

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 vixen's daughters to their respective suitors. But the bowstring will get some of 'em yet if they don't watch out.

I heard a story, though, of one lady calligraph. It isn't precisely an "Arabian Nights" story, because it brings in Cinderella, who flourished her disarray 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 hostelry 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 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 roughest 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 those solicitous gentlemen were only the city's wealthiest brokers and business men seeking trifling loans of half a dozen millions or so from the dinky 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 classic. 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 protégé. She had unflinching 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—unnaturally 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. It turning, I strolled through the lobby of the Acropolis, and saw, with a little warm glow of spirit, Miss Bates, 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 those following:

"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 passeretierie on it that it sounded exactly like a hailstorm I heard once when I was staying all night with a girl that lived in a top floor studio.



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

"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 sidwinkered, 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 fainted. 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 dispossession 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 Bontion 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 bedges. 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 light 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 hedger 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 saw the cop, 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 in section. 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. It'll hold left all my own clothes in my skinner's fit in Brooklyn.

"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 status 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—"

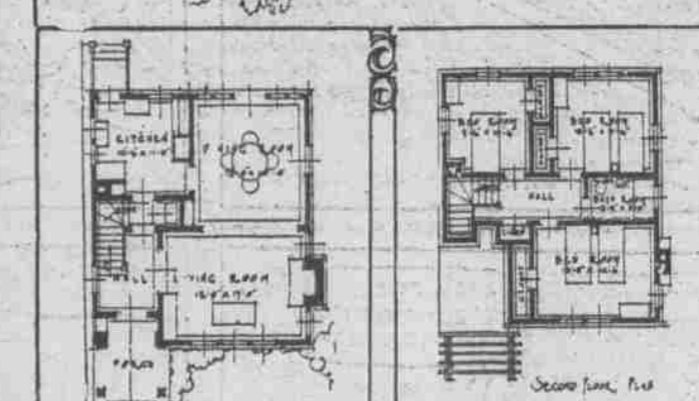
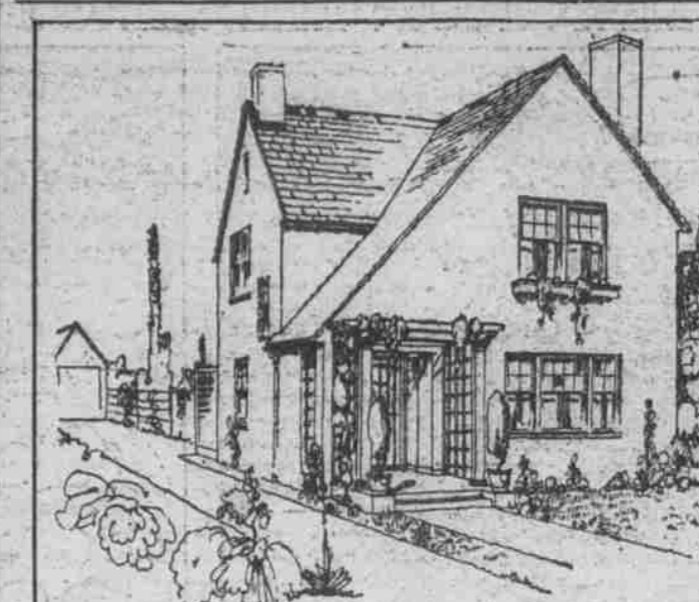
"Of course, I was invited to the wedding. After the ceremony I dragged Lathrop aside.

"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 her 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?"

"Well, Mr. Man, three days of that light 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 hedger 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

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large potatoes; wash them, put in oven and bake. When done cut in halves, take out potato, mash and add a little butter and warm milk, pepper and salt to suit taste. Beat until light or same as mashed potatoes. Have some eggs boiled hard. Cut up whites in small pieces and add to potatoes. Now fill in oven or warming closet to keep hot. Just before serving mash yolks of eggs, add a little salt and pepper and sprinkle on top of potatoes. Serve on lettuce leaf. If eggs are high you can omit them and put a little butter on top of each potato, put in roaster and brown a little on top just before serving.

HOUSEHOLD HINTS

AN INNOCENT VICTIM.

The Original of Squeers Died of a Broken Heart.

The grassest 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 "Nickelby" and especially for the Dottheboys episode. At Greta 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 penkniving 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.

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 hard 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 1808, 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.

Snipe 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.

Rice Soup.—Heat two tablespoons butter in sauce pan, add one cup rice, stir until a golden brown. Now add two points water or stock, two small onions cut in small pieces, one cup canned pepper to taste. Cook slowly one hour.

Rice Souffle.—Grind four tablespoons rice and stir to smooth paste with one tablespoon butter and six tablespoons milk. Add remainder of a pint of milk, put all into sauce pan and stir until it thickens. Add beaten yolks of three eggs and three tablespoons sugar; stir well, also add well-beaten whites of three eggs. Mix thoroughly, place in buttered souffle dish. Bake half hour.

Rice Cream.—This makes an excellent dessert and is a good way to use up cold cooked rice. Place in upper part of double boiler one pint milk and pinch of salt; bring to boiling point, add 1-2 teaspoons cooked rice, boil about five minutes, then stir in two egg yolks that have been beaten to a cream with half cup of granulated sugar. Cook until well thickened, fold in stiffly whipped egg whites with a little vanilla. Cool and serve with plain or whipped cream.

Rice Pudding.—Cook one cup rice in four cups milk until thick, then cool. Cream half cup butter and one cup sugar, add three well-beaten eggs, half cup seeded raisins, a little salt, the rice, and cinnamon to taste. Bake one hour.

Custard Rice Pudding.—Two cups cooked rice, one cup sugar, yolks three eggs, rind one orange and one lemon, juice of the lemon, one cup milk. Bake half hour. Beat whites of three eggs with a little sugar, then place in oven to brown. Add bits of jelly on top when taken from oven.

THINGS WORTH KNOWING.

To take shine off serge skirt, sponge with hot vinegar and rub until the shine disappears.

To keep macaroni from sticking to baking dish, grease dish, then flour it, like you do for a cake.

To Wash Silk Poplin.—Make suds of a good white soap. Be sure soap is all melted. Immerse article in suds, but do not rub. Rinse in lukewarm water in which a little gum arabic is added. Rinse twice, then hang in shady place to dry.

THE TABLE.

Cream Puffs.—One cup flour, three-fourths cup water, pinch of salt, one-fourth pound butter, five eggs, filling. Heat water, add butter and salt; when this mixture boils stir in the flour (take care to have no lumps). Cook until mixture leaves the sides of the sauce pan. Pour out into another pan and allow to cool. When nearly cold add the unbeaten eggs, one at a time. Mix in each one thoroughly before adding the next. When all the eggs have been added, cover mixture and let stand one hour. When ready to bake, leaving space for them to rise. When baked, cut across with sharp knife and put in any filling desired.

Orange Marmalade.—Two sweet oranges, one-half cup water, one cup sugar, one-half lemon, one cup English walnuts. Grate oranges and squeeze out juice, add sugar and water. Slice lemons very thin and cut slices in halves. Shell walnuts and break in medium pieces. Cook oranges, sugar and water and lemon one-half hour. Remove from fire, add walnuts. This makes a very good marmalade and will keep any length of time by placing in glasses and tying paper over tops.

Blanketed Sausage.—Make a baking powder dough of flour, 1-2 teaspoons baking powder, one teaspoon salt, water enough to make it of right consistency. Roll this into a thin sheet; cut into square pieces and wrap each piece around a roll of sausage meat. Bake and serve very hot.

Delicious Baked Potatoes.—Take nice

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RED LETTER TIP TO THE CITY EDITOR

Respect for the old bewitched felled fellow that yells "rags and old iron" around your back door, is commanded today by the disclosure that the price of junk has jumped from six to twelve cents a pound, and junk men are getting rich quick on account of the war. There may be a good local fellow story in this from your local junk dealer.—U. P.

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