

THE PARADISE MYSTERY

By J. S. Fletcher

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THIS STARTS THE STORY
The little English cathedral town of Wrythe is the scene of intrigue and mystery. Mary Stebbing, sixteen years old, and her brother Dick, seven years old, and her father, Mr. Stebbing, are on a boat which was found dead. The theory is that he fell, but this is objected to by Varner, a stenographer, who was on the boat. Varner had been paid for a search register where Mark Bradford had acted as boat man at the time of the murder of the Duke of Montague. Callahan, a laborer who said he could throw light on the murder, is the murderer on the ground that he prescribed for Callahan and his wife the night before the Duke's death. Mary assures Bradford of her confidence in Varner. Stebbing, a detective, questions Varner, learns a scrap of the secret which hidden in a cemetery. Varner admits he has learned that Bradford was in truth Bradford, father of Mary and Dick. Her father tells Stebbing of the secret he saw in the city before Bradford's death. At the request of Callahan's body, Bradford's body, on the death of either Bradford or the son, Bryce finds a party has searched for a body and found a box containing jewels stolen from the Duke of Montague many years before. The body was found in a Scotland Yard man called on by Doctor Bradford and ask his help. He tells them of his suspicions of Bryce and Varner. The officers go to question Bryce. He admits loving Mary Stebbing, but denies here to cast new suspicions on Bradford.

AND HERE IT CONTINUES
HE WENT leisurely out and across the market square and into the narrow, old world street called Pliggate, along which he strolled as if doing no more than looking about him, until he came to an ancient shop which had been converted into an office, and had a wire blind over the lower half of its front window, wherein was woven in conspicuous gilt letters "Wrythe Second Friendly Society"—George Stebbing, secretary. Nothing betokened romance or mystery in that essentially humble place, but it was in Jettison's mind that when he crossed its threshold he was on his way to discovering something that would possibly clear up the problem on which he was engaged.

The staff of the Second Friendly was considerable in number—an outer office harbored a small boy and a tall young man; an inner one accommodated Mr. Stebbing, also a young man, sandy haired and freckled, who, having inspected Detective Sergeant Jettison's professional card, gave him the best chair in the room and stared at him with wide and plainly inquiring curiosity which mingled with a curiosity which he had never ascertained a detective before. And as if to show his visitor that he realized the seriousness of the occasion, he nodded meaningfully at his door.

"All safe here, sir," he whispered. "Well-tiding doors in these id houses—knew how to make 'em the days. No chance of being overheard here—what can I do for you, sir?"

"Thank you—much obliged to you," said Jettison. "No objection to my pipe, I suppose. Just so. Ah!—well, between you and me, Mr. Stebbing, I'm down here in connection with that Callahan case—you know."

"I know, air—poor fellow," said the secretary. "Cruel thing, sir, if the man was put an end to. One of our members, was Callahan, sir."

"So I understand," remarked Jettison. "That's what I've come about. Bit of information on the quiet, air? Strictly between our two selves—for the present."

Stebbing nodded and winked, as if he had been doing business with detectives all his life.

"To be sure, sir, to be sure," he responded with alacrity. "Just between you and me and the doorman—all right. Anything I can do, Mr. Jettison, shall be done. But it's more in the way of what I can tell, I suppose?"

"Something of that sort," replied Jettison in his slow, easy-going fashion. "I want to know a thing or two. Yours is a workingman's society, I think? Aye—and I understand you've a system whereby such a man as you put his bits of savings in your hands?"

"A capital system, too," answered the secretary, seating on a pamphlet and pushing it into his visitor's hand. "I don't believe there's better in England!"

"I'll take a look at it some time," said Jettison, putting the pamphlet in his pocket. "Well, now, I also understand that Callahan was in the habit of bringing you a bit of saved money now and then—a sort of saving fund, wasn't it?"

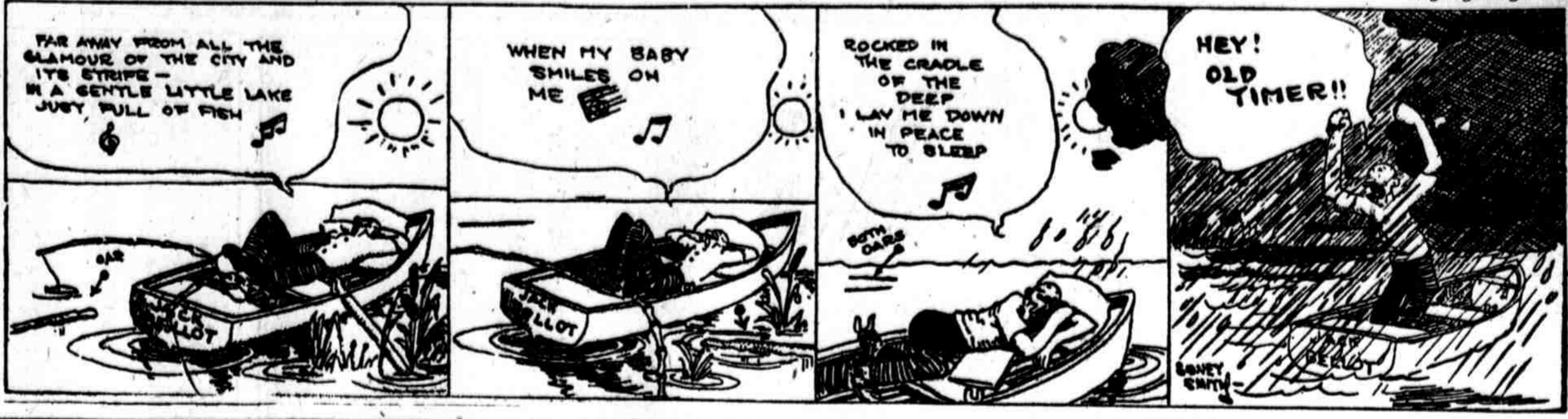
Stebbing nodded assent and reached for a ledger which lay on the farther side of his desk.

"Callahan," he answered, "had been a member of our society ever since it started—fourteen years ago. And he'd been putting in savings for some eight or nine years. Not much, you'll understand—say, as an average, two to three pounds a year, never more. But just before his death, murthered as it was, he whatever you like to call it, he came here one day with fifty pounds. Fairly good money, don't you think, for a man?"

"That's about that fifty pounds I want to know about," said Jettison. He didn't tell you how he came by it, did he? A legacy, for instance?"

THE GUMPS—Sailor, Take Care!

By Sydney Smith



PETEY—Male and Female

By C. A. Voight



THE TERRIBLE-TEMPERED MR. BANG

By FONTAINE FOX

SCHOOL DAYS

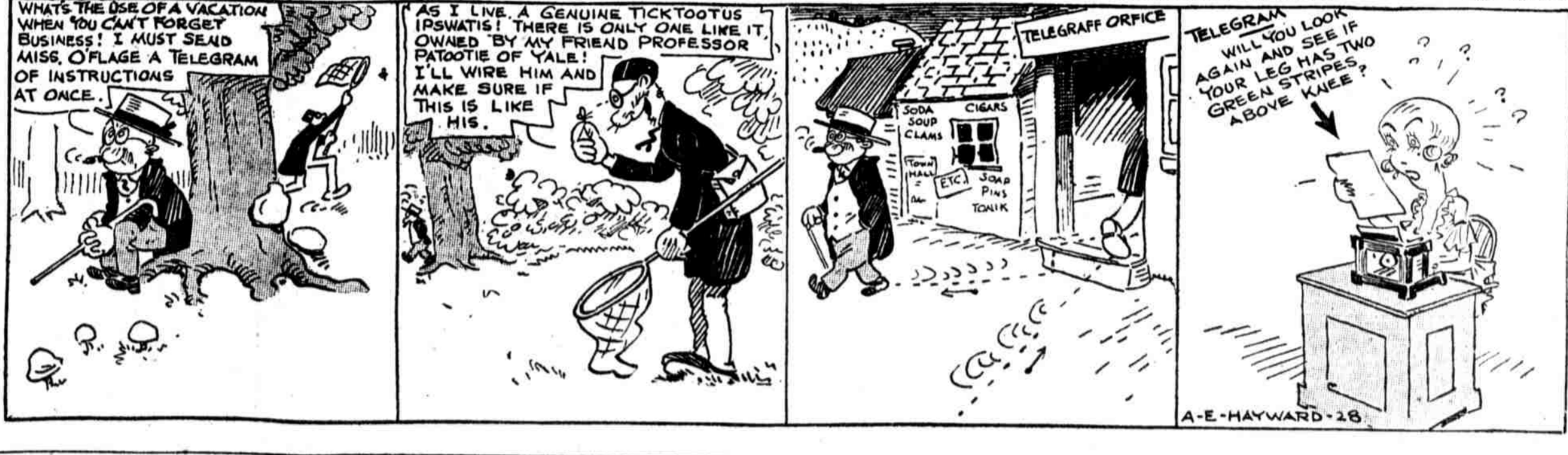
By DWIG



SOMEBODY'S STENOG—The Boss Is Still on His Vacation

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By Hayward



"CAP" STUBBS—"Cap" Isn't the Sort to Hold a Grudge

By Edwin



CONTINUED MONDAY