

persistent deluge of rain, and with only two days left for practice, Bruce-Brown was eager to make the most of the little time that he had to put his Fiat through its final prep.

He did not reach the course until late in the afternoon, when I was about to clear the roads of the racing cars and open the highways to the regular traffic. When he asked me to delay such action in order that he might turn two or three practice laps, I consented, for it was anything but an unreasonable request under the circumstances.

I gave him an extra half hour and then signalled him to come in, but as he put brakes to his car, I could see that he hoped to wheedle me into rescinding my order. His ingratiating smile telegraphed his intentions.

"Just one lap more," he pleaded. "The timing isn't just right and I want to see what's the matter."

I was about to surrender to this irresistible boy and nod my assent, when I chanced to look at his tires. They were worn through to the fabric and ready to go.

"You get back to the garage," I commanded, "and take it easy when you do. If you don't you'll get an ambulance ride. And don't come on this track tomorrow till you've put on new shoes all around."

With a deaf ear and putting his gears in mesh, he rolled slowly away to disregard my instructions.

About five minutes later the telephone rang in the judge's stand. The call came from the control on the back stretch, and as I snatched the receiver from the hook and put it to my ear, I had a premonition something was wrong.

"Get an ambulance over here quick!" a voice demanded. "Bruce-Brown's blown a rear tire. His car

is in the ditch and he's under it. For God's sake, hurry!"

And for Bruce-Brown's sake, we did. But we were too late. We did manage to get the car off him, but he passed away on that awful ride to the hospital.

No tragedy of the race course touched me so deeply as the death of Bruce-Brown. I looked upon this splendid boy, who only a few years before I had sent away on his first drive against distance and time, as a sort of foster-son. I had gloried, as a father would, in his sterling achievements—his victory in the Grand Prix and his remarkable showing in the French Grand Prix of 1912, which he lost on a technicality. He was a race driver to the purple born, and his equal on the roaring road I have never known.

With your kind permission, I would like to bring up at this time no less a celebrity than Barney Oldfield himself. Frankly, he has seriously cramped my style. For it was my honest intention, if ever I were privileged to record the high-lights of my accelerated life, to devote not a few pages of such a humble manuscript to this most lovable and amazing personage. And just as the opportunity came for me to pay such public tribute, what does the versatile and talented Barney do but blossom out as a fellow-autobiographer.

This many sided and protean Oldfield—waiter, bellhop, elevator boy, bicycle rider, racing car driver, buffet proprietor, tire manufacturer, automobile designer and currently a prosperous Los Angeles apartment house owner—patently stole most of my long-hoarded stuff about him when he penned a book of his own, and for me now to retell in my own inexpert way, what he had already told in so charming a manner would be, obviously, the height of redundancy.