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A MUNICIPAL REPORT

After O. Henry

Fancy a novel about Chicago or Buffalo, let us say, or Nashville, Tennessee! There are just three big cities in the United States that are "story cities" — New York, of course, New Orleans, and, best of the lot, San Francisco.

Frank Norris



一份都市报道

欧·亨利　原著

设想一下，如果出现一篇描写芝加哥或布法罗的小说，又或者说，描写田纳西州的纳什维尔的小说，会是什么样的情况 美国有三个大城市是‘小说城”——纽约，是理所当然的，新奥尔良，还有，城市中的佼佼者，旧金山。

——弗兰克·诺里斯



1 East is East and West is San Francisco, according to Californians. Californians are a race of people; they are not merely inhabitants of a State. They are the Southerners of the West. They always picture their city as the Bagdad of the New World. But no one can lay his finger on the map and say: "In this town there can be no romance — what could happen here?"

"**Nashville.** — A city, port of delivery, and the capital of the State of Tennessee, is on the Cumberland River and on the N. C. & St. L. and the L. & N. railroads. This city is regarded as the most important educational centre in the South."

2 I stepped off the train at 8 pm. It was drizzling.

3 Take of London fog 40 parts; malaria 20 parts; gas leaks 40 parts and mix. Now you have an idea of a Nashville drizzle.

4 I went to a hotel in a carriage. It was drawn by ancient horses and driven by a Negro. I was sleepy and tired, so when I got to the hotel I hurriedly paid him the fifty cents he demanded (with a good tip, I assure you) as I did not want to hear him talk about his "old master" or anything that happened "before the war".

5 The hotel was one of the kind described as "renovated". That means twenty thousand dollars' worth of new marble pillars, electric lights and cuspidors in the lobby, and a train timetable in each one of the great rooms above. The management was without reproach, the service as slow as a snail and as

1　在加利福尼亚人看来，东面是东部地区，西面是旧金山。加利福尼亚人是一个民族，他们不仅仅是一个州的居民。他们是西部的南方人，他们总是把他们的城市想像为西半球的巴格达。但是没有一个人能把手指放在地图上说："这个城市不可能有罗曼史——这里能发生什么呢？"

"纳什维尔——是一个城市，交货港口，田纳西州的首府，位临坎伯兰河，与北卡罗来纳及圣路易斯毗邻，靠近高架铁路和新铁路线。该城市被认为是南方最重要的教育中心。"

2　我在晚上 8 点下了火车。天下着蒙蒙细雨。

3　试取 40 份伦敦雾，20 份瘴气，40 份漏出的煤气，再将它混合在一起，你便可对纳什维尔的蒙蒙细雨有一个清楚的概念。

4　我坐了一辆马车去旅馆，它由几匹古色古香的马拉着，赶马的是一个黑人。我又困又乏，因此一到旅馆，我急急忙忙依他索取的付给了他 5 角钱（带一笔像样的小费，我向你保证），因为我不想听他唠叨他的'老主人'以及'战前'的什么故事。

5　旅馆是一家那种号称"整修翻新的"。这意味着价值 2 万元的新大理石柱子、电灯和门廊中的痰盂，以及上面的每间大房间中的火车时刻表。经营管理是无可指责的，招待服务就像蜗牛那么慢条斯理，但脾气好得

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municipal [mju'nisipəl] *a*.　都市的；市政的
Buffalo ['bʌfələu] *n*.　布法罗〔美国港市〕
Nashville ['næʃvil] *n*.　纳什维尔〔美国城市〕
Tennessee [ˌtene'si] *n*.　田纳西〔美国州名〕

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good-humored as Rip Van Winkle. The food was worth traveling a thousand miles for.

6 At dinner I asked a Negro waiter if there was anything doing in town. He thought carefully for a minute, and then replied : "Well, boss, I don't really suppose there's anything at all doing after sundown."

7 Sundown had disappeared in the drizzle long before. So I could not see that spectacle. But I went upon the streets in the drizzle to see what might be there. I walked through long streets, all leading uphill. On a few on the "main streets" I saw lights in stores here and there; saw street-cars go by; saw people pass engaged in conversation; and heard a burst of laughter coming from a restaurant. The streets other than "main" seemed to have houses full of peace and domesticity. In many of them lights shone, in a few music was heard. There was indeed little "doing". I wished I had come before sundown. So I returned to my hotel.

8 Here I first saw Major Wentworth Caswell. I knew that he was a type the moment I saw him. A rat is a rat, wherever he lives.

9 This man was hunting about the hotel lobby like a starved dog that had forgotten where he had buried a bone.

10 I happened to be standing within five feet of a cuspidor when Major Caswell opened fire upon it; so I stepped aside so quickly that the Major seized the opportunity to apologize to me. In four minutes he had become my

又像里普·范·温克尔一样。伙食也好，值得走上 1000 英里来品尝一番。

6　吃晚餐时我问一个黑人侍者，城里有没有什么正在开展的活动。他认真地想了片刻，然后回答说："嗯，老板，我真的想不出在日落后还有什么活动。"

7　日落早在蒙蒙细雨中消失。因此我未能见到这景观。但我还是走到蒙蒙细雨的街上，想看看可能发生什么。我走遍了几条长街，都是上坡路。在少数几条"大街"上，我见到了各处商店的灯光，看到街车来往，看到边走边谈着的人们；并听到从一家饭馆传出的哄笑声。在那些不是"大街"的街上，看来倒有些充满宁静和居家气氛的住宅。好多家亮着灯光，少数几家可以听到音乐声。这倒是真正的小"活动"。我要是在日落之前来就好了。于是我回到了自己的旅馆。

8　在旅馆我第一次见到温特沃思·卡斯韦尔少校。我一见到他就知道他是个人物。一只老鼠总归是老鼠，不管他住在什么地方。

9　这人在旅馆门廊里来回搜索着，正像一只忘记了骨头埋在什么地方的饿狗。

10　当卡斯韦尔少校向一个痰盂开火的时候，我正巧站在距离它不到 5 英尺的地方，因此我急忙靠边一闪，于是少校便抓住这个机会向我表示歉意。4 分钟后他成了我的朋

New Orleans [nju:'ɔ:liənz] *n*.　新奥尔良〔美国港市〕

San Francisco [ˌsæn frən'siskəu] *n*.　旧金山〔美国港市〕

伊尔温格所写的童话中的主人公名。

friend and had dragged me to the bar. Major Caswell began to talk about the battles he had taken part in. Then he began on family trees and demonstrated that Adam was only a third cousin of the Caswell family. When he had finished with genealogy, he began to speak about his private family matters.

11 By this time I began to suspect that he was hoping that I might pay for the drinks he had ordered. But when they were drunk he threw a silver dollar upon the bar. Then, of course, another drink was obligatory. And when I had paid for that I left him immediately. But before I had got rid of him he had spoken loudly of an income that his wife received, and showed a handful of silver money.

12 When I got my key at the desk the clerk said to me: "If that man Caswell has annoyed you, and if you would like to make a complaint, we will throw him out. He is a loafer and without any known means of support, although he seems to have money most of the time."

13 "Why, no," said I after thinking a little, "I do not want to make any complaints. But I don't care for his company. Your town seems to be a quiet one. What manner of entertainment or adventure have you to offer to the stranger here?"

14 "Well, sir," said the clerk, "there will be a show here next Thursday. I'll have the announcement sent up to your room with the ice water."

友，拉着我到酒吧间去了。卡斯韦尔少校开始讲述他参加过的战役。接着他开始讲家族世系，他表明，亚当仅是卡斯韦尔家族的第三代远房兄弟。当他数完了家谱之后，他又开始讲他个人家庭的事情来。

11 这时我开始怀疑他是希望我代他付他所要的酒的钱。但是这些酒喝完后，他扔了一个1元的银币在柜台上。当然，接下来的一次该是我的。当我付了这笔钱后我立即离开了他。但在我摆脱他之前，他大声地讲了他老婆的一笔收入，并拿出了一把银币。

12 当我拿起桌子上的钥匙时，管理员对我说："如果这个卡斯韦尔惹你不高兴，如果你有意见，我们就把他撵出去。他是个没有明确生活来源的二流子，虽然大多数时候看起来是有钱的。"

"哦，不，"我想了一会说，"我不想提任何意见，但我不喜欢和他作伴。你们的城市是个很安静的城市。你们有些什么文娱演出或探险活动可以介绍给外来客的？"

13 "噢，先生，"管理员说，"下星期三这里将有次演出。我在送冰水时把通知送到你的房间去。"

Bagdad ['bægdæd] *n*. 巴格达〔伊拉克首都〕
the New World 西半球 美洲
delivery [di'livəri] *n*. 交付，交货 a ~ port 交货港

15 After I went up to my room I looked out of the window. It was only ten o'clock, but I looked upon a silent town.

16 "A quiet place," I said to myself. "Nothing of the life here that give colour and variety to the cities in the East and West. Just an ordinary business town."

"**Nashville** occupies a foremost place among the manufacturing centres of the country. It is the fifth boot and shoe market in the United States and the largest candy manufacturing city in the South."

17 I must tell you how I came to be in Nashville. I was travelling elsewhere on my own business, but I had a commission from a Northern literary magazine to stop over there and establish a connection between the publication and one of its contributors, Azalea Adair.

18 Adair (of whom nothing was known except the handwriting) had sent in some poems that had made the editors smile approvingly over their one o'clock luncheon. So they had asked me to visit this Adair and sign a contract for his or her output at two cents a word before some other publishers offered her ten or twenty.

19 At ten o'clock the next morning I went out into the drizzle which was still going on. At the first corner I came upon Uncle Caesar. He was a tall old Negro with gray hair and a face that reminded me of Brutus; and a second afterwards of King Cettiwayo. He wore the most remarkable coat that I had ever seen or expect to see. I must speak about that coat, for

15 当我上楼回到自己的房间后，我倚窗眺望了一会。这才 10 点钟，但是我看到的是一个静悄悄的城市。

“一个安静的地方。”我自言自语道，“这里的生活没有那种给东部和西部的城市增添了缤纷色彩和丰富情调的东西。这是个普通的商业城市。”

“纳什维尔在全国生产制造中心里占领先位置，它是美国第五大靴鞋市场和南方最大的糖果生产城市。”

16 我必须告诉你们我是怎样来到纳什维尔的。我当时正为了私事在作周游旅行，但是一家北方文学杂志社委托我在此逗留了一下，为杂志社和它的一个撰稿人，阿扎利亚·阿代，建立起联系。

18 阿代(关于此人，我除了手迹外一无所知)寄去了几首诗，使得编辑们在 1 点钟的午餐时表示出嘉许的笑容，因此他们要我去访问一下这位阿代，并抢先和他(或她)签订一个给其作品每词付酬 2 分的合同，免得以后其他出版社可能每词付酬 1 角或 2 角。

19 第二天早上 10 点，我又走进仍在下个不停的蒙蒙细雨中。在第一个转弯处我遇上了恺撒大叔。他是个高个子的黑人老头儿，头发是灰色，脸相使我想起布鲁图，后来又使我想起另一位人物，塞提沃约国王。他穿着我所见到过的或想见到的最奇特的大衣。我必须讲讲这件大衣，因为这与本故事

N. C. = North Carolina [nɔːθ kærə'lainə] 北卡罗来纳〔美国州名〕

布鲁图(约前 85—前 42)，古罗马政治家，与恺撒同时代。

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it has to do with the story — the story that is so long in coming, because you can hardly expect anything to happen in Nashville.

20 It must have been the military coat of an officer. It was very long and the cape of it and all its frogs were gone; all the buttons were also gone except one. The second button from the top alone remained. It was the size of a half-dollar, made of yellow horn.

21 This Negro stood by a very old carriage with a couple of ancient horses. As I approached he opened the door, drew out a feather duster, waved it without using it, and said:

22 "Step in, sir, there isn't a speck of dust in it — just got back from a funeral, sir."

23 I concluded that on such happy occasions carriages were given an extra cleaning.

24 I looked up and down the street and saw that there was little choice among the carriages for hire. I looked in my memorandum book for the address of Azalea Adair.

25 "I want to go to 861 Jessamine Street," I said, and was about to step into the carriage.

26 But for a moment the thick, gorilla-like arm of the old Negro stopped me. On his large face a look of suspicion appeared for a moment. Then he asked: "What are you going there for, boss?"

27 "What is that to you?" I asked, a little sharply.

28 "Nothing, sir, just nothing. Only it's a lonesome part of the town and few people ever

有关——这故事我们迟迟开不了头，因为你可能几乎不想让纳什维尔发生什么事。

20 这想必是一位军官的军用大衣。大衣很长，但其披肩和盘花纽扣都不在了，扣子只有一颗，其他都没有了，保留下来的是从上数下来的第二颗扣子。它有 5 角的硬币那么大，是黄色角质的。

21 这个黑人站在一辆非常古旧的马车旁，马车配着一对古色古香的马。我走近时他打开了门，拿出了一把羽毛掸子，挥动着，但实际并没有使用，同时说：

“进去，先生，车里一点灰尘也没有，刚参加葬礼回来的，先生。”

23

22 我推想，逢到这样的喜庆，马车是要特别打扫一番的。

24 我顺着街道前后观察了一番，可雇的马车之间实在没有什么可以挑选的余地。我查阅着我的备忘录，寻找阿扎利亚·阿代的地址。

25 “我要到杰萨明街 861 号。”我说着就准备跨进马车。

26 但这黑人老头的粗壮的、像猩猩般的手臂把我挡住了片刻。就在这片刻，他的那张大脸上浮起了狐疑的神色。接着他问道：“你到那儿去干什么，老板？”

27 “这与你有什么相干？”我反问道，语气有点冲。

28 “没事，先生，真的没事。只是那地方是城市的偏僻区，很少有人上那儿去办事。请进吧。坐位是很干净的——刚从葬礼回

St. L. = St. Louis [sənt'luis] 圣路易斯〔美国城市〕

have business there. Step right in. The seat is clean — just got back from a funeral, sir."

29 A mile and a half it must have been to our journey's end. I could hear nothing but the rattle of the old carriage; I could smell nothing but the drizzle mixed with coal smoke. All I could see through the windows were rows of dim houses.

30 Eight-sixty-one Jessamine Street was a decayed mansion. Thirty yards back from the street it stood, hidden in splendid trees. The gate was kept closed but when you got inside, you saw that eight-sixty-one was a shell of former grandeur. But in the story, I have not yet got inside.

31 When the carriage had stopped, I handed the Negro his fifty cents with an additional quarter. He refused it.

32 "It's two dollars, sir, "he said.

33 "How's that?" I asked. "I heard you call out at the hotel: 'Fifty cents to any part of the town'."

34 "It's two dollars, sir," he repeated. "It's a long way from the hotel."

35 "It is within the city limits, "I argued. "Don't think that you have picked up a greenhorn Yankee. Do you see those hills over there?" I went on , pointing towards east (I could not see them myself because of the drizzle); "Well, I was born and raised on their other side. You, old fool, can't you tell people from other people when you see them?"

36 The grim face of King Cettiwayo soft-

来，先生。”

29　到我们旅程的终点大概有 1 英里半。除了这辆旧马车的格格声我听不到什么声音；除了夹杂着煤烟的蒙蒙细雨外我闻不到其他气味。我从窗子看出去所能见到的只是一排排朦胧的房子。

30　杰萨明街 861 号是一幢衰败的住宅。它坐落在街后 30 码处，隐蔽在浓密的树阴中。门是掩着的，当你进入里面后，你会发现 861 号在昔日曾是豪华的门第，可现在只剩下了个骨架。但在这故事里，我还没有进到屋里。

31　当马车停下来，我付给这黑人 5 角，另外添了 2 角 5 分。他拒绝了。

32　“得给 2 元，先生。”他说。

33　“怎么回事？”我问道。“我听到你在旅馆门口喊‘城内各地，一律 5 角’。”

34　“得给 2 元，先生。”他还是那句话。“从旅馆来路很远。”

35　“这可是在城市的范围内。”我争论说，“你别以为你遇上了个新到的移民。你看到那边的那些山吗？”我继续说，手指着东方（因为蒙蒙细雨我自己也看不到它们）；“要知道，我就在山那一边出生和长大的。你这个老傻瓜，你见到人的时候，都分辨不清谁是谁吗？”

36　塞提沃约国王的严厉的脸色缓和了下来。

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drizzle ['drizl] *v*. 下蒙蒙细雨
malaria [mə'leəriə] *n*　疟疾；污浊的空气，瘴气
renovate ['renəuveit] *v*. 革新；修复；恢复；使干净，刷新
cuspidor ['kʌspidɔ:] *n*. 〔美〕痰盂
lobby ['lɔbi] *n*　门廊，门厅

ened.

37 "Boss," he said, "fifty cents is right; but I need two dollars, sir; I'm obliged to have two dollars. I am not demanding it now, sir, after I know where you're from. I'm just saying that I have to have two dollars tonight and business is poor."

38 Peace and confidence were upon his face. He had been luckier than he had hoped. Instead of having picked up a greenhorn, ignorant of rates, he had come upon a Southerner.

39 "You old rascal!" I said, taking the money out of my pocket, "you ought to be turned over to the police."

40 For the first time I saw him smile. He knew, he knew, he knew.

41 I gave him two one-dollar bills. As I handed them over I noticed that the upper right-hand corner of one of them was missing, and it had been torn through the middle, but joined again. A strip of blue tissue paper was pasted over the split.

42 Enough of the African bandit for the present; I left him happy and opened the gate.

43 The house, as I said, was a shell. A paintbrush had not touched it in twenty years. I could not see why a strong wind should not have destroyed it like a house of cards until I looked again at the trees that surrounded it — the trees that saw the battle of Nashville and still drew their protecting branches around it against storm and enemy and cold.

44 Azalea Adair , fifty years old, white-

37 “老板，”他说，“5角是不错，但我需要2元，先生。我会很感谢您给我2元的。在我知道你是那儿人后，我现在不是催你付了。我只是说，今晚我得要2元钱用，可是生意却不好。”

38 他脸上显出平和与自信的表情，他比他希望的要更幸运些。他没有遇上个不懂行情的新来移民，可是却碰上了个南方佬。

39 “你这个老恶棍！”我说，从口袋里掏出钱来，“该把你送交警察才是。”

40 我第一次看到他开颜了。他懂，他懂，他懂。

41 我给他两张1元的票子。在递给他时我注意到其中一张右上方缺了一个角，并且票子中间被撕裂过，又经重新粘合。一条薄薄的蓝纸贴在裂缝上。

42 现在我和这个非洲强盗已经纠缠够了；我让他高高兴兴地离去，自己去开了门。

43 就像我说的，这房子只是一个骨架。油漆刷有20年没有碰过它了。我不明白为什么大风没有把它像小孩用纸牌搭成的房子那样摧毁掉，当我重新望着那些围着它的树木，我才恍然大悟——这些树曾经历过纳什维尔的战斗并依旧在房屋周围长出枝桠，保护着它免遭风暴、敌人和寒冷的侵袭。

44 阿扎利亚·阿代，50岁，满头白发，就

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reproach [ri'prəutʃ] *v* 指责
snail [sneil] *n*. 蜗牛
domesticity [dəumes'tisiti] *n*. 家庭生活；对于家庭生活的爱好 深居简出
genealogy [ˌdʒiːni'ælədʒi] *n*. 家系 家谱

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