



# An O. Henry cocktail

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threepence.' The reviewer's partial description has proved to be correct, for it agrees with the only recorded copy — here more fully described.

THE | STORY OF TOBY, | A SE-  
QUEL TO "TYPEE." | BY THE  
AUTHOR OF THAT WORK. |  
U [being the signature] |

LEAF:  $4\frac{7}{8}$ "  $\times$   $7\frac{1}{8}$ ".

COLLATION: A single signature, U<sup>s</sup>, with additional signature-mark U<sub>2</sub> on the second leaf of the gathering; signed to follow Murray's first edition of *Typee*. Issued without fly-title.

PAGINATION: [i], this serves as a title-page, but it is a divisional half-title as subsequently used in the first Eng-

lish cloth edition of *Typee* (1847) to contain the *Sequel*; [ii], Note to the *Sequel*, dated *New York, July, 1846.*; 289–301, text; at foot of 301, printer's note, beneath a rule: London: Printed by William Clowes & Sons, Stamford Street.; [302], blank.

BINDING: Printed gray paper wrappers, trimmed to leaf size, uniform with those of the first English edition of *Typee* issued in parts in Murray's 'Home and Colonial Library.' The front wrapper, inside, and the back wrapper, inside and outside, are imprinted with publisher's advertisements.

The front wrapper, outside, bears a small ink-stamp of a Liverpool bookseller, W. Crapel.

JOHN H. BIRSS

## An O. Henry Cocktail

**O** HENRY'S 'Thimble, Thimble,' a story with an unsolved ending frankly imitated from Stockton's 'The-Lady or the Tiger,' was published in *Hampton's Magazine*, XXI (December, 1908), 698–704. An editorial note remarked: 'This story has caused so much commotion around the office that we are leaving it to our readers — with O. Henry himself as judge — to settle the perplexing question. As an inducement we will pay \$50 for the best answer; \$25 for the second; \$15 for the third, and \$10 for the fourth — a total of \$100. And we do so with a genuine feeling of relief!' In the following February (XXII, 282–284) the editor wrote that 'every incoming mail

is still bringing answers,' and that 'at this writing nearly three thousand of our readers have sent in guesses'; while O. Henry awarded the four prizes to contestants from St Paul, Minnesota, Augusta, Maine, Red Key, Indiana, and Richmond, Virginia. All four winners picked Black Tie as the Virginia Carteret to whom Uncle Jake delivered the heirloom watch.

As indicated by manuscripts now in the Harvard College Library, at least one reader, Miss Edith Morse, New Rochelle, New York, wrote directly to the author, using light blue stationery:

Dear O. Henry,

"Thimble, Thimble" is a mighty clever little story and had me guessing for almost a minute. — However, you

can't fool sister when it comes to spotting the N.Y. gnys.

"Blue Tie" is the Manhattan lad, & the one who did the proposing to Miss De Ormond, but it was "Black Tie" who comes to the rescue by handing out the necessary coin & it was he who rec'd the watch from Jake.

My reason for arriving at this conclusion, is the clue given in "Black Tie's" speech in which he says that "times have changed," and while the old Southern idea of chivalry consisted in "maintaining a moth eaten arrogance" his code was "the prompt payment of debts" — Black Tie, in his life North, has learned "something of business and a little of life." Also in the same speech, Black Tie says "Northerner's, Southerners," while if he were a Northerner, he would in all probability be polite & say Southerners first — comprenez?

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Goodluck to you, O. Henry, you & Bill Shakespeare can divvy up the laurel wreath for giving us side lights on the human nature problem, and your little stories have cured me of the blues quicker than a Dry Martini or a dose of quinine.

Hope you will solve the problem soon & save us from brain fever.

Beg to remain,

Your sincere admirer,  
Your sincere admirer,  
(Miss), Edith Morse

P. S. Would much rather have your autograph than the \$25

One would suppose that O. Henry was disconcerted by the ease and unanimity with which his supposedly in-

soluble ending was solved. But in a letter dated December 23, though post-marked January 10, 1909, he wrote from the Caledonia, 28 West 26th Street, New York City, to his nearby admirer, therein adding nothing to literature but something guaranteed to tickle the palate:

My Dear Miss Morse

Thanks for your letter. It was a pale blue oasis in a desert of "communications"

Jay comprenny. I'm "awful" glad to hear that my poor little stories rank with a martini as a blues-dispeller.

Your answer was correct but escaped me until too late — so here it gets this "honorable mention."

Did you every [*sic*] try:

Gordon gin	½
Private Stock	½
Orange bitters	big dash
Absinthe Moderate	"
Mix	

It is with genuine pleasure that I append the autograph, and await confidently your decision that the martini substitute will win out against both literature and quinine.

Yours Very truly  
O. Henry

I regret to say that I cannot endorse O. Henry's opinion, but possibly the fault is to be laid on the quality of liquids obtainable in these days of Priorities and Shortages.

HYDER E. ROLLINS

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