Well, you see me, don't you? I walked straight to the Acropolis and asked for my job back and I got it. How did you say your writings were getting along? I know you've lost out some by not having me to typewrite 'em. Do you ever have 'em illustrated? And, by the way, did you ever happen to know a newspaper artist—oh, shut up! I know I asked you before. I wonder what paper he works on? It's funny, but I couldn't help thinking that he wasn't thinking about the money he might have been thinking I was thinking I'd get from old Maggie Brown. If I only knew some of the newspaper editors I'd—"

The sound of an easy footstep came from the doorway. Ida Bates saw who it was with her back hair comb. I saw her turn pink, perfect statue that she was—a miracle that I share with Pygmalion only.

"Am I excusable?" she said to me—adorable petitioner that she became. "It's—it's Mr. Lathrop. I wonder if it really wasn't the money—I wonder, if after all, he—"

Of course, I was invited to the wedding. After the ceremony I dragged Lathrop aside.

"You an artist," said I, "and haven't figured out why Maggie Brown conceived such a strong liking for Miss Bates—that was? Let me show you."

The bride wore a simple white dress as beautifully draped as the costumes of the ancient Greeks. I took some leaves from one of the decorative wreaths in the little parlor and made a chaplet of them and placed them on Mrs. Bates' shining chestnut hair and made her turn her profile to her husband.

"By Jingo!" said he. "Isn't Ida's a dead ringer for the lady's head on the silver dollar?"

AN INNOCENT VICTIM.

The Original of Squeers Died of a Broken Heart.

The grossest injury which Dickens ever inflicted on a fellow being was his too accurate portrait of an innocent man in his Squeers. That Yorkshire schoolmaster was, as a rule, cruel and wicked enough it is true, but the particular schoolmaster who was recognized and who recognized himself as the original Squeers seems to have been an exception to the rule.

It will be remembered that Dickens and his illustrator traveled together to the north of England for the purpose of collecting material for "Nickleby" and especially for the Dotheboys episode. At Gretna Bridge they visited a boarding school known as Bowes academy. The master, William Shaw, received the strangers with some hauteur and did not as much as withdraw his eyes from the operation of penmaking during the interview.

Phiz sketched him in the act; Dickens described the act. The personal peculiarities of William Shaw were recognized in Squeers. Shaw became a butt of popular ridicule, lost his pupils and finally died of a broken heart. Yet there is abundant evidence to prove that he was a really excellent and kind hearted man, who was made to suffer for the misdeeds of his neighbors.—Exchange.

Golf Balls.

History tells us that at first golf balls were nothing but round or nearly round pebbles about the size of the sphere used at present. These were supplanted by the hand cut wooden balls and then in turn by the feather ball. Then came the gutta percha ball, of which an interesting story is told.

It is said a caddie in Scotland picked up a discarded football shoe with a gutta percha sole and tore off the sole. This he soaked in water until it was soft and then molded it with his hands to the size of a golf ball. Thence it was only a step to the molded and hammered gutta percha balls, which endured until as late as 1838, when the rubber cored ball was first brought out in the United States.

The rubber cored ball, the foundation of the ball of the present, was not taken into England until three or four years later, and it is interesting to note that in 1905 Aleck Herd, who was the only player in the field using the ball, won the British open championship with it.—New York Sun.

Feathered Surgeons.

Sulphur and woodcock have often been taken with a mass of feathers on one of the legs. This mass when examined has always been found to cover a broken bone. The feathers have been carefully and neatly twisted round the part where the limb was fractured in such a way as to prove that they had been put on intentionally as a bandage or splint, and the repairs have been made quite as skillful as if performed by a qualified surgeon.

A well known naturalist actually watched a woodcock through his glasses drag a broken leg to the margin of a stream. There the bird took some clay and, after working it into a paste with its beak, smeared it round the leg in layer after layer, adding a number of downy feathers which it plucked from its own back and breast. When the operation was finished the bird stood still for more than an hour, no doubt to give the plaster time to set.

Wounds on other parts of the body have also been found plastered in the same way.—London Answers.

AMERICAN PURSUIT OF VILLA IS ENDED

U. S. Troops to Remain Concentrated in Strong Units for the Present.

El Paso, Texas.—The redispotion of forces of the American punitive expedition into Mexico, as planned by Major General Funston, has been in a large measure completed.

The troops are now concentrated in strong units along a line of communications thoroughly protected, that is said not to be much more than 250 miles long. Reinforcements are also gathering at Columbus, N. M.

Ready to meet any eventuality, the American expedition will now maintain a military status quo while diplomatic negotiations go forward at Washington for the withdrawal of the troops. This will require many days, if not weeks. The pursuit of Francisco Villa is over. That is the belief of army officers at Fort Bliss, who now believe the troops will engage the small wandering bands of Villistas that roam northern Chihuahua. These bands are widely scattered and operate in groups of two or three.

While the expedition is at its main bases, it will recuperate from the rigors of its rapid dash southward. Official admission has been made that the advanced forces of the American cavalry have been withdrawn northward and it is understood they have been taken out of the zone where the hatred and dislike for the American is most intense. This withdrawal is designed to prevent clashes during the diplomatic negotiations.

GERMANY WILL MAKE CONCESSIONS, REPORT

Washington.—Confidential dispatches from Ambassador Gerard at Berlin indicate that Germany will make certain concessions to the United States in response to the note demanding the immediate abandonment of present methods of submarine warfare.

It is understood Ambassador Gerard has received broad intimations that the German government will go to great lengths to preserve friendly relations with the United States. He is understood to have gained his impression from officials of the Berlin foreign office, including Foreign Minister von Jagow.

The Berlin government is confronted with finding a way to satisfy the United States without arousing the element which insists upon a relentless submarine campaign.

TRAIN ROBBER IS CAUGHT

Wyoming Desperado Says He Holds Up Trains For Sport.

Rawlins, Wyo.—William L. Carlisle, professional train-robber, is in jail here. Carlisle, who says that is not his real name, was captured in a desert country 20 miles north of Walcott by a posse led by William Haynes, city marshal of Walcott, Wyo. He surrendered without a fight.

The bandit, who declared that he "liked the sport of holding up trains," and that he wanted to get the best of the police and the railroads, boasted that he robbed the Union Pacific Overland Limited near Rock Springs, Wyo., in February and another train of the same road near Corlett Junction, on April 4, in addition to the robbery of Union Pacific Limited No. 21 near Hanna, Wyo.

"Yes, I'm the man," said the robber, confessing his guilt. "I robbed all three trains."

Villa is Either Dead or in Hiding.

Field Headquarters, Namiquipa, Mexico, by wireless to Columbus, N. M.—American authorities obtained reliable information that Francisco Villa has not crossed the Durango-Chihuahua line. When closely followed by American columns in the Hidalgo district in the vicinity of Parral, with a small band of men, he turned westward to the Sierra Madres. He is said to be either dead or in hiding in the mountains northwest of Parral.

Tallest Man is Dead.

New York.—Hugo, a circus giant, said to be the tallest man in the world, died here from pneumonia. He was 8 feet 4 inches high and normally weighed 536 pounds.

Ford Leads Cummins in Nebraska.

Omaha.—Returns from last week's primary in hand gave Henry Ford a lead over A. B. Cummins of 97 votes in the race for indorsement for president.

Thousand Lost in Disaster in China.

Shanghai.—More than 1000 soldiers and men of the crew of the steamer Hain-Yu were lost when the steamer sank after a collision with the cruiser Hal-Yung south of the Chusan islands.

IS IT TRUE?

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