EVENING PUBLIC LEDGER-PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, 'AUGUST 14, 1920

THE PARADISE MYSTERY By J. S. Fletcher

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THIS STARTS THE STORY

AND HERE IT CONTINUES.

IE WAS wondering, all the time dur-I ing which he reeled off these questions, if, Mr. Gilwaters was wholly ignorant of the recent affair at Wrychester. He fnight be-a glance round his book-He might be-a glance round his book-abled room had suggested to Bryce that about the wife?" asked Bryce. s was much more likely to be a bookorm than a newspaper reader, and it was quite possible that the events of the day had small interest for him. And his first words in reply to Bryce's quesions convinced Bryce that his surmise as correct and that the old man had d nothing of the Wrychester Paralise mystery, in which Ransford's name ud, of course, figured as a witness at

e inquest "It is nearly twenty years since ard any of their names." remarked fr. Gilwaters. "Nearly twenty yearslong time ! But, of course, I can anwer you. Mary Bewery was our verness at Braden Medworth, She ame to us when she was nineteen—she was married four years later. She was a girl who had no friends or relatives— ahe had been educated at a school in the north—I engaged her from that school, where. I understood, she had lived since infancy. Now then, as to prake and Ransford. They were two young men from London, who used to come fishing in Leicestershire. Rans-ford was a few years the younger—he was either a medical student in his last year, or he was an assistant somewhere in London. Eralte was a bank manager in London. Brake was a bank manager ame to us when she was nineteen-she London-of a branch of one of the is banks. They were pleasant young flows, and I used to ask them to the Mearage. Eventually, Mary Bewery and John Brake became engaged to be mar Hed. My wife and I were a good deal surprised—we had believed, somehow that the favored man would be Ransford. However, it was Brake-and Brake she married, and, as you say, Ransford was best man. Of course, Brake took his wife off to Londonand from the day of her wedding. I ver saw her again "

"Did you ever see Brake again?" sked Bryce. The old clergyman shool "Yes " he said sadly. "I did see

Brake again-under grievous, grievous circumstances !" "You won't mind telling me what cir-

umstances?" suggested Bryce. "I will mep your confidence, Mr. Gilwaters." "There is really no secret in it-if it es to that," answered the old man. waters. I saw John Brake again just once. In

Gilwatera," he remarked. "You say that you saw Brake after the case was over Did you learn anything?"

Did you learn anything?" "Nothing whatever?" answered the old clergyman. "I got permission to see him before he was taken away. He did not seem particularly pleased or disposed to see me. I begged him to tell me what the real truth was. He was, I think, somewhat dazed by the sentence—but he was also sullen and morose. I asked him where his wife and two children— one, a mere infant—were. For I had already been to his private address and had found that Mrs. Brake had sold al! the furniture and disappeared—com-pletely. No one—thereabouts, at any rate—knew where she was, or would tell me anything. On my asking this, he re-fused to answer. I pressed him—he said finally that he was only speaking the truth when he replied that he did not know where his wife was. I said I must find her. He forbade me to make any attempt. Then I begged him to tell me if she was with friends. I re-member very woll what he replied.—T'm not going to say one word more to any man livins. Mr. Gilwaters, he answered determinedly. 'I shall be dead to the world—only because I've been a trust-ing fool!—for ten years or thereabouts, but, when I come back to it, I'll let the world see what revenge means! Go away!" he concluded. 'I won't say one word more.' And—I left him." "And—you made no more inquiries?— about the wife?" asked Bryce. "Nothing whatever!" answered the old

about the wife?" asked Bryce. "I did what I could," replied Mr. Gli-waters. "I made some inquiry in the neighborhood in which they had lived. All I could discover was that Mrs. Brake had disappeared under extraordinarily mysterious circumstances. There was no trace whatever of her. And I speedily found that things were being said—the usual cruel suspicious, you know." "Such as—what?" asked Bryce. "Thet the amount of the defalcations

"Such as—what?" asked Bryce. "That the amount of the defalcations was much larger than had been allowed to appear," replied Mr. Gilwaters. "That Brake was a very clever rogue who had got the money safely planted some-where—Australia, or Canada, or some other far-off region—to await his re-lease. Of course, I didn't believe one word of all that. But there was the fact—she had vanished: And eventually. I thought of Ransford as having been Brake's great friend, so I tried to find him.

"At Wrychester," answered Bryce "She is a young woman of twenty, and she has a brother, Richard, who is be-tween seventeen and eighteen."

"Without a doubt those are Brake's children!" exclaimed the old man. "The infant I spoke of was a boy. Bless me! -how extraordinary. How long have they been at Wrychester?" "Ransford has been in practice there some years—a few years," replied Bryce. "These two young people joined him there definitely two years ago. But from what I have learned he has acted, as their guardian ever since they were mere oblidern."

"And-their mother?" asked Mr. Gil-

"And-their mother?" asked Mr. Gil-waters. "Said to be dead-long since." answer-ed Bryce. "And their father. too. They know nothing. Ransford won't tell them anything. But, as you say-I've no doubt of it myself now-they must be the children of John Brake." "And have taken the name of their mother!" remarked the old man. "Had it given to them." said Bryce "They don't know that it isn't their real name. Of course, Ransford has given it to them! But now-the mother?" "Ah, yes, the mother!" said Mr. Gil-waters. "Our old governess! Dear me!" "Thm going to put a question to you," continued Bryce, leaning nearer and speaking in a low, condential tone.





A. R. B. B. L.

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"A prison cell !" exclaimed Bryce. "And he-a prisoner?" "He had just been sentenced to ten

mars' penal servitude," replied Mr. Gilsaters. "I had heard the sentencewas present. I got leave to see him. Ten years' penal servitude !--- a terrible diahment. He must have been released

long ago-but I never heard more." Bryce reflected in silence for a mo Mant-reckoning and calculating.

"When was this-the trial?" he asked. "It was five years after the marriage wenteen years ago," replied Mr. Gli-

and-what had he been doing?" in-"Stea

nd-what had he been doing?" in-de Bryce. The bank's money." an-ed the old man. "I forgot what technical offense was-embezzie-or something of that sort. There not much evidence came out, for is impossible to offer any defense, he pleaded guilty. But I gathered what I heard that something of sort occurred. Brake was a branch ger. He was, as it were, pounced one morning by an inspector, who i that his cash was short by two ree thousand pounds. The bank e seemed to have been unusually and even severe-Brake, it was had some explanation, but it was taside and he was given in charge. the sentence was as I said just a very savage one. I thought. But had recruity been some bad cases at sort in the banking world, and pose the judge felt that he must an example. Yes-a most trying "I have a report of the case where, which I cut out of a London mar at the time." Gilwaters rose and turned to an sk in the corner of his room, and some rummaging of papers in a st, produced a newspaper-cutting the handed the book to his re is the account." he said. "You

the account," he said. "You Te is the account," he said. "You id it for yourself. You will notice a what Brake's counsel suid on half there are one or two curious ysterious hints as to what might been said if it had been of any [advantage to say it. A strange

turned engerly to the faded

MANAGER'S DEFALCATION. the Central Criminal Court yes-y, John Brake, thirty-three, for-f manager of the Upper Tooting the of the London and Home ties Bank, Ltd., pleaded guilty of zeing certain sums, the property is employers

nties Bank, Ltd., pleaded guilty of easing certain sums, the D.operty is employers. It will be it was impossible for court on behalf of the prisoner, that while it was impossible for client to offer any defense, there e circumstances in the case which. It hat while it was a wronged and even the prisoner was a scriptural house of his friend. The man who really guilty in this affair had werly escaped all consequences, nor id it be of the least uso to enter any details respecting him. Not penny of the money in question is purposes. It was doubtless a mag and improper thing that his any details respecting him. Not penny of the conset uso the done, and he had pleaded if y and yould submit to the con-tion with the case could have been a fit would have served any use-purpose to tell it. It would have the set to fue the learned counsel, do the far to say that, know-wid to far as to say that, know-wid set of judgment. He him-du go af ar as to say that, know-wid the far the learned counsel, the he did, knowing what had a fold him by his client in strict any details nor all by had the set of the learned counsel, the bodiship merely remarking that. The did by and the prisoner the him-the with the case to say that, know-wid the first the set of the tech-set of the sort could be offered to the prisoner though tech. The Lordship merely remarking that. The set that by his client in strict and set the book. this over twice before

speaking in a low, condential tone-"You must have seen much of the world. Mr, Gilwaters-men of your profession know the world, and human nature, too. Call to mind all the mysterious circum-stances, the veiled hints, of that trial. Do you think-have you ever thought-that the false friend whom the counsel referred to was-Ransford? Come false friend whom the to was-Ransford?

referred

referred to was-Ransford? Come now !" The old clergyman lifted his hands and let them fall on his knees. "I do not know what to say!" he ex-claimed. "To tell you the truth. I have often wondered if--if that was will at really did happen. There is the fact that Brake's wife disappeared myster lously--that Ransford made a similar mysterious disappearance about the same time--that Brake was obviously suffering from intense and bitter hatred of some person on whom he meant to be revenged---and that his counsei hinted that he had been deceived and betrayed by a friend. Now, to my knowledge, h and Ransford were the closest of friends --in the old days, before Brake married our governess. And I suppose the friendship continued-certainly Rans-ford acted as best man at the wedding! But how account for that strange double disappearance?" disappearance?

Bryce had already accounted for that, In his own secret mind. And now, hav-ing got all that he wanted out of the old clergyman, he rose to take his leave. "You will regard this interview as having been of a strictly private nature. Mr. Gilwaters?" he said. "Certainly!" responded the old man. "But—you mentioned that you wished to marry the daughter? Now that you know about her father's past—for I am sure she must be John Brake's child— you won't allow that to—eh?" "Not for a moment!" answered Bryce, with a fair show of magnanimity. "I am not a man of that complexion.

"I am not a man of that complexion, sir. No!-I only wished to clear up certain things, you understand." "And—since she is apparently—from

"And-since she is apparently-from what you say-in ignorance of her real father's past-what then?" asked Mr. Gilwaters anxiously. "Shall you-"" "I shall do nothing whatever in any haste," replied Bryce. "Rely upon me to consider her feelings in everything. As you have been so kind, I will let you know, later, how matters go." This was one of Pemberton Bryce's ready inventions. He had not the least intention of ever seeing or communi-

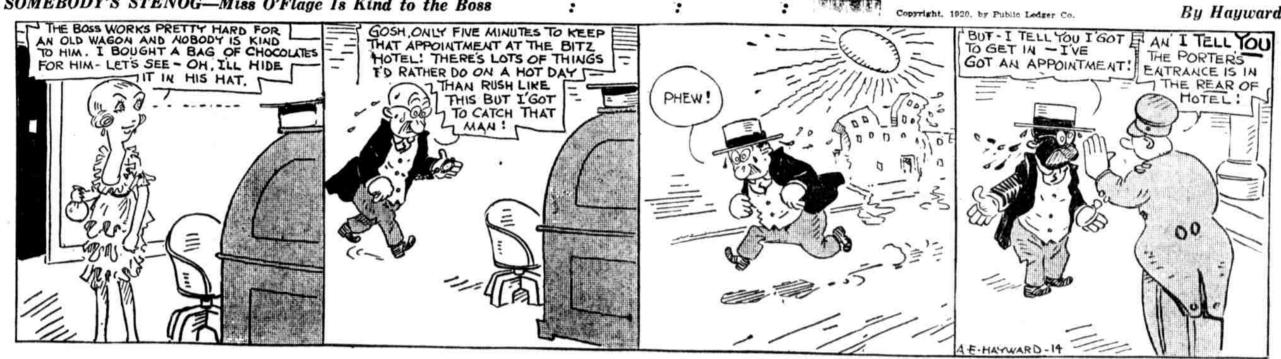
know, later, how matters go." This was one of Pemberton Bryce's ready inventions. He had not the least intention of ever seeing or communi-cating with the late vicar of Braden Medworth again; Mr. Gilwaters had served his purpose for the time being. He went away from Bayswater, and, an hour later, from London, highly satisfied. In his opinion, Mark Rans-ford, seventeen years before, had taken advantage of his friend's misfortunes to run away with his wife, and when Brake, allas Braden, had unexpectedly turned up at Wrychester, he had added to his former wrong by the commission of a far greater one. Bryce went back to Wrychester firmly convinced that Mark Ransford had killed John Braden. He reckoned things up in have elapsed since Braden, or rather Brake's release. He had probably heard, on his release, that Ransford and his, Brake's neise and in the original interest m his first schemes of revenge; he might have lost all trace of them; he might have lost all trace of them; he might have lost his original interest m have begun a new life for himself in Australia, whence he had undoubtedly tome to England recently. But he had tome, at last, and he had evidently tracked Ransford to Wrychester—why, otherwise, had he presented himself at Ransford had met—most likely in the precincts of the cathedral. Ransford, who linew all the quiet corners of the precincts of the cathedral. Ransford, who have and in all probability induced bring have lost fils original interest of the da place, had in all probability induced bring which was to witness his death? Nothing, in Bryce's opinion, could be clearer. Brake had turned up. He and recincts of the cathedral. Ransford, who linew all the quiet corners of the old place, had in all probability induced bring had noticed the open doorway, had thrown Brake through it. All the facts ported. It ought to be enough--proved—to put Ransford in a criminal dock.

e and mysterious, Mr. (CONTINUED MONDAY)

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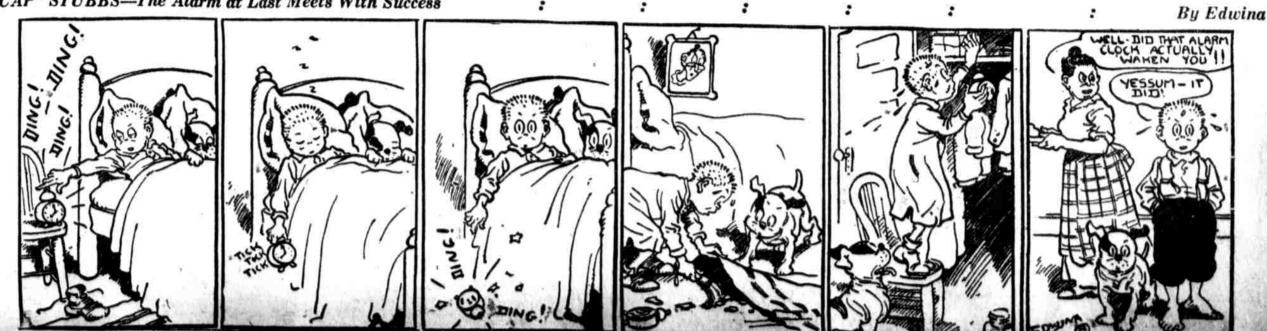
The young lady across the way says the car shortage is still pretty serious, and she doesn't see why they don't make them three or four

feet longer while they're about it.



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"CAP" STUBBS—The Alarm at Last Meets With Success



SOMEBODY'S STENOG-Miss O'Flage Is Kind to the Boss