

A FOOL AND HIS MONEY

By
GEORGE BARR M'CUTCHEON,
Author of "Graustark,"
"Truxton King," Etc.

Copyright, 1913, by George Barr M'Cutcheon.

SYNOPSIS.

John Bellamy Smart, unmarried and heir to a fortune, while abroad with his secretary, Poopendyke, and his valet, Britton, buys a dilapidated old castle on the Danube, in care of the Schmicks, and discovers a mysterious woman inhabiting one of the towers.

"Say," said the second man, advancing with a most insulting scowl, "we'll understand each other right off the reel, my friend. All you've got to do is to answer us when we ask for prices. Now, bear that in mind, and don't try any of your high and mighty tactics on us."

"Just remember that you're a junk dealer and we'll get along splendidly," said the other in a tone meant to crush me. "What do you ask for this thing?" tapping the dusty spinet with his walking stick.

It suddenly occurred to me that the situation was humorous.

"You will have to produce your references, gentlemen, before I can discuss anything with you," I said, after swallowing very hard. (It must have been my pride.)

"They stared. "Good Lord!" gasped the bristly one, blinking his eyes. "Don't you know who this gentleman is? You—you appear to be an American. You must know Mr. Riley-Werkheimer of New York."

"I regret to say that I have never heard of Mr. Riley-Werkheimer. I did not know that Mrs. Riley-Werkheimer's husband was living. And may I ask who you are?"

"Oh, I am also a nobody," said he, with a wink at his purple jowled companion. "I am only poor old Rocks-

world, the president of the—" "Oh, don't say anything more, Mr. Rocksworth!" I cried. "I have heard of you. This fine old spinet? Well, it has been reduced in price. Ten thousand dollars, Mr. Rocksworth."

"Ten thousand nothing! I'll take it at \$75. And now let's talk about this here hall seat. My wife thinks it's a fake. What is its history, and what sort of guarantee can you?"

"A fake!" I cried in dismay. "My dear Mr. Rocksworth, that is the very hall seat that Pontius Pilate sat in when waiting for an audience with the first of the great Teutonic barons. The treaty between the Romans and the Teutons was signed on that table over there, the one you have so judiciously selected. I perceive. Of course you know that this was the Saxon seat of government. Charlemagne lived here with his court."

They tried not to look impressed, but rather overdid it.

"That's the sort of story you fellows always put up, you skinflints from Boston. I'll bet my head you are from Boston," said Mr. Rocksworth shrewdly.

"I could not afford to have you lose your head, Mr. Rocksworth, so I shan't take you on," said I merrily.

"Don't get fresh now," said he stiffly. Mr. Riley-Werkheimer walked past me to take a closer look at the seat, almost treading on my toes rather than give an inch to me.

"How can you prove that it's the genuine article?" he demanded curtly. "You have my word for it, sir," I said quietly.

"Pish tosh!" said he. Mr. Rocksworth turned in the direction of the banquet hall.

"Carrie," he shouted, "come here a minute, will you?"

"Don't shout like that, Orson," came back from the porcelain closet. "You almost made me drop this thing."

"Well, drop it and come on. This is important."

I wiped the moisture from my brow and respectfully put my clenched fists into my pockets.

A minute later three females appeared on the scene, all of them dusting their hands and curling their noses in disgust.

"I never saw such a dirty place," said the foremost, a large lady who couldn't by any circumstance of fate have been anybody's wife but Rocksworth's. "It's filthy! What do you want?"

"I've bought this thing here for seventy-five. You said I couldn't get it for a nickel under a thousand. And, say, this man tells me the hall seat here belonged to Pontius Pilate!"

"Pardon me," I interrupted, "I merely said that he sat in it. I am not trying to deceive you, sir."

"And the treaty was signed on this table," said Mr. Riley-Werkheimer. He addressed himself to a plump young lady with a distorted bust and a twenty-two inch waist. "Maude, what do you know about the Roman-Teutonic treaty? We'll catch you now, my friend," he went on, turning to me. "My daughter is up in ancient history. She's an authority."

Miss Maude appeared to be racking her brain. I undertook to assist her. "I mean the second treaty, after the fall of Nuremberg," I explained.

"Oh," she said, instantly relieved. "Was it really signed here, right here in this hall? Oh, father, we must have that table!"

"You are sure there was a treaty, Maude?" she demanded her parent accusingly.

"Certainly," she cried. "The Teutons ceded Alsace-Lorraine to"— "Pardon me once more," I cried, and this time I plead guilty to a blush. "You are thinking of the other treaty—the one at Metz, Miss Riley-Werkheimer. This, as you will recall, antedates that one by—oh, several years."

"Thank you," she said, quite condescendingly. "I was confused for a moment. Of course, father, I can't say that it was signed here on this table as the young man says. I only know that there was a treaty. I do wish you'd come and see the fire screen I've found!"

"Let's get this out of our system first," said her father. "If you can show me statistics and the proper proof that this is the genuine table, young man, I'll"—

"Pray rest easy, sir," I said. "We can take it up later on. The facts are"—

"And this Pontius Pilate seat," interrupted Rocksworth, biting off the end of a fresh cigar—"what about it? Got a match?"

"Get the gentleman a match, Britton," I said, thereby giving my valet an opportunity to do his affirming in the pantry. "I can only affirm, sir, that it is common history that Pontius Pilate spent a portion of his exile here in the sixth century. It is reasonable to assume that he sat in this seat, being an old man unused to difficult stairways. He"—

"Buy it, Orson," said his wife, with authority. "We'll take a chance on it. If it isn't the right thing we can sell it to the secondhand dealers. What's the price?"

"A thousand dollars to you, madam," said I.

They were at once suspicious. While they were busily engaged in looking the seat over as the porters shifted it about at all angles I stepped over and ordered my workmen to resume operations.

"Here!" roared Mr. Rocksworth. "Stop this beastly noise! What the deuce do you mean, sir, permitting these scoundrels to raise the dead like this?"

I moved forward apologetically. "They are raising the dead. The place is fairly alive with dead rats and"—

"Good Lord!" gasped Riley-Werkheimer. "We'll get the bubonic plague here."

"Well, let's move on upstairs," said Rocksworth. Addressing the porters, he said: "You fellows get this lot of stuff together, and I'll take an option on it. I'll be over tomorrow to close the deal, Mr.—Mr.— Now, where is the old Florentine mirror the count was telling us about?"

"The count?" said I, frowning. "Yes, the real owner. You can't stuff me with your talk about being the proprietor here, my friend. You see, we happen to know the count."

They all condescended to laugh at me. I don't know what I should have said or done if Britton had not returned with a box of matches at that instant.

Almost simultaneously there appeared in the lower hall a lanky youth of eighteen.

"Say, these clubs are the real stuff, all right, all right. They're as brittle as glass. See what I did to 'em. We can have 'em spliced and rewound, and I'll hang 'em on my wall. All I want is the heads anyhow."

He held up to view a headless mid-iron and brassie and triumphantly waved a splendid cleek. My favorite clubs! I could play better from a hanging lie with that beautiful brassie than with any club I ever owned, and, as for the iron, I was deadly with it.

He lit a cigarette and threw the match into a pile of shavings. Old Conrad returned to life at that instant and stamped out the incipient blaze.

"I shouldn't consider them very good clubs, Harold, if they break off like that," said his mother.

"What do you know about clubs?" he snapped, and I at once knew what class he was in at the preparatory school.

If I was ever like one of these, said I to myself, God rest the sage soul of my Uncle Rilas!

The situation was no longer humorous. I could put up with anything but the misbanding of my devoted golf clubs.

Striding up to him, I snatched the remnants from his hands.

"You infernal cub!" I roared. "Haven't you any more sense than to smash a golf club like that? For two cents I'd break this putter over your head."

"Father," he yelled indignantly, "who is this mucker?"

Mr. Rocksworth bounced toward me, his cane raised. I whirled upon him.

"How dare you?" he shouted. The ladies squealed.

If he expected me to cringe he was mightily mistaken. My blood was up. I advanced.

"Pardon him, dad!" roared Harold. But Mr. Rocksworth suddenly altered his course and put the historic treaty table between him and me. He didn't like the appearance of my rather brawny fist.

"You big stiff!" shouted Harold. Afterward it occurred to me that this inelegant appellation may have been meant for his father, but at the time I took it to be aimed at me.

Before Harold quite knew what was happening to him he was prancing down the long hall with my bony fingers grasping his collar. Coming to the door opening into the outer vestibule,

"How dare you?" he shouted.



"How dare you?" he shouted.

ble, I drew back my foot for a final aid to locomotion. Acutely recalling the fact that slippers are not designed for kicking purposes, I raised my foot, removed the slipper and laid it upon a taut section of his trousers with all of the melancholy force that I usually exert in slicing my drive off the tee. I shall never forget the exquisite spasm of pleasure his plaintive "Ouch!" gave me.

Then Harold passed swiftly out of my life.

Mr. Rocksworth, re-enforced by four reluctant mercenaries in the shape of porters, was advancing upon me. Somehow I had a vague but unerring instinct that some one had fainted, but I didn't stop to inquire. Without much ado I wrested the cane from him and sent it scuttling after Harold.

"Now get out!" I roared.

"You shall pay for this!" he spluttered, quite black in the face. "Grab him, you infernal cowards!"

But the four porters slunk away, and Mr. Rocksworth faced me alone. Rudolph and Max, thoroughly fed and most prodigious, were bearing down upon us, accounting for the flight of the mercenaries.

"Get out!" I repeated. "I am the owner of this place, Mr. Rocksworth, and I am mad through and through! Skip!"

They skipped.

CHAPTER IV.
I Converge With a Mystery.

LATE in the afternoon I opened my door, hoping that the banging of hammers and the buzz of industry would have ceased; but, alas, the noise was even more deafening than before. Esyng Britton in the gloomy corridor, I shouted to him, and he came at once.

"Britton," said I as he closed the door, "do you think they will carry out their threat to hang the law on me? Mr. Rocksworth was very angry—and put out. He is a power, as you know."

"I think you are quite safe, sir," said he. "Shortly before 2, sir, one of the porters from the hotel came over to recover a gold purse Mrs. Riley-Werkheimer had dropped in the excitement, and he informed Mr. Poopendyke that the whole party was leaving at 4 for Dresden."

Later on, somewhat refreshed and relieved, I made my way to the little balcony, first having issued numerous orders and directions to the still stupefied Schmicks, chief among which was an inflexible command to keep the gates locked against all comers.

Suddenly as I sat there ruminating I became acutely aware of something white on the ledge of the topmost window in the eastern tower. Even as I fixed my gaze upon it something else transpired. A cloud of soft, wavy, luxurious brown hair eclipsed the narrow white strip and hung with spreading splendor over the casement ledge plainly. Indubitably to dry in the sun.

My neighbor had washed her hair! And it was really a most wonderful head of hair. I can't remember ever having seen anything like it except in the advertisements.

What a glorious, appealing, sensuous thing a crown of hair—but just then Mr. Poopendyke came to my window.

"May I interrupt you for a moment, Mr. Smart?" he inquired, as he squinted at me through his ugly bone-rimmed glasses.

"Come here, Poopendyke," I commanded in low, excited tones. He hesitated.

"You won't fall off," I said sharply.

Although the window is at least nine feet high, Poopendyke stooped as he came through. He always does it, no matter how tall the door. It is a life-long habit with him. Secretly I mentioned that my worthy secretary is six feet four and as thin as a reed? I remember speaking of his knees. He is also a bachelor.

"It is a dreadful distance down there," he murmured, flattening himself against the wall and closing his eyes.

A pair of slim white hands at that instant indolently readjusted the thick mass of hair and quite as casually disappeared. I failed to hear Mr. Poopendyke's remark.

"I think, sir," he proceeded, "it would be a very good idea to get some of our correspondence off our hands. A great deal of it has accumulated in the past few weeks. I wish to say that I am quite ready to attend to it whenever"—

"Time enough for letters," said I, still staring.

"First of all, we must have a ladder," I went on. "Have you seen to that?"

"A ladder?" he faltered, putting one foot back through the window in a most suggestive way.

"Oh," said I, remembering. "I haven't told you, have I? Look! Up there, in that window. Do you see that?"

"What is it, sir? A rug?"

"Rug! Great Scott, man, don't you know a woman's hair when you see it?"

"I've never—er—never seen it—you might say—just like that. Is it hair?"

"It is. You do see it, don't you?"

"How did it get there?"

"Good! Now I know I'm not dreaming. Come! There's no time to be lost. We may be able to get up there before she hears us!"

I instructed old Conrad to have the tallest ladder brought to me in the courtyard at once.

"There is no such thing about the castle," he announced blandly.

"Where are your sons?" I demanded. The old couple held up their hands in great distress.

"Herr Britton has them wearing their souls out, arch, that terrible invention of his!" groaned old Conrad. "My poor sons are faint with fatigue, mein herr. You should see them perspire and hear them pant for breath."

Happily a new idea struck me almost at once.

In a jiffy half a dozen carpenters were at work constructing a substantial ladder out of scantlings, while I stood over them in serene command of the situation.

When the ladder was completed I mounted to the top and peered through the sashless window. It was quite black and repelling beyond. Instructing Britton and the two brothers to follow me in turn, I clambered over the wide stone sill and lowered myself gingerly to the floor.

I will not take up the time or the space to relate my experiences on this first fruitless visit to the east wing of my abiding place. Suffice to say, we got as far as the top of the stairs in the vast middle corridor after stumbling through a series of dim, damp rooms, and then found our way effectually blocked by a stout door which was not only locked and bolted, but

bore a most startling admonition to would be trespassers.

Pinned to one of the panels there was a dainty bit of white note paper, with these satiric words written across its surface in a bold feminine hand: "Please keep out. This is private property."

Most property owners no doubt would have been incensed by this calm defiance on the part of a squatter, either male or female, but not I. The very impudence of the usurper appealed to me. What could be more delicious than her serene courage in dispossessing me with the stroke of a pen of at least two-thirds of my domicile and what more exciting than the thought of waging war against her in the effort to regain possession of it? Really it was quite glorious! Here was a happy, enchanting bit of fandalism that stirred my romantic soul to its very depths.

We returned to the courtyard and held a council of war. I put all of the Schmicks on the grill, but they stubbornly disclaimed all interest in or knowledge of the extraordinary occupant of the east wing.

"We can smoke her out, sir," said Britton.

I could scarcely believe my ears. "Britton," said I severely, "you are a brute. I am surprised. You forget there is an innocent babe, maybe a collection of them, over there and a

(Continued Next Week)

Patents, Trade-Marks Copyrights.

Send model, or sketch and description for preliminary examination. Book containing over 200 mechanical movements sent free on request.

W. N. ROACH, Jr.
Attorney and Counsellor at Law.
Mechanical & Electrical Expert.
McGill Building
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Patents, Trade-Marks Copyrights.

Send model, or sketch and description for preliminary examination. Book containing over 200 mechanical movements sent free on request.

W. N. ROACH, Jr.
Attorney and Counsellor at Law.
Mechanical & Electrical Expert.
McGill Building
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Patents, Trade-Marks Copyrights.

Send model, or sketch and description for preliminary examination. Book containing over 200 mechanical movements sent free on request.

W. N. ROACH, Jr.
Attorney and Counsellor at Law.
Mechanical & Electrical Expert.
McGill Building
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Patents, Trade-Marks Copyrights.

Send model, or sketch and description for preliminary examination. Book containing over 200 mechanical movements sent free on request.

W. N. ROACH, Jr.
Attorney and Counsellor at Law.
Mechanical & Electrical Expert.
McGill Building
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Patents, Trade-Marks Copyrights.

Send model, or sketch and description for preliminary examination. Book containing over 200 mechanical movements sent free on request.

W. N. ROACH, Jr.
Attorney and Counsellor at Law.
Mechanical & Electrical Expert.
McGill Building
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Patents, Trade-Marks Copyrights.

Send model, or sketch and description for preliminary examination. Book containing over 200 mechanical movements sent free on request.

W. N. ROACH, Jr.
Attorney and Counsellor at Law.
Mechanical & Electrical Expert.
McGill Building
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Patents, Trade-Marks Copyrights.

Send model, or sketch and description for preliminary examination. Book containing over 200 mechanical movements sent free on request.

W. N. ROACH, Jr.
Attorney and Counsellor at Law.
Mechanical & Electrical Expert.
McGill Building
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Patents, Trade-Marks Copyrights.

Send model, or sketch and description for preliminary examination. Book containing over 200 mechanical movements sent free on request.

W. N. ROACH, Jr.
Attorney and Counsellor at Law.
Mechanical & Electrical Expert.
McGill Building
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Patents, Trade-Marks Copyrights.

Send model, or sketch and description for preliminary examination. Book containing over 200 mechanical movements sent free on request.

W. N. ROACH, Jr.
Attorney and Counsellor at Law.
Mechanical & Electrical Expert.
McGill Building
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Patents, Trade-Marks Copyrights.

Send model, or sketch and description for preliminary examination. Book containing over 200 mechanical movements sent free on request.

W. N. ROACH, Jr.
Attorney and Counsellor at Law.
Mechanical & Electrical Expert.
McGill Building
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Patents, Trade-Marks Copyrights.

Send model, or sketch and description for preliminary examination. Book containing over 200 mechanical movements sent free on request.

W. N. ROACH, Jr.
Attorney and Counsellor at Law.
Mechanical & Electrical Expert.
McGill Building
WASHINGTON, D. C.

\$250.00 Reward
THE AMERICAN CATTLE COMPANY
With headquarters at Hinsdale, Montana, owning the following brands:

Will pay \$250 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of anyone molesting, illegally driving or branding, or stealing any of their cattle or horses. Address
John D. McClellan, Foreman,
Hinsdale, Montana

Plan Now to "Go Great Northern"

CALIFORNIA'S EXPOSITIONS

An interesting journey via Spokane, Seattle, Portland—aboard one of the new steamships "GREAT NORTHERN" and "NORTHERN PACIFIC," a voyage down the Pacific Ocean to San Francisco. This is the "GREAT NORTHERN WAY" to California's World's Fairs at San Francisco and San Diego.

SPECIAL EXCURSION FARES

Special Round Trip Excursion Tickets from Anaconda, Butte, Helena, Great Falls, Billings, Lewistown, as well as other points in Montana on the Great Northern Railway to Los Angeles, San Francisco and San Diego—California's Exposition Cities—will be on sale daily March 15th to November 30th, inclusive. Tickets permit of stopover at principal points on either going or return journey and are good for return three months from date of sale, but not later than December 31st, 1915.

Take advantage of these special fares to visit California's Expositions. Call on or write your local Agent for descriptive literature and full information regarding the "GREAT NORTHERN WAY" to the "Panama-Pacific" and "Panama-California" Expositions.

J. T. MCGAUGHEY,
Asst. Gen. Freight and Pass. Agent
Helena, Montana

H. A. NOBLE, Gen. Pass. Agent
St. Paul, Minn.

Remember, "See America First" means See Glacier National Park on the Great Northern Railway

THIS "PRUDENT MAN" PUT HIS FIRST SAVINGS IN THE BANK

John D. Rockefeller was once a poor, young man. Suppose he had not banked the FIRST money he earned, would he have become rich?

He never dabbled in get-rich-quick schemes either.

Make OUR bank YOUR bank.

First National Bank

Glasgow, Montana.