

"Say not those words, adding perjury to your many other crimes; verily do I now guess that you were sent there to spy that Tyrrell did well his ghastly wicked work. O God, my pretty boys."

Despairing, then cried I:

"Blame not an atom of the crime upon King Richard, fair heart-torn Queen Elizabeth."

"Nay, then, will I," retorted she; "he shall bear it all. Nor shall I call the slayer of my children king. Let him be damned and cursed forever; aye, forever and forever!"

With which rushed I from her; for there are women, Sire Brains, whose conclusions once jumped to, whether right or wrong, are conclusions throughout eternity. Elizabeth Woodville had a subtle mind; but it had become impaired through brooding on her grief.

Ambition, alas, ambition, Sire Brains, had caused all her tribulations. An ambition is not commendable, except it is attained.

Indeed those times were deadly, as I think I said before; yet could I not but have pity for this widowed mother bereft so cruelly of all her brood of males. Girls she had left; but what use are girls, unless they are to be our mothers?

Better had it been for the earthly happiness of the Lady Grey had she remained her life at Grafton Castle. Felicity even hath a cow-herd's wife; the queen of England's king had only torment of her spirit.

Unfortunate Elizabeth sank toward the grave; she did not live to see her namesake daughter married to that vile Richmond. Soon her spirit shook its shackles off, and she greeted then again her sons with the Astragans.

I shall not dwell upon that contemptible personage, Henry Earl of Richmond, any more than I can help. Coward and bastard, bastard and coward, either way you like; but those were his legitimate names, Sire Brains. How anyone with a soul, as you mortals call it, I say, could ever have followed him I cannot understand.