

Brewster's Millions

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By GEORGE BARR M'UTCHEON (RICHARD GREAVES)

CHAPTER VI
 "I wish I knew whether I had to abide by the New York or the Montana standard of extravagance," Brewster said to himself. "I wonder if he ever sees the New York papers?"
 Late each night the host of the grand old Brewster family went to his bedroom, where, after dismissing his man, he settled down at his desk, with a pencil and a pad of paper. Lightening flashed, and the pen scribbled on the paper. He found himself much more easily, he thoughtfully and religiously calculated his expenses for the day. Nopper Harrison and Elton Gardner had the receipts for all money spent, and Joe Henson was keeping an official report, but the "chief," as they called him, could not go to sleep until he was satisfied in his own mind that he was keeping up the average. For the first two weeks it had been easy—in fact, he seemed to have quite a comfortable lead in the race. He had spent almost \$100,000 in the fortnight, but he realized that the greater part of it had gone into the yearly and not the daily expense account. He kept a "profit and loss" entry in his little private ledger, but it was not like any other account of the kind in the world. What the ordinary merchant would have charged to "loss" he jotted down on the "profit" side, and he was continually looking for opportunities to swell the total.

Rawley, who had been his grandfather's butler since the day after he landed in New York, came over to the grandstand establishment, greatly to the wrath and confusion of the latter's Aunt Emmeline. The chef came from Paris, and his name was Detuit. Ellis, the footman, also found a much better berth with Monty than he had had in the house in the avenue. Emmeline never forgave her nephew for these base and disturbing acts of treachery, as she called them.

One of Monty's most extraordinary financial feats grew out of the purchase of a \$15,000 automobile. He boldly admitted to Nopper Harrison and the two secretaries that he intended to use it to practice with only, and that as soon as he learned how to run the thing he should have it. He expected to buy a good, sensible, durable machine for \$7,000.

His staff officers frequently put their heads together to devise ways and means of curbing Monty's reckless extravagance. They were worried.
 "He's like a sailor in port," protested Harrison. "Money is no object if he wants a thing, and—hang it—he seems to want everything he sees."
 "It won't last long," Gardner said reassuringly. "Like his namesake, Monte-Christo, the world is his just now, and he wants to enjoy it."
 "He wants to get rid of it, it seems to me."
 "Whenever they reproached Brewster about the matter he disarmed them by saying: 'Now that I've got money I mean to give my friends a good time. Just what you'd do if you were in my place. What's money for, anyway?'"

"But this \$3,000 a plate dinner?"
 "I'm going to give a dozen of them, and even then I can't pay my just debts. For years I've been entertained in the best houses and have been taken cruising on your yachts. They have always been bully to me, and what have I ever done for them? Nothing. Now that I can afford it, I am going to return some of these favors and spend myself. Doesn't it sound reasonable?"

And so preparations for Monty's dinner went on. In addition to what he called his "efficient corps of gentlemen," he had secured the services of Mrs. Dan DeMille as "social mentor and utility chaperon." Mrs. DeMille was known in the papers as the leader of the fast young married set. She was one of the cleverest and best-looking young women in town, and her husband was one of those who did not have to be "invited" to Mr. DeMille lived at the club and visited his home. Some one said that he was so slow and his wife so fast that when she invited him to dinner he was usually two or three days late. Altogether Mrs. DeMille was a decided acquisition to Brewster's campaign committee. It required just her touch to make his parties fun instead of funny.

It was on Oct. 15 that the dinner was given. With the usual of a general Mrs. Dan had seated the guests in such a way that from the beginning things went off with zest. Colonel Drew took in Mrs. Valentine, and his content was assured. Mr. Van Winkle and the beautiful Miss Valentine were side by side, and no one could say he looked unhappy. Mr. Cromwell went in with Mrs. Savage, and the same delicate tact-in some cases it was almost indelicacy—was displayed in the disposition of other guests.

Somehow they had come with the expectation of being bored. Curiosity prompted them to accept, but it did not prevent them from manifesting their disapproval. Socially Monty Brewster had to make himself felt. He and his diners were something to talk about, but they were accepted hesitatingly, hitting. People wondered how he had secured the co-operation of Mrs. Dan, but Mrs. Dan always did go in for a new toy. To her was inevitably attributed whatever success the dinner achieved, and it was no small measure. But here Monty was obscure. He had decided to begin conservatively. He did the conventional thing, but he did it well. He added a touch or two of luxury, the faintest aroma of splendor. Pettigall had designed two curious ways in which, with its comfortable atmosphere of companionship, and arranged its decoration of great lavender orchids and lacy butterfly festoons of white ones touched with yellow. He had wanted to use dahlias in their many rich shades, from pale yellow to orange and deep red, but Monty held out for orchids. It was the artist, too, who had found in a rare and happy moment the marvelous gold candelabra—ancient things of a more luxurious age—and their opalescent shades. Against his advice the service, too, was of gold—"rank vulgarity," he called it, with its rich meaningless ornamentation. But here Monty was obscure. He insisted that the lily color and that porcelain had no character. Mrs. Dan only prevented a quarrel by suggesting that several courses should be served on silver.

By Monty which Monty had purchased at his instigation he had designed a ceiling screen of heavy rich glass in tones of white that grew into yellow and dull green. It served to conceal the lights in the chandelier and to give the glow of electricity was immensely softened and made harmonious by passing through it. It gave a note of quiet to the picture which caused even these men and women, who had been here and there and seen many things, to draw in their breath sharply. Altogether the effect manifested made an impression.

Such an environment had its influence upon the company. It went far toward making the dinner a success. From far in the distance came the softened strains of Hungarian music, and never had the little band played the "Valse Amoureuse" and the "Valse Blanche" with the spirit it put into them that night. Yet the soft piano in the dining room instantly ignored the emotion of the music. Monty, bored as he was between the two most important downers at the feast, wondered dimly what the lady had put into them that night. Yet the soft piano in the dining room instantly ignored the emotion of the music. Monty, bored as he was between the two most important downers at the feast, wondered dimly what the lady had put into them that night.

"The butler's chin went up, happen while the guests were still there." Then he added gravely: "In strict confidence, I had planned to have it fall just as we were pushing back our chairs, but the confounded thing disappointed me. That's the trouble with these automatic chimes—they usually hang fire. It was to have been a sort of fall of Babylon effect, you know."
 "Splendid! But, like Babylon, it fell at the wrong time."
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"Wouldn't that be a little—just a little pronounced?" she asked, lightly enough.
 "You mean—that people might talk?"
 "She might feel conspicuously present."
 "Do you think so? We are such good friends, you know."
 "Of course if you'd like to have her, slowly and doubtfully, 'why, but her name down. But you evidently haven't seen that.'" Mrs. Dan pointed to a copy of the *Trumpet* which lay on the table.
 When he had handed her the paper she said, "The *Censor* is growing facetious at your expense."
 "I am getting on in society with a vengeance if that ass starts in to write about me. Listen to this"—she had pointed out to him the obnoxious paragraph: "If Brewster drew a diamond flush do you suppose he'd catch the queen? And if he caught her how long do you think she'd remain in Drew's? Or if she drew Brewster would she be willing to learn such a game as Monte?"

The next morning a writer who signed himself *The Censor* got a thrashing, and one Montgomery Brewster had his name in the papers, surrounded by fulsome words of praise.
 [TO BE CONTINUED.]

CHAPTER VII
 MONTY BREWSTER'S butler was surprised and annoyed. For the first time in his official career he had unbent so far as to manifest a personal interest in the welfare of his master. He was on the verge of assuming a responsible billet which makes any servant intolerable. But after his interview he resolved that he would never again overstep his position. He made sure that should be the last offense. The day following the dinner Rawley appeared before young Mr. Brewster and indicated by his manner that the call was an important one. Brewster was seated at his writing table, deep in thought. The exclamation that followed a cough of announcement was so sharp and so unmistakably fierce that all other evidence failed into insignificance. The butler's interruption came at a moment when Monty's mental circuit was pulling itself out of a very bad rut, and the cough drove it back into chaos.

"What is it?" he demanded irritably. Rawley had upset his calculations to the extent of seven or eight hundred dollars.
 "I came to report an unfortunate condition among the servants, sir," said Rawley, stiffening as his responsibility became more and more weighty. He had related temporarily upon entering the room.
 "What's the trouble?"
 "The trouble's headed, sir."
 "Then why bother me about it?"
 "I thought it would be well for you to know, sir. The servants was going to ask for 'igher wages today, sir."
 "You say they were going to ask? Aren't they?" And Monty's eyes lighted up at the thought of new possibilities.
 "I convinced them, sir, as how they were getting good pay as it is, sir, and that they ought to be satisfied. They'd be a long time finding a better place if they had any sense. There's been with you a week, and here they're striking for more pay. Really, sir, these American servants!"

"Rawley, that'll do," exploded Monty. The butler's chin went up, and his cheeks grew redder than ever.
 "I beg pardon, sir," he gasped, with a respectful but injured air.
 "Rawley, you will kindly not interfere in such matters again. It is not only the privilege but the duty of every American to strike for higher pay whenever he feels like it, and I want it distinctly understood that I am heartily in favor of their attitude. You will kindly go back and tell them that after a reasonable length of time their wages—I mean wages—shall be increased. And don't meddle again, Rawley."
 Late that afternoon Brewster dropped in at Mrs. DeMille's to talk over plans for the next dinner. He realized that in no other way could he squander his money with a better chance of getting its worth than by throwing himself boldly into society. It went easily, and there could be only one aspect arising from it in the end—his own sense of disgust.

"So glad to see you, Monty," greeted Mrs. Dan glowingly, coming in with a rush. Come upstairs and I'll give you some tea and a cigarette. I'm not at home to anybody."
 "That's very good of you, Mrs. Dan," said he as they mounted the stairs. "I don't know what I'd do without your help. He was thinking how pretty she was."
 "You'd be richer, at any rate," turning to smile upon him from the upper landing. "I was in tears half the night, Monty, over that glass screen," she said after finding it comfortable

place among the cushions of a divan. Brewster dropped into a roomy, lazy chair in front of her as he responded carelessly.
 "It amounted to nothing. Of course it was very annoying that it should happen while the guests were still there." Then he added gravely: "In strict confidence, I had planned to have it fall just as we were pushing back our chairs, but the confounded thing disappointed me. That's the trouble with these automatic chimes—they usually hang fire. It was to have been a sort of fall of Babylon effect, you know."
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