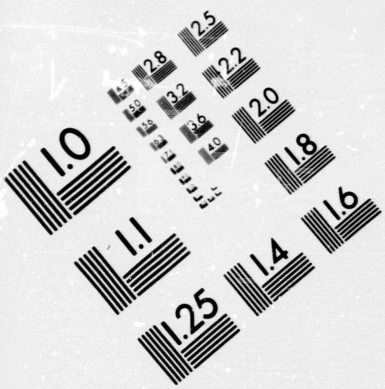


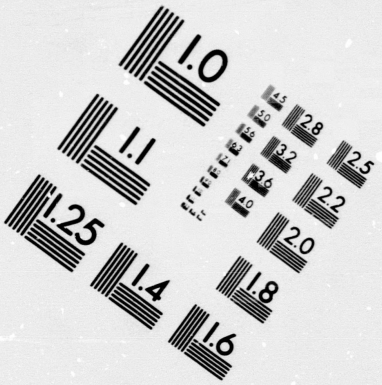
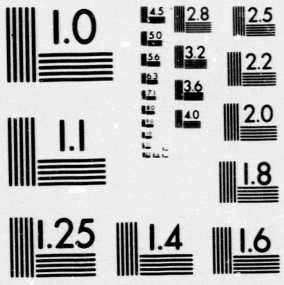
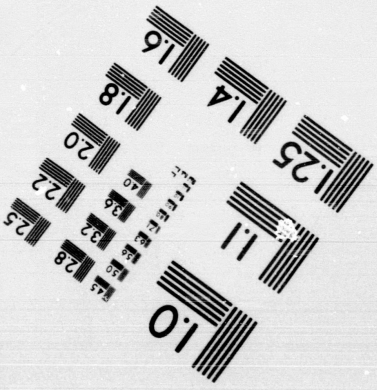
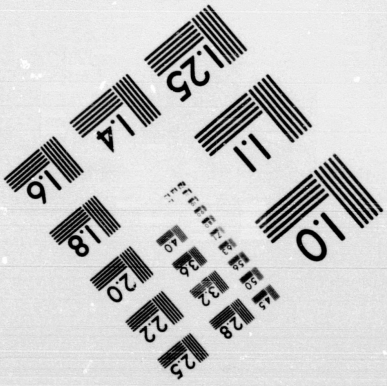



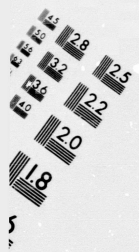

**IMAGE EVALUATION**
**TEST TARGET (MT-3)**




Canadia



# CIHM/ICMH Microfiche Series.

# CIHM/ICMH Collection de microfiches.

Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions

Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques

1980

## Technical Notes / Notes techniques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Physical features of this copy which may alter any of the images in the reproduction are checked below.

- ☐ Coloured covers/ Couvertures de couleur
- ☐ Coloured maps/ Cartes géographiques en couleur
- ☐ Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/ Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées
- ☑ Tight binding (may cause shadows or distortion along interior margin)/ Reliure serré (peut causer de l'ombre ou de la distortion le long de la marge intérieure)
- ☐ Additional comments/ Commentaires supplémentaires

L'Institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Certains défauts susceptibles de nuire à la qualité de la reproduction sont notés ci-dessous.

- ☐ Coloured pages/ Pages de couleur
- ☐ Coloured plates/ Planches en couleur
- ☑ Show through/ Transparence
- ☐ Pages damaged/ Pages endommagées

---

## Bibliographic Notes / Notes bibliographiques

- ☐ Only edition available/ Seule édition disponible
- ☐ Bound with other material/ Relié avec d'autres documents
- ☐ Cover title missing/ Le titre de couverture manque
- ☐ Plates missing/ Des planches manquent
- ☐ Additional comments/ Commentaires supplémentaires

- ☐ Pagination incorrect/ Erreurs de pagination
- ☐ Pages missing/ Des pages manquent
- ☐ Maps missing/ Des cartes géographiques manquent

The images appearing here are the best quality possible considering the condition and legibility of the original copy and in keeping with the filming contract specifications.

Les images suivantes ont été reproduites avec le plus grand soin, compte tenu de la condition et de la netteté de l'exemplaire filmé, et en conformité avec les conditions du contrat de filmage.

The last recorded frame on each microfiche shall contain the symbol ⟶ (meaning "CONTINUED"), or the symbol ▽ (meaning "END"), whichever applies.

Un des symboles suivants apparaîtra sur la dernière image de chaque microfiche, selon le cas: le symbole ⟶ signifie "A SUIVRE", le symbole ▽ signifie "FIN".

The original copy was borrowed from, and filmed with, the kind consent of the following institution:

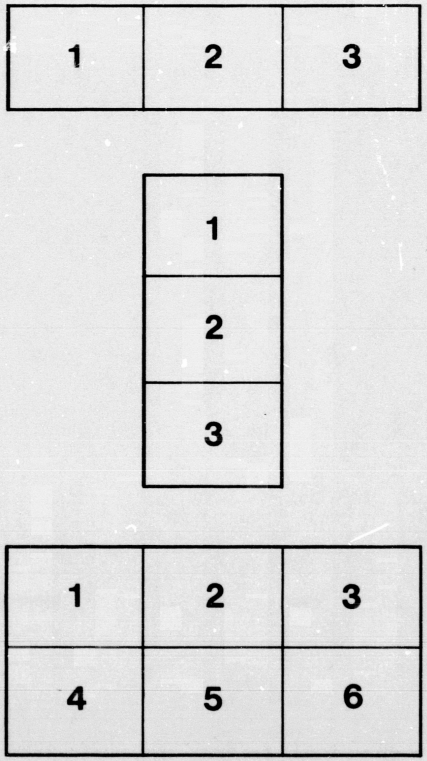
National Library of Canada

L'exemplaire filmé fut reproduit grâce à la générosité de l'établissement prêteur suivant :

Bibliothèque nationale du Canada

Maps or plates too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom, as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method:

Les cartes ou les planches trop grandes pour être reproduites en un seul cliché sont filmées à partir de l'angle supérieure gauche, de gauche à droite et de haut en bas, en prenant le nombre d'images nécessaire. Le diagramme suivant illustre la méthode :



F.

A

Copyrighte

PRINTED

# A Meteor King.

BY JOHN A. COPLAND.

Copyrighted in Canada, United States and Great Britain

BY THE AUTHOR.

HARRISTON, ONTARIO

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY THE HARRISTON TRIBUNE

STEAM POWER PRINTING HOUSE.

July, 1899.

Entered according to Act of the Parliament of Canada in the year 1901 by John A. Copland at the Department of Agriculture.

King Ri
hobby, a
lecturer
man wh
had been
Joseph F
been eve
ed him;
Mr.
med his
his big o
and fierc
ently:

# A METEOR KING

BY JOHN A COPLAND.

"CRAZINESS! That man is an ass! Such infernal rot!"

This was remarkable language for orthodox Mr. Joseph Brains to use; but he was excited this night. He had been to hear Professor Acumen deliver an address on the character of King Richard Third of England, Mr. Brains' favorite hobby, and Mr. Brains was irritated because the learned lecturer had taken the ground that King Richard was a man who had been greatly maligned and whose career had been distorted by the majority of historians. Mr. Joseph Brains believed King Richard Third to have been even a worse monster than Shakespeare has pictured him; and he resolved to stick to his belief.

Mr. Brains, confirmed bachelor that he was, slammed his fur gauntlets and his cap on to the sofa, pitched his big overcoat into one chair and himself into another, and fiercely smoked his cigar in front of the fire. Presently:

"I'll have a toddy and go to bed", said he.

Hardly had he begun the concoction of his soother before he heard a sturdy tread upon the stairs and coming along the passage to his apartments. Joseph looked at his clock, then at his watch, muttering:

"Who comes in upon me at this unholy hour—half-past eleven? Confound him whoever he is. I expect it is that ridiculous fellow Dullwinniger; he's always"——

"Kong! Kong! Kong!" resounded on the door.

"Hello, there!" shouted Mr. Brains; "why don't you smash in the door?"

Without another signal in strode a finely-constructed and handsome man, dressed like a nobleman of the end of the fifteenth century. Mr. Brains recognized the dress immediately, so well had he made historic research.

Astonishment personified was Mr. Brains as he saw his stranger visitor bow profoundly to him, mention his name, remove Joseph's coat from the chair to the lounge and take a seat at the table opposite to him.

"Pray, sir", quoth Joseph, "whom have I the honor"——

"Call me Astragus, Sire. My human name that was is of no consequence."

"Well, Mr. Astragus, Sire, I deem that a cheeky, very cheeky, intrusion; not to say remarkable."

"It may be, Sire, from your point of view; but we Astragans have no secrets, therefore we enter where we may; we move where we list and banish space as nothing."

"A lunatic", thought Mr. Brains; "and there are more of them! I must humor him."

"Not a lunatic, Sire Brains", retorted Astragus; and Joseph was startled at this correct reading of his thought.

"Well, bless me", he said, "this is extraordinary. Why do you speak so archaically?"

"It is the accent of our time."

"Your time?"

"Aye, the Fifteenth Century in England."

"Bless me more and more, what a phenomenal man you are!"

"Nay, mortal Sire, you mistake; I am not a man; I am an Astragan."

"Pray what is that; something connected with the stars?"

"Yes, Sire; my abode is in the Eternity of Stars; when I travel they are but lamps to light me on my way."

"You have the properties of Roentgen's X rays; you pass through apparently opaque objects; are you a spirit?"

"I am of spirit, as you will; but there existeth no such thing as a spirit."

"That accounts for your coming through my door, when I know that it is locked."

"Truly we recognize not bars and bolts"; and Astragus chuckled.

"I should like to test your spiritism", went on Mr. Brains; "from here you seem solid flesh and bones."

"Smite me, Sire Brains."

Joseph did so—once, twice, thrice. As well might he have tried to beat the wind. Only that he could see Astragus, he would have sworn that he-of-spirit's chair was vacant.

"Now shake hands", smiling said Astragus.

Mr. Brains reached out; they clasped hands. From that moment Joseph realized the sympathy of intellect and knew the origin of imagination. Their thoughts were in inter-communion.

"Thus", quoth Astragus, "can we converse."

"Yes, yes", admitted Mr. Brains; "I recognize at last that you are not a mortal. But such visits as yours are very rare; to what or to whom am I indebted for this one?"

"Simply to your zeal in the study of King Richard's character—England s libelled monarch."

"Ah, so you think he was not bad like he is painted?"

"I think nothing; I know."

"Ah, yes; of course; you were his contemporary; and near to his person, eh?"

"Exactly, Sire Brains; now you begin to understand."

"You are here to tell me the truth about King Richard Third of England?"

"If such should be your pleasure."

"My pleasure! Ye gods! Nothing could be more suited to my taste. Converse or controversy on that subject is to me as the smell of blood is to the warhorse.'

"Good; then shall I weave thee the web of my reminiscence."

They composed themselves, the one to listen and the other to talk; Astragus began:—

---

Thou hast read that those were troublous times for England in the middle of the Fifteenth Century.

Shortly after the notable flight of beautiful and valiant Margaret of Anjou to Flanders, and early in the year 1464, a young widow gazed out through one of the deep mullioned windows of Grafton—the historic home of Sir Richard Woodville in Northamptonshire.

Portly but comely was a matron who also occupied the room and spoke in quiet tones with her sad-faced sweet companion. Resemblance between the two was striking; the younger was daughter to the elder.

This elder lady was once the widow of the great Duke of Bedford; but, by second consummation of the banns, her name had been changed to Lady Woodville and the mourning adolescent beauty by her side who languidly perused the landscape was relict of unfortunate Sir John Grey, who fell whilst struggling beneath the red rose, emblem of the then repressed Lancastrians, at the second battle of St. Alban.

"Dear daughter Elizabeth", said Lady Woodville, "why will you persist in saddening all your days?

John Grey is dead; and weeping or fretting cannot bring him to your side again."

"I know that well, respected mother; nor is it now my husband's death that I lament."

"And, prithee, what, my child?" asked Lady Woodville, elevating in astonishment her silken eyebrows.

Widow Grey plucked nervously awhile the fringes of her facinator before she replied:

"All our property is confiscated; I feel I am a burden, kindest mother"——

"Have I not forbidden all such language?" interrupted Lady Woodville, testily. "How can a dutious child become a burden in her parent's house? Your misfortunes are not of your breeding; and He who sent can just as quick reclaim. Elizabeth, your moodiness insults Sir Richard and myself—who both have thought for but your welfare; and now you fret beneath your childhood's roof, because Providence hath willed that you return. Oh, fie, my daughter, that did love me so!"

Tears stood in the gentle lady's eyes; quick the pretty widow was at her side to soothe her:

Mother, mother, mother; come; we'll kiss and laugh."

Elizabeth wound her arm around her mother's waist and brought her to the casement.

"Oh, mother, look," cried Lady Grey, vivacious for her parent's sake; "there's Witch Penelope beside the gate. Let me whisper: yestereve I had her tell my fortune."

"What did she say?"

"That I quite soon should be a queen, and lots of things so nice!"

"Indeed; and said she nothing grue?"

"Ah, no; she said she saw a gloomy cloud, and asked if I would look it through; but I declined, preferring only prophecies most bright."

"Quite right, my child; your evil days will dawn by far too soon, without your rushing to meet their

black habiliments."

"Look, look there", suddenly spoke Lady Grey, nodding her head excitedly.

"What do we see?"

"A cavalcade, mother; yea, it is the king and his hunting retinue."

"So it is, I vow; heralds and pursuivants already at our gates."

"You do not seem displeased, my mother."

"Why should I be? Have I not known this Edward Fourth since he was wrapped in swaddling bands?"

"It is well that he forgets not the friends, who are friends, in his now great exaltation."

"He always was a noble boy; king Edward!"

"Mother, I do admit he sits a perfect king; his majesty becomes him. And there's his noble brother Richard by his side."

"Yes, yes; he is now the Duke of Gloucester."

"The king could hardly pass his brother George, although he seemed to tender him dislike", said Elizabeth, half musingly, "and so he made him the Duke of Clarence. George is not with the king."

"Why should he be, Elizabeth? His ways are too austere toward King Edward. But let us out and greet them, even though they represent the hated House of York and we the rival House of Lancaster."

Gallant and handsome certainly was the young King Edward; and he impressed the Lady Grey as being all that a woman could desire in man. Again, Edward admired instantly the sombre-garmented daughter of his hostess.

Edward's brother Richard had a gift of keen observance, and generally his prescience was not at fault. After their descent on the Woodville residence, Richard, ever sauve and kindly toward his eldest brother, expostulated with his majesty:

"Prithee, kingly brother, if it will not affront to ask my sovereign's reason; but why didst turn us from

our way to detour into the encampment of our enemies? These Woodvilles are Lancastrians."

"Yea, my clever Richard, I know it", quoth the king; "but it suits my whim to visit the widow of Bedford—I notice not her present Woodville."

"Methinks, King Edward, that you have heard too much about the beauty of the young Elizabeth."

"Nay; not too much; for she is more beautiful than I had thought."

"I guessed you thought so, your majesty; control yourself."

"It is but a passing amour, my Richard."

"So let it be, courageous brother King Edward; but remember that these passing whims if multiplied may ruin your government brain. I myself am passionate, as you, my life's companion, know full well; yet should I not allow my loves to while away my independence."

"Cleverly spoken, Dick of Gloucester; you are vast of intellect, as I have often noticed. I shall not let this sweet widow pervert my sense of duty. With your counsel, Dick, I can have no fear."

"Of a certainty, my sovereign, I am no dictator; but I beg that your majesty will take tent of our powerful ally, Warwick. He is no friend of Lancaster."

"Nor art thou, I fear me, Dick"; and King Edward laughed.

"You speak with a double meaning, King Ned, if I may be so bold; you feign hilarity; yet you would not savor being told that Warwick's anger might take him off with Clarence."

"Damn Clarence", said the king, frowning at the thought of his wily brother George.

"He is our brother, Sovereign Ned."

"Aye, Aye; so saith our mother."

Conversation was interrupted by a scuffle beside the way among the courtiers.

"What now? What now?" cried Edward; the brothers spurred their horses up.

Only Witch Penelope being hustled off the road by

flunkeydom.

"Cease!" King Edward shouted. "Thou'rt being rudely handled, my good dame; these dogs have scurvy manners."

"It was yon Catesby set them on", shrieked Penelope. "Be ware of him, Your Majesty, as you would a viper."

"A fortune-teller, now, I ween", said Edward.

"Your Majesty, but a poor one", Penelope replied.

"Ah, well, my dame, set forth a sample of your science."

"Believe me, Your Majesty, we find our troubles soon enough without peering into futurity to overhaul them. It is a good adage to let well enough alone."

"Canst tell nothing then to cheer us, dame; is everything so black?"

"Not black, Your Majesty; but with the joys are many sorrows. Divers battles Your Majesty shall fight; aye, with even them who now profess to thee undying friendship and allegiance. Almost your crown shall be torn away; but the spirit is with thee and within thee; therefore shall not a kingly calibre like thine be suffered to die in alien land. True king thou art; true king thou'lt die."

"This is not so dark a future", quoth King Edward; "it deserves a shower of gold."

So speaking, he dropped a handful of coins into Penelope's extended apron.

"Tell us somewhat of my beloved brother Richard", pursued the King.

"Ah, Your Majesty, forbear" remonstrated Gloucester.

King Edward persisted.

"In his handsome form", proceeded Penelope, her eyes atwink, "I see a METEOR KING."

"That is arrant nonsense, Penelope", Richard vexedly interpolated; "how can I ever be a king?"

"All things are possible, Your Royal Grace, with the Unseen Power; especially when strong lords and

barons resolve to have it so. I say a king you shall be; just long enough to let you taste the bitter and the sweet of ruling. Again, I say you'll make a proper king. Sorry the day for England when she loses you, whose wisdom and valor none shall question. On the field of battle shall your crown go down; but only when you fall, treacherously deserted by one who here bears company."

Penelope became silent, for a moment regarding Gloucester with half-closed lambent eyes. Every person listened expectantly for some words from her. She spoke again:

"York! Fated York, of the rose so white! Thy doom is sealed. Tapering toward the last, its disappearing point is Richard, Duke of Gloucester, one of England's bravest sons. Posterity shall be deceived by historians, whose aim shall be to curry favor with the enemies of the powerful Richard by detracting from the lustre of his fame. Nay! They shall try hard to blacken him, so that their own dark deeds may seem to have more brightness. They shall call him hunchback, demon, fiend-in-human-form, murderer-of-the-innocents, when they know 'tis false! A lie!

"But time and enlightenment can work wonders. In ages coming it shall dawn upon the world's vast multitude that Richard of Gloucester was a man maligned. Take courage, Gloucester; you shall reign again a decade of centuries from when you die; but over an infinite country and a greater people; your soul incarnate, fully-formed, within a body glorious to behold, and with an intellect only less prodigious than a god's."

Before the astonished company could glean their wits, Penelope had gone. This incident I relate but as example of what can be known by a mentality already etherealized.

Yes, yes, Sire Brains, that meeting of King Edward and the Lady Grey was but the beginning of the mighty wave of strife that was once more to surge across England and engulf many of the bravest of the realm.

Lady Woodville and LadyGrey were delighted that

the king should visit them, nor were they at any pains to hide these pleasant feelings. True, true; love at a glance it was on the part of King Edward for the Lady Grey. That astute young dame instictively recognized this, and, whilst admiring the handsome monarch, resolved that it should be her purpose to regain thereby the possessions that had been torn from her at the death of her husband. She had a mother's true regard for her children; so for their sake more than for her own must the game be played. Her woman's intuition told her that she held a winning hand.

Much to the anxiety of Richard of Gloucester, farseeing though merely a boy, King Edward made several visits to Grafton, often incognito. Gloucester warned his brother, and begged him to refrain from courting Lady Grey; but Edward had become too much enamored, so kept on his course. He came to feel somewhat conscience-stricken in the presence of Richard.

To ease circumstances, and to perhaps at the same time appease his brother, King Edward granted Richard the castles, lordships and lands of Henry de Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, as well as the castle and manors of Robert, Lord Hungerford, both of which noblemen had been beheaded after the battle of Hexham.

Three years previously Edward had appointed Richard, at that time merely nine years of age, High Admiral of England. Thus the king's admiration for his younger brother's intellect was not only of the lips, as you will remark, for that position was one requiring ability and firmness of judgment above the ordinary. Richard was rather chary about accepting the sovereign's munificence, and told him so.

When Edward and Richard were alone together they eschewed all formality, at the desire of the king.

"King Ned", said Gloucester, "you flatter me most graciously with all these honors that you continue to heap upon me, a mere child."

"I can't think you are so young, Dick", exclaimed the king, looking his fondness. "You have an old head

on young shoulders, certainly. There is a saying that the child of old age is either an idiot or extremely wise. You were the eleventh child of our famous father, and the youngest; surely you have inherited all the intellect of Richard Plantagenet. Dick, you were rightly named."

"My fond brother Ned, you are satirical; as you know, unmerited praise is the bitterest of sarcasm."

"Faugh, my clever Dick; really you are a phenomenon."

"Aye, 'twill be but twelve years next second of October since I saw the light of day in the princely castle of Fotheringay in Northamptonshire."

"Well do I remember it Dick. It was feared our beloved mother, the Rose of Raby, would not survive that travail; but she did—ah, yes, she did. She was most beautiful."

King Edward sank into a retrospective mood.

Richard's eyes betokened coming ardor in the conversation.

"Pardon me, King Ned", ejaculated he; "but when I think of those occurrences it but makes your present actions gall the more. My mother suffered much for me; I am not ungrateful, nor can I ever be. Those hated Lancastrians have been our parents' bane and ours. King Ned, I pray thee, keep pure the delicate white rose. Although I was a child, did I not witness all those early struggles between the House of York and the House of Lancaster, which hurried our noble father, the Duke of York, to his grave?"

"Ah, but, Dick, remember that they also eventually raised me to the throne of England", said King Edward facetiously.

"King Ned, sophistry cannot clear your conscience; if mortals have such inconvenient things in these days of dire calamities, when belted knights can deem it valor to knock out a defenceless prelate's brains across the altar, when a duke can hire assassins to rid him of a rival and when a 'holy' bishop does the same because his bro-

ther cleric is obnoxious to His Grace. For nearly a twelve-month, dost not recollect, King Ned, our mother with myself and George were held prisoners by the vile Lancastrians, until at length that glorious victory was won by the Yorkists at Northampton?"

"Yes, yes, Dick; it seems as yesterday. It was three months after the battle when our honored mother, rightly termed the Rose of Raby, arrived in London with yourself, our sister Margaret and brother George. He better never had come back; he cannot bode me good. I do begrudge I made him Duke of Clarence."

"Repent not for your good deeds, King Ned. George is not after our model, I admit with ease; too much praying and hypocrisy. He is morose, ambitious; worst of all, he is jealous; thus I say you did well to not pass him, King Ned. His friendship is better than his hatred, which I fear you assuredly must have if you hint at marrying Lady Grey."

King Edward sprang up and swore.

"The devil I care for his opinion", cried His Majesty vehemently; "again, if that were all, I forsooth should do it out of spite for him; just to show the white-livered patron of the priests that I take no account of what he thinks."

"Steadily, steadily, my sovereign Ned", Richard interjected soothingly; "but that is not all. There is our mother, there is Bona, and—to top all, there is Warwick."

"Aye, Warwick", gloomily assented Edward, sitting back among the cushions. "I like Warwick; and he is a powerful Nobleman. He has been called the King Maker. That is an obstacle."

"Your mind takes better shape, King Ned; continue thus."

Silence of thinking fell, broken at last suddenly by the king.

"Brother Dick", quoth he, "whatever happens you will be true?"

"True to you as both my brother and my sover

eign."

"I shall go and say adieu to Lady Grey."

"Nay, go not once more before the temptress; go rather and pay address to Bona of Savoy."

"My honor tells me to see again the Lady Grey."

"It may be once too often, King Ned; you have the inclinations of a man, but you are a king. Were it beholden that you should be but the former, all right; yet you cannot be. As a king you belong not to yourself; you are your people's. Your honor is in your own keeping. Sully that honor and you degrade the worth of what is theirs. Go to the widow, but let the king rule the man."

So Richard left his royal brother.

Edward's soul was torn upon the rack; it was the fight between the monarch and the man. As he sat with his face sunk into his palms, the people of his thoughts spoke of his majesty:

"Tonight the king comes, mother", sighed Lady Grey.

She was reclining on a luxurious couch in a cosy corner of Grafton Castle.

"Why do you sigh, Elizabeth?" asked Lady Woodville.

"I do not know; I simply feel slight wearines."

"You must not look weary tonight."

"I shall not."

"Every woman's lover is not a king, Elizabeth."

Lady Grey but smiled.

"He may not marry me", she said.

"Why not?"

"There are powerful state reasons, my mother."

"Persuade him you; the marriage may be clandestine."

"He shall say that himself."

So the day passed at last, and Lady Grey had her toilet done bewitchingly. She felt now elated. She stood radiant whilst her mother viewed her admiringly.

"You'll do," said Lady Woodville. "There are

sounds of horses. I shall leave you. He comes incognito. See that the red rose and the white shall join their powers tonight."

Lady Grey was as vivacious as a purling brook before the youthful and enamored king. Only a sorcerer could have guessed the depth of statecraft, yes, statecraft, those laughing eyes concealed. In her presence King Edward was nimble to forget his boy-mentor's words of warning.

"The King looks well tonight", the fair lady rippled, glancing roguishly, as her monarch craved and was permitted the privilege of kissing her hand. "Even kings can condescend to request on occasion, and not command, Your Majesty."

"Before this loveliness I stand subdued", gallantly spoke her royal lover, as he drew her gently to his side upon the couch.

"You flatterer", she said.

"You witch", he retaliated.

Edward continued to hold her hand, whilst his eyes feasted on her magnificent beauty.

"Lady Grey—Elizabeth", he uttered in a low deep voice, "I sit upon the throne of England, but I am not satisfied."

Lady Grey looked eloquently into the king's bright eyes.

"What further honor would the king desire?" she queried.

"A glorious honor, sweet one: that I should reign supreme in the Queen of Beauty's heart."

"Where is the Queen of Beauty?"

"Beside me."

She looked away, and was silent.

"What say you, dearest; do you love me just a little?" the king went on, drawing nearer and putting his left arm about her, whilst he fondled her pretty fingers with his right hand.

For answer Lady Grey twined her arms around King Edward's neck and kissed him.

Great was the triumph of small Cupid. How exquisitely delighted would have been fair Venus could she have succeeded but half so well with hard-to-win Adonis! Lady Grey's lip touch and the velvety feeling of her arms excited Edward's passion to an almost uncontrollable degree.

"My love, my love" he said.

"You really love me—Edward?" whispered she.

"Heaven knows I do."

"You'll grant me one favor? A small one for the king."

"My loveliest, do you but ask."

"Return to my children and myself the lands and manors taken from my husband."

"Assuredly I shall, my love, if you but let me taste the sweets of your delicious self, this precious moment, here upon this couch."

"Fie, King Edward, that is dishonorable!" exclaimed the lady, as she freed herself and grasped his hands.

"There are ladies in this land who would welcome me without provided", the king said, somewhat sulkily.

"I am not one of them. Rather would I die dependent and have my offspring paupers than submit to such dishonor. I did not expect it from the gallant King Edward."

Covering her eyes with her fingers, she wept.

"By my sword, but this is hard for mortal man to bear! Do not spend those tears; far rather would I have your anger, sweet Elizabeth—my own Elizabeth. Come to me. Far be it from me to dishonor one so sweet. Be queen to me. Marry Edward, not the king of England. There, there".

"Yes", she whispered, "I can consent to be your queen; but otherwise—"

What Edward called the globules of sparkling fragrance had ceased to fall from her eyes; Lady Grey was calm again. King Edward was much steadier; that shower had done his ardor good.

"Our marriage must be secret, Elizabeth", said he.

"Ah, then, why, Your Majesty?" was the subtle rejoinder of the Lady Grey, nestling on the king's shoulder.

"For several reasons of state, my love; but chiefly because my Council and influential statesmen consider that they must be consulted on matrimonial ideas I may care to entertain. Already several young princesses have been named as eligible, but Bona of Savoy has presently the preference. You know, she is the sister of the Queen of France, and France's king it is deemed expedient to curry favor with."

"But do you love her?"

"Not I. I never saw her. What matters that? Royal weddings are seldom the result of love, my sweet."

"Dear, Oh dear; I believe that's true; but you do not do any courting of your affianced?"

"No; the powerful Earl of Warwick has been commissioned to make the necessary arrangements."

"So he makes queens as well as kings, eh?"

"That's his forte, dearest. After the delays judged proper in such matters, principally with the hope of making better terms, Warwick has the contract drawn up and waiting only to be ratified."

"Then what shall you do, dear Edward?" asked Lady Grey, the tone of her voice presaging another tear cascade.

"Do? What can I do?"

Lady Grey but shook her head.

Edward regarded her in silence; presently he spoke:

"That question I may answer, sweetest; I must marry you tonight, if you but will."

"My gallant Edward, you know I would, most willingly; but no preparations have been made. There is no priest at hand."

"My confidential valet shall ride breakneck to fetch a clergyman, say you but so, my queen."

"Can you trust him with our secret?"

"Aye with a thousand of them; except my brother Richard, no man is so close within my thoughts."

"How quick your majesty can act; how clever and statesman-like you are, my Edward?" murmured Lady Grey. "Of course I say, do as you care."

Edward's conscience somewhat reminded him that his present course was anything but statesmanlike, as he recollected his brother Richard; but he crowded down his mentor, and rang the servant's bell.

Lady Grey caressed King Edward.

"For the present, fare thee well", she purred; "I go to dress. An hour from now I shall come to thee."

His voluptuous under lip pursed out, King Edward paced the floor until a giant of a man appeared—young, tall, broadshouldered and fair-haired, his face clean-shaven. Surely he was body guard enough for any king! Strong as an elephant and lithe as a doe, was Richard of Gloucester's apt description of the champion. Every line of his face proclaimed that Dymoke was a keeper of secrets, not a purveyor of them.

"Dymoke", said the king, "ride thou thy maddest, and bring here a clergyman."

Dymoke for an instant looked astonished.

"Lady Woodville had taken ill quite suddenly", explained the king, with a grimace of which you would say in these days, "he winked the other eye."

"Your Majesty shall be obeyed", quoth the giant.

Drawing nigh to the casement King Edward heard his doughty messenger go rattling to the highway; then sat he down and thought. He was doing something that would have a terrible significance to himself as king of England. Scan Future's dark vista as he would, no peaceful way for his escape presented. Warwick's wrath some day must be encountered; perhaps quite soon, for excuses would have to be given for deferring marriage with Bona of Savoy. Then there was his brother George, whom he had created so unwillingly Duke of Clarence at the request of Dick. George awaited but some chance to turn traitor to his brother Ned.

"They shall not know!"

King Edward thumped the cushions with his fist.

There are times when even a king can make an ass of himself, Sire Brains.

"For my part this secret shall be kept", soliloquized King Edward; "if my queen loves me truly, she also will keep it."

As is generally so with lovers, King Edward thought not of his future mother-in-law—the ambitious Lady Woodville.

Dymoke smiled grimly, as his big cream-colored stallion bore him clinking clanking through the night.

"War!" he muttered; "it means war—war—war—Warwick."

Chuckling long and deeply, he dug his spurs afresh into his horse. They fairly flew. Yellow Ajax was a speeder, in spite of his enormous size and his heavy master on his back.

Not much beyond an hour had flown before Dymoke ushered a trembling priest in to the presence of the king. Dymoke had frightened the cleric nigh to death with his blustering ways.

"Be discreet, Your Majesty. I espied the Duke of Clarence in the town beyond", whispered Dymoke to the king.

King Edward frowned and mused.

"We shall see that this cleric does not go back tonight", he said.

At this moment the door through which Elizabeth had earlier departed was pushed awide to admit the Lady Woodville, the Lady Grey and two gentlemen who escorted them. King Edward was surprised, and looked enquiry at so many arrivals.

Lady Woodville spoke:

"Witnesses, Your Majesty."

Lady Grey beamed on the king; his majesty succumbed, though groaning inwardly.

"Young Dymoke was all the witness we required, my dearest", he faintly remonstrated.

"Our secret will be safe with my father and my brother, surely, Your Majesty", pouted Lady Grey.

"Well, well", said the king.

Without much ado the ceremony was performed. Elizabeth became the wife of Edward Fourth of England.

The reverend father was not permitted to depart, for peradventure he might fall in with the Duke of Clarence, and although he was sworn to secresy yet might the wily George worm out enough to satisfy himself of what had happened.

Hilarity was rampant at Castle Grafton that night, led on by the big boyish Dymoke; even the cleric rolled intoxicated upon the floor.

King Edward stayed until late next day with his queen; night had fallen when His Majesty and Dymoke betook themselves from Grafton Castle by a woodland route.

The priest had departed several hours earlier in the day, jogging dolefully along, his head throbbing fit to burst at every footfall of his pudgy nag. No necessity for the landlord at the first inn to exhort the suffering churchman to enter; his thirst was appalling and must be appeased; as well must his conscience be drowned to smother its twingings of the night's debauch; so he dismounted with alacrity before the astute host had time to say a word.

Inside was the Duke of Clarence.

"Ha, my worthy cure, thou lookest weary", was his exclamatory welcome to the prelate. "Only that you are a holy son of the Church, I should guess that you had been drinking too much wine. What is the matter? You look wild".

"Thirsty, thirsty, Your Royal Highness; that is all. Landlord, bring me some ale".

"Tut, tut! You don't want ale, Reverend Sir", interjected Clarence. "Fetch wine here, landlord".

"No, no, Your Royal Highness; I touch it not outside the sacrament!"

So protested the priest, his palms toward the Duke

as if to ward off the evil; but the Duke of Clarence merely laughed, and said, with a just-appearing sneer.

"A little for thy stomach's sake."

"Very well; ah, very well", assented the friar, as though reluctant; "give me one little glass."

This was but the starter of an avalanche of thirst which overwhelmed the priest and had to be appeased. Clarence, born an intriguer, contrived to keep quite sober. Soon was the cleric rollicking drunk once more. So much noise did he make that the Duke and he were compelled perforce to retire to an inner room, whence a sound was never known to emanate.

"Tell me of what happened yesternight at Castle Grafton", suddenly the Duke insinuated.

"No—hic—no, your Royal Highness; that is a secret of the King".

"Yes, yes, you true fellow; but am I not a brother of the King, and love him as the apple of mine eye?"

"Ver' true, ver' true; but he do n' want me t' tell t' he married t' Lady Grey, y'see, your Highness, beg pa'-d'n, mean Royal Highness. Y' know I could n'—hic—break faith wi' t' King or——"

"Never mind then, Father. I shall not press you. You are a good fellow. Drink your wine."

With the Cleric asleep beneath the iun table, the Duke of Clarence rode away, black thoughts against his brother the King fomenting in his brain.

"A secret marriage, hey? O me! O me! Ho, ho; he, he", the Duke went giggling to himself. "I'll see that Warwick knows this. That will alienate his Earlship from the King, bless his soul. George, my boy, you may yet be king your noble self. Ho, ho! What a fool that priest is! I shall send a post to Warwick in an hour. No, by the Virgin, I shall go myself. This is an important venture. To the middle of the next shire is not a quarter of a hundred miles".

In spite of rapid riding, the machicolated towers and battlemented walls of Warwick Castle were nearly indiscernible in the dusk by the time the Duke of Clar-

ence was pounding at the gate.

Bing! Bang! Bung! His blows reverberated for the third attack. Then:

"Ho, there, without! What noise is this?" demanded a stentorian voice across the parapet.

"Admit the Duke of Clarence!"

Delay sufficiently important intervened, then the rattling of chains and the thumping of bolts back preluded the entrance of the Duke. Advancing to meet his Royal Highness came the Earl of Warwick, whose strong features proclaimed the man of iron nerve and will, with colossal mentality behind his opinionistic eyes. Their purport at present was enquiry. He was studying the face of Clarence.

"What news, friend Clarence?"

The Duke pulled his sleeve, and they withdrew together into a secluded apartment. They became seated and Clarence kicked the rushes on the floor for a moment, then, subitaneously darting his ophidian gaze toward Earl Warwick:

"King Edward is married", he said.

Warwick's face became a dusky crimson; it grew paler, paler, paler, until not a drop of blood seemed coursing through his veins.

"I predicted it", said Clarence.

Warwick's expression of countenance exhibited unbelief and disappointment struggling for the mastery.

"Before God, Duke, do you swear that it is true the king is married?"

"Yea, I do", chanted Clarence.

"I was not consulted", went on Warwick; "and he was my Edward. On my soul I love that boy. Ye gods! Bona of Savoy—but tell me whom?"

"Elizabeth Woodville, the widow of Sir John Grey, that dastard Lancastrian who was killed in the second battle of Saint Alban's——"

"Say it not", put in Warwick angrily.

"Aye but the bitter truth must out; she has played her cards quite well. Edward married her last night at

Grafton, secretly."

"How know you this?"

"Priestly bibulosity; Bacchus really."

"Duke, you are a devil; a tempter of the Church; and look and dress so sanctimoniously. One would mistake thee for a monk."

Clarence laughed his Satan's chuckle.

"I shall have the king disclaim her", said Warwick, after musing. "You can arrange with the priest; that is in your line. Were there any other witnesses?"

"Perchance", and Clarence shook his head.

"I must see King Edward immediately", groaned Warwick. "There shall never be a proclamation of this Woodville queen. It would kill the Nevilles."

"Especially the king-making Neville", covertly sneered the Duke.

"A king-maker is useful", growled Warwick; "yourself would crave to have me laboring at that trade for Clarence."

"Which yourself would only do for benefit to you", retorted his royal highness the Duke, Prince George.

"Enough!" cried Warwick; "I shall see King Edward. Duke, did you ply the spy; or was your knowledge accidental?"

"As you will. King Edward makes no confidant of me; young Richard gets his secrets, forsooth, notwithstanding that I am more advanced in years and much matured in judgment."

"Dick is a faithful boy", quoth Warwick.

"Which infers that I am not."

"I am not so sure of your fidelity to the king", and Warwick winked.

"Plainly spoken, Earl; we'll let it go at that."

"You rode alone to Grafton, no doubt", went on the Earl, "to aid the king, peradventure he might have fallen foul of some murdering Woodvilles or footpads?"

"That was it, Earl".

"Probably you had no thought of assassinating Ed-

ward, thus removing the one obstacle to your ascending of the throne?"

"None; I swear it."

"Of course you could have blamed it on the Lancastrians; did you think of that, good pious Duke?"

"Bagh!" Clarence grunted.

"Had you slain him, I should have felt called upon to relieve thy spirit from the cumber of the flesh, and so fetch Richard by two steps to the English throne."

So the Duke of Clarence went out from the great Earl of Warwick.

Backboneless and a coward, Clarence continually brooded on how he might come to the throne. Could he but foment trouble vast enough through his secret marriage, Edward might be ousted from the throne on the pretence that he was a favorer of the Lancastrians with imbecile Henry VI. and Prince Edward, the latter then in exile with his mother, Margaret of Anjou. If they were not fit rulers, then was not Edward Fourth.

With this reasoning, by the time that Clarence had returned to Westminster he had determined that he would precede the Earl of Warwick and confront King Edward with his knowledge of the secret marriage.

King Edward and his beloved Richard were alone together. Clarence greeted both his brothers icily. How lucky, thought he, that the Duke of Gloucester would also be a listener to a revelation of the perfidy of the king. Mayhap he might sow the seeds of alienation between Richard and Edward, even though he did not consider that Richard had much power.

"Permit me to felicitate the king," said Clarence, "on his recent marriage with the Lady Grey, the Woodville belle."

And the Duke of Clarence bowed until his chin but scathed the floor.

Both the king and Richard turned pale—Edward with dread that his secret had been discovered; Richard with fear that Clarence spoke the truth.

Richard of Gloucester was to astute, boy though he was, not to fathom the design of Clarence. There and

then he registered a mental vow to stand by Edward at whatever inconvenience to himself, just to off-set his brother George's treachery.

"This is more of his serpent work," said Richard.

"I would ask the king," proceeded Clarence, ignoring Richard, "if he intends to proclaim the Lady Grey his queen?"

"The king's command is that the Duke of Clarence shall leave his presence," quoth his majesty.

Which forthwith the Duke did, most ceremoniously.

"Richard of Gloucester," pursued His Majesty, "wherever George has learned my secret God knows; but—I am married to Elizabeth Woodville."

Richard was silent; but his countenance spoke volumes.

"Gloucester," said the king, "for what do you fear; I see it in your gaze, my brother?"

"Not for yourself, King Ned; you have pleased yourself, and have only yourself to blame, if there is blame. From that view you have done right; but there are other views. This land of England now must overrun with plebeian Lancastrians; the Lady Grey is not of royal blood."

"We shall make her royal, Richard."

"Oh, aye; and all her relations as well. They'll importune your life away, I fear, King Ned."

"Dread not, my brother Gloucester; I be not of the sort that let their troubles kill them."

Gloucester turned to the casement, and looked out thoughtfully. Suddenly:

"Here comes the Earl of Warwick," he said.

The powerful Earl's greeting to the king and Richard was affable to a high degree.

"How now?" quoth Edward.

"Business, Your Majesty; merely a little business, which I hope Your Majesty shall deal with, as it concerns yourself immediately."

King Edward smiled; he liked the Earl.

"This document," proceeded Warwick; "your Majesty's marriage contract with sweet Bona of Savoy.

It but awaits the royal sanction and ratification to be brought before Your Majesty's sage councillors. To-morrow has been set for the convening of the cabinet."

King Edward moved uneasily; he was in awe of Warwick.

Gloucester felt the cold perspiration dripping from his spine at the thought of his brother's entangling predicament.

"Warwick," began King Edward, "you have always befriended me and mine; I shall not equivocate. I am married."

"That heard I from the restless Duke of Clarence, Your Majesty; but I believed it not."

"Alas, it is true."

"Then you do well to say 'alas'. I am torn at the heart to think Your Majesty has acted so inconsequently. You have called me friend; you have not treated me as such. Had I not some right to have your confidence?"

"Morally, you had, Earl Warwick."

"Which means legally I had not, eh, Your Majesty?"

"If so thou will't."

"Just that; but here I make a proposition—disclaim this marriage with the Lady Grey."

"That cannot be."

"Why so, Your Majesty?"

"There are witnesses."

"How many?"

"Five"

"Their names?"

"Sir Richard Woodville, Anthony Woodville, Lady Woodville, Dymoke and the priest."

"Leave this to me, King Edward, and all will be well. My brother, whom Your Majesty has promised to recommend to the archbishopric of York, can have your marriage annuled; his influence with the Head of the Church is somewhat. Dymoke is all right; demons could not tear the secret from him. Thy brother George will attend to the priest at my direction. As for the Woodvilles—phut! Let us call them liars, and slay the male portion of them if they object; far better

citizens have been butchered already in these Wars of Roses. Lady Grey and her estimable mother may be given an asylum somewhere; yet I fear me the mother will talk too much. I could warrant she has already told every dame within her hearing of the good fortune of her daughter."

Which was the fact.

King Edward chewed his rather downy moustache in deliberation; Richard of Gloucester regarded his regal brother anxiously; the Earl of Warwick patiently awaited, a self-satisfied smile in his eyes, as though he considered himself the man who had shown a seasonable and a reasonable escape from a troublesome dilemma.

At length spoke the king. Said he:

"This procedure would give much pain to Lady Grey and Lady Woodville, not to mention other connections of their family."

"Well, what of that?" enquired the Earl, testily. "Are they not Lancastrians, and bitter enemies of the king, Your Majesty? What their arms cannot procure, methinks they may get hold of it by strategy."

"That sneer, Earl of Warwick, ill becomes thee," reproached King Edward. "Thou couldst not have thus addressed King Henry Sixth; thou art a sophist, Earl."

"Pah! Too much praying made King Henry mad; beside the ills piled on him by his French wife of intellect. Take warning, King Edward, from that monarch's state."

"Methinks you do most foul to thus deride the French Margaret, Earl. Wist I not that it was but now you espoused for me the cause of Bona of Savoy, who is the sister of the queen of the king of France?"

"There is French and there is French; Bona is not Margaret of Anjou; nor is Margaret Bona of Savoy."

"Cleverly put, Earl Warwick. Then there can a good thing come out of Nazareth?"

"Ha, ha; His Majesty becomes quite scriptural; by-and-bye he sall say that this secret marriage was appointed of the Lord, forsooth."

"Blasphemy, Earl, blasphemy", cried the king in righteous anger. "I do not act as a prater or a maker of prayers; but, permit me to remark that the scripture directs a forgiving of your enemies, not an extermination."

"Verily, verily, things are coming to pass when we hear King Edward turning into the hypocritical footsteps of the Duke of Clarence!"

"Damn!" ejaculated the king.

The Earl of Warwick bowed.

"That word is neither royal nor polite", said he.

"Mention not the Duke of Clarence to me", quoth the king.

"Agreed", said Warwick. "This vein of sanctimosity, this forgiving of your enemies, King Edward, hath but arisen since Your Majesty met the Lady Grey. Think of the proposition I have made; remember also that the Earl of Warwick is aggrieved, which means the aggrieving of his numerous myrmidons. Adieu, King Edward; adieu, Duke Gloucester, and counsel thou His Majesty aright."

Stately bowing, the Earl departed.

"Brother Dick", began the king, "I feel like a man without a soul of his own; as if the one I have belonged to these 'great' men of England, whose province it seems to be to rule the kingdom and the king. What shall I do?"

"Your Majesty should not require to ask a boy like myself such a question."

"As I have often said, Dick, you are young in years but old in brains. You have good judgment."

"Nay, that is not it; as a metaphysician, King Ned, you are not a success. This wonderful condition of intellect which you seem to think I enjoy is merely the result of having a strong will-power to curb my inclinations. Yourself, King Ned, are just as wise as I, but you let your susceptibilities dwarf your mental powers. You fear to offend where you should not; a failing generally termed good-heartedness."

"You do yourself injustice, Dick; you are not so cold a calculator as might be inferred from your own diagnosis of your state; but I admit I am not firm enough in will. In this matter I crave your advice; not binding myself to follow it of course."

"What action would you prefer, King Ned?"

"To proclaim my wife queen."

"A laudable inclination,as becomes a man."

"Who, as you say, should be subordinated to a king?"

"Yes; from the point of consideration taken by our statesmen", said Gloucester.

"And from your own vantage?"

"I am not a king."

"Suppose yourself one."

"All right, I am a king."

"Put yourself in my predicament."

"I am in it."

"What will you do?"

"Use my own power; tell all objectors to go to the devil; proclaim my wife my queen."

"Bravo! Richard, so shall I."

"What about the Lancastrians, King Ned?"

"They may go to the devil; I do not marry all of them."

Gloucester laughed, and:

"I hope not", he said.

"Tomorrow, then", spoke Edward, "I shall go before the Council and inform them of my wedding; at the same time commanding that steps be taken to have Elizabeth proclaimed queen with due ceremony."

"That is a brave decision, King Ned; it entails much. Not only will you raise Lady Grey to this most eminent position; you shall have to ennoble all her relatives; in fact, create a new horde of peers to harass the old barons. These noblemen of long standing are bound to rebel, through excess of jealousy. War to the knife, I fear me, must result; but I stand by you, brother Ned, while your course is honorable."

There was much astonishment among the nobles when King Edward announced his marriage to his Council. Disgust was visible on the face of the Duke of Clarence at this turn of events, for he had calculated to hold a high trump card in the secret of which he had become possessed. Anger was aroused in the bosom of the Earl of Warwick; he remonstrated bitterly with His Majesty. Not the least pain was he at to hide his opinions; so the primary germs of mistrust were sprouted, which soon bourgeoned into alienation and enmity, between the powerful Earl and the young king, for whom he had contributed much energy to place upon the throne.

Seeing how King Edward was exhibiting firmness, George Neville concluded in his innate shrewdness that his best policy was to confirm His Majesty in his action. He refused to even consider the annuling of the marriage, and went so far as to upbraid the great Earl. Edward felt mollified and flattered; nor was he long before he had procured for the far seeing prelate the coveted title of the Archbishop of York, as a reward for his kind words.

This move contributed to widen the breach between the king and Warwick, who was further incensed that Edward should honor his brother for attacking him.

"Me! Myself! I!" ejaculated the Earl.

Not immediately did the outbreak occur, but the harmony and confidence which had existed between the monarch and his most powerful subject came to an end.

Orders were issued for the coronation of the queen, which was performed with exceeding pomp. All the populace were much impressed with the beauty of this lady for whom King Edward had dared so much, so that enthusiasm ran high, to the further chagrin of the Earl of Warwick.

"How dared he?" he would mutter.

In honor of the event King Edward created thirty-eight knights of the bath, four of whom were chosen from among the citizens of London. All was "merry as

a marriage bell" ought to be; but soon the clouds began to hover and lower. As Richard had predicted, the elevation of the queen meant the exaltation of her family and connections. First came the queen's father. Herself broached it to His Majesty.

"It seems so commonplace to have my father but plain Sir Richard Woodville," she sighed.

"Does it, sweetheart. Truth to tell, any man who is father to such crystallized rapture ought to at least be made an earl", quoth Edward. "He shall be called the Earl Rivers, and I shall appoint him Treasurer and Constable of England."

"Ah-h, you love; and brother Anthony?"

"One at a time, my dearest; we shall arrange for everyone."

So King Edward deputed the Duke of Gloucester to attend to the ennobling process, and bring the candidates before his attention—once more wormwood and gall to the Earl of Warwick. Not that the Earl desired the commission, but because he hated parvenu nobles on general principles—he and all his associates in the ranks of the ancient peers and nobles of the realm.

"I cannot understand, Richard", said the Earl to Gloucester; "why yourself should abet King Edward in this work of creating spurious nobility; enough that he married a plebeian. This does dishonor to the remembrances of your noble mother, Duke. Was not Cecily Neville the daughter of the Earl of Westmoreland?"

"Aey, Earl; and related to your noble self; but methinks she bequeathed to King Edward more manhood than agrees with the Earl of Warwick."

"Fie, Richard; no such thought have I ever uttered. What distracts me is this new nobility craze which you have fallen in with."

"I' faith, I love it not", quoth Richard; "but even the most ancient lineage must have a start. Let these begin today, in one thousand years from now, or a good deal less, there shall be slight difference in the ancientness of either. Leave this to me; there is much fiendish

delight in these matches I am making. Ha, here comes your reverend brother, the new Archbishop of York."

"How fare thee, Archbishop?"

"Well, Your Royal Highness; good morrow to you brother Warwick; you seem ill at ease."

"Bah!" cried the Earl. "Disgust is my malady. These upstart nobles!"

"Ho, ho, yes; how much of the programme, Gloucester, has been completed?"

Richard solemnly began to digitize:

"Sir Richard Woodville has become Earl Rivers and Treasurer and Constable of England"——

"Curse him!" interjected Warwick.

"Brother!" expostulated the archbishop.

"Anthony Woodville," pursued Richard, "has been married to the daughter of the late Lord Scales, whose title and estates have been conferred upon him. Those five sisters of the queen have been married to young noblemen all; and now comes the consummating work, which Your Grace will perform for the king—that young brother of the queen who has not yet attained majority is to marry the wealthy dowager-duchess of Norfolk. Let me see; yes, just four times his age. She is past eighty, Your Grace."

"Great God! Maritagium diabolicum!" ejaculated the archbishop.

Richard and Warwick laughed derisively, while the prelate looked shocked and aghast. Nevertheless, he did the king's request subsequently.

Gloucester hoped that this maritagium diabolicum would end the shower of "honors"; but not so. King Edward sent for him, and:

"Richard", quoth he, a light of exultation coming in his eyes," the Earl of Warwick has asked me to prevail upon the Duke of Exeter to bestow the hand of His Grace's daughter and heiress, who is also our niece, as you know, upon the nephew of the Earl of Warwick."

"Yes, Your Majesty," said Richard.

"I shall not," went on the king"; she has been

promised to the son begat of the queen's former marriage. The wedding comes off shortly."

"Another blow in the face for the Earl of Warwick."

So went it on; other and more distant connections of this fortunate Woodville family were provided for by marriages, gifts and offices. Cause enough was there for the origin of the feud which arose between the Nevilles and the Woodvilles. At heart the Archbishop of York was with his brothers, the Earl of Warwick and the Earl of Northumberland. Notwithstanding that King Eward suspected this, he created the archbishop Chancellor of the Kingdom, to the chagrin of the new queen and her relatives. Why, even the Earl of Northumberland was enjoying the title and forfeited estates of the Percys.

Of the three brothers there was no doubt that the Earl of Warwick was the most influential; and, as you must know, he had up to this time been the king's chief adviser and most skilful general.

Jealous of the power of the three Nevilles, the Woodvilles—queen, father, mother, brothers, sisters and other relations—combined to foment the growing dislike between King Edward and the dreaded trio. Every little tale was borne carefully to His Majesty, and insinuations were made, until finally innuendo was dropped and Earl Rivers joined with the queen to consummate the rupture.

Warwick had been fuming over some of King Edward's actions; especially was he chagrined at the bilking of his aims with regard to the marriage of his nephew with the king's niece; nor was the great Earl averse to speaking strongly on these matters.

Earl Rivers was present with the queen when King Edward in anger was commenting on the unseemly language of the Earl of Warwick and the hypocrisy of the Archbishop of York.

"Your Majesty should not permit it," said Earl Rivers, rising to join the king in a walk of agitation up

and down the apartment.

"Of a truth, you should not, Edward," commented the queen, watching the monarch's flashing glances.

"They are old friends of our family," said Edward; "I owe the Earl of Warwick much."

"Not so much as to have to continually submit to his tutelage," ejaculated Earl Rivers fervently. "Your Majesty has been held at it too long already; and for what?"

King Edward shook his head.

"Merely to serve the ends of the Nevilles," put in Earl Rivers with emphasis. "Your Majesty will see that as soon as they fear that their ambitions are to be thwarted they will turn and rend their benefactor."

King Edward nodded his chin against his cravat, and finally ejaculated:

"I shall put and keep them in their proper places as subjects; there can be but one king; which king is not the Earl of Warwick!"

Later the Duke of Gloucester was commissioned to inform the Earl of Warwick of the king's displeasure.

Forthwith there sprang up a solider collusion between the Nevilles and that tricky intriguer, the Duke of Clarence. In high dudgeon Warwick and Clarence started for France, that favorite rendezvous in those days for all malcontents and fugitives from England, where trouble could be fomented and armies gathered free from the tedium of the watchful eye of England's king. France's king was ever ready to abet anything which foreshadowed prestige for himself or strife in hated England.

"Next year," quoth Warwick to the Duke of Clarence shortly subsequent to their arrival in France, "will begin the seventies, and here we are, five years after that ghastly marriage of King Edward, little better than exiles."

Clarence nodded and ruminated.

"I have a proposal to make," went on the Earl.

"You have?"

"As you know, Duke, King Edward has as yet no son by Elizabeth Woodville. We want no woman to rule in England whilst good men of royal blood remain ungraved. Yourself, my dear Duke, are the next in succession to the throne; what is to hinder your getting it?"

"Much," said the Duke laconically.

"Pah!" exclaimed Warwick, snapping his fingers; "there is not even that to prevent it."

"Clarence chuckled satirically."

"Hark", continued the Earl! "You and I have power enough to raise rebellion; we can muster nearly an army of men between us."

"Yes."

"On one condition shall I co-operate with you," pursued the Earl of Warwick."

"That is?"

"Marry my daughter, Duke."

Clarence once more emitted that diabolical chuckle without disarranging a lineament of his face.

"What about informing my brother, the king, and requesting his consent to this procedure?" Clarence enquired.

"Are you, perforce, to have permission from the king to do what I—I, the Earl of Warwick, the King-Maker—proclaim you may? My daughter is mine; not King Edward's."

"No, Your Majesty the King-Maker," said the Duke of Clarence mockingly; "I am not compelled to ask his will; but were I to adopt that course it might enamor him of his dutiful brother George once more."

"And enwrath me?" sententiously growled the Earl. "Look here, Duke, I have made kings before; I can still do so; do you choose to be my next material?"

"To be made a puppet; to be set up; to be knocked down; at your Majesty the King-Maker's pleasure," quoth the Duke.

"As my son-in-law you would be sure of my continued good-will; you see, eventually the rulers would

trace their lineage to me."

"Verily, thou art a man of great parts," remarked the Duke of Clarence with sarcasm. "I agree. Your daughter shall become the Duchess of Clarence, in spite of the anger of my kingly brother. It remains for her powerful father to advance her to the position of the queen of the king."

There was a knocking at the door; a message for the Duke, from Richard of Gloucester, recounting that an insurrection had occurred in Yorkshire.

Long had the Hospital of St. Leonard's claimed the right to levy a thrave, in some parts signifying twelve and in others twenty-four sheaves, of corn from every ploughland in the country.

"This Robin of Redesdale has done nobly," quoth the Duke of Clarence; "but Gloucester informs me that his head has fallen. He led a rebellion in Yorkshire against the government because of the exactions of the Hospital of St. Leonard's. He had a good army, too—over fifteen thousand men. What a pity they had no better weapons than pitch-forks, pikes and sickles."

"Who marched against this insurgent and his rabble?" asked the Earl.

"Montacute, Earl of Northumberland; he soon gained a victory and executed Robin."

"Who's cause was just," commented Warwick. "There is a strong allegation that these extorted thraves were not, as originally designed, used for the relief of the poor; they were cooly appropriated for the benefit of the beastly warden and his fellows."

The Duke of Clarence emitted his horrid chuckle again.

"We can turn this to advantage," said he; "it shows how the wind blows, Earl."

"That does it," agreed the Earl. "Now is the time; let us strike while the iron gleams. My nephew and my cousin-german can take the initiative; we shall remain here for a little while."

So everything was arranged. The Duke of Clar-

ence married the Earl of Warwick's daughter at Calais; then cabals and intrigues were the order of the day, to put the Duke of Clarence on the throne of England. Richard of Gloucester was righteously angry with his brother George for the cool and negative reply he sent to Richard's request to return to England and strengthen the hands of King Edward. He also had intimated that His Majesty required the return of the Earl of Warwick; but the great Warwick had no intention of going back at that time.

"Have I not," said he to the Duke of Clarence, "again and again patched up a peace with the king, only to be each time fresh affronted? His Majesty and myself have made friends and have quarrelled once too often. The die is cast; I am against King Edward."

Warwick succeeded well; weak minded Clarence abetted him in everything. Insurrection of a more widespread and serious character broke out in England, with which, for a certainty, the nephew and the cousin-german of the Earl of Warwick were prominently identified. "Bills of Articles" were issued by the insurgents, which complained that King Edward had debased the coin; had raised money by new and grievous impositions, through forced loans and by heavy fines consequent upon vexatious prosecutions. These extortions within only the last year had amounted to over two hundred thousand marks. Where was the need for such procedure, the Bills of Articles enquired, while King Edward possessed the livelihood of the English crown; of the principality of Wales; of the duchies of Lancaster, Cornwall and York; of the Earldoms of Chester and March; also of the Lordship of Ireland?

"King Ned," said Gloucester, "you have given into your enemies' hands a keen-cutting weapon through your profligate gratification of desire to the dethronement of your will."

"None regrets that more than myself," quoth the king.

"Then rouse yourself, my royal brother; shake off

your unkingly indolence and become your former valiant self. Teach these Nevilles and our spiteful Clarence a salutary lesson."

"What further says that insurrectionary document?" asked Edward.

"It formulates excuses for Your Majesty's bitter course; which shows you have but to act to regain the loving allegiance of your estranged people."

"Let us hear the excuses."

"It explains that your grievous modes of extorting money are the necessary result of being surrounded by seductious persons, who may abuse your generosity to enrich themselves whilst impoverishing your Majesty."

"Pray, whom are these seductious persons?"

"They are set forth as being the queen's father, her step-mother, her brother, the Lord Audeley, Sir John Fogg, Treasurer of the household, and Herbert and Stafford, the latter two of whom Your Majesty has but created Earls of Pembroke and Devon."

"Yes, I see" said Edward; "those names would appear to have been inserted at the instigation of some malicious and jealous noblemen—per chance Warwick, or the Archbishop of York, or the Duke of Clarence."

Richard performed a deprecatory motion with his hand.

"Have they further to say?" queried King Edward.

"They have. They set forth that it is therefore the humble petition of your Majesty's faithful commons that you will call around yourself the lords of your blood and the nobles of the realm and with their advice inflict on these seductious persons the punishment which they deserve."

"That will do," said His Majesty; "my sword I have buckled on; let us proceed to Fotheringay. That castle of your birth, Richard, is a strong one."

Not very long did the forces of the king and Gloucester remain at Fotheringay before they advanced to Newark. Along the line of march no augmentation of the troops took place. On the contrary, Edward be-

came somewhat alarmed at the open signs of disaffection. Something must be done. Richard and his majesty might be brave enough, but they could do nothing without men; so the king resolved to write to Warwick, to the Archbishop of York and to his brother the Duke of Clarence with his own hand, requesting that they hasten to join him at Nottingham with the same retinues which usually attended them in times of peace. In the note to the Earl of Warwick the king added significant words:

"We do not believe," he wrote, "that you should be of any such disposition toward us as the rumor here runneth, considering the trust and affection we bear you. And, cousin, we think but you shall be to us welcome."

Nevertheless there was no intention on the part of those noblemen to abandon the cause for which they had fomented the insurrection in the north; acting otherwise, they summoned all their friends in Kent and the neighboring counties to meet them on the next Sunday at Canterbury, avowing that their purpose was to proceed in a company to the king and lay before His Majesty the petitions of the Commons.

"That is a ruse," remarked the Duke of Gloucester to King Edward.

"I believe it, Dick," said the king. "We have now but one source of hope."

"What is that?" quoth Gloucester.

"The speedy arrival of the Earls of Pembroke and Devon."

"A broken reed," said Richard; which statement proved correct.

Not long afterward Dymoke came riding on his ponderous horse.

"What news?" cried King Edward, in anxious interest.

"Your Majesty," began Dymoke," the news is ill. The Earl of Pembroke was hastening with nearly ten thousand Welshmen to the aid of Your Majesty; the Earl of Devon was following with a numerous body of

archers whom he had collected among the retainers of his family. They entered Banbury, Your Majesty, together, and quarrelled about their quarters."

"Blockheads!" exclaimed the king.

Dymoke continued:

"The Earl of Pembroke left the Earl of Devon in possession and marched inward to Edgecote. Lord Fitzhugh was already in that neighborhood with the insurgents, and his forces fell upon the Welshmen like an avalanche atop a Tyrolean village."

King Edward made a gesture of despair; Gloucester stood stolid and pale as a statue.

"Separated from their friends; without archers; what could the Welshmen do?" queried Dymoke. "It was an easy victory for the multitude of their enemies; two thousand courageous Welshmen lie dead on the battle-field!"

"Where is Pembroke?" asked the king, rather ruefully.

"He and his brother were taken prisoners and immediately killed."

"Our hopes are extinguished," remarked his majesty with bitterness. "We can find no man willing to draw the sword for us!"

To add to the torment of the king, the troops whom he had arrayed slipped away from their colors, and the favorites of His Majesty had to seek safety in hiding. Mostly was this in vain. Earl Rivers and his son were discovered in the forest of Dean, the Earl of Devon was taken at Bridgewater. All three were beheaded, ostensibly because their names had appeared in the list appended to the petition of "the King's true subjects"; really because the again all-powerful Warwick had ordered their execution, pleased to think he could thus be rid of three of those obnoxious parvenus in the English nobility.

It was with overwhelming bombast and trumpeting that the King-Maker waited upon his Majesty. King Edward, to his chagrin and mortification, was now vir-

tually a prisoner in the hands of the Nevilles.

"We want a general pardon for all concerned in the late insurrection, if such it may be called," demanded Warwick.

On the advice of Gloucester the king granted this; also on Richard's recommendation a reconciliation was patched up between Edward and Clarence and the Earl of Warwick.

"For," intimated Gloucester, "we must be dip'omatic, brother King Ned. Await our chance. When the time comes you shall be rid of this Warwick who has become so pestilent. Lacking that warring demon Warwick, Clarence can do nothing; we need have no fear of him."

Storm of vaster fury verily was brewing beneath this deceitful calm on the surface. Richard trusted neither Warwick nor the Duke of Clarence; nor their vows of undying fealty to the king. Warwick was well watched by Gloucester. His vigilance went not unrewarded.

Richard discovered that the Earl of Warwick and the Duke of Clarence were planning another outbreak in Lincolnshire, and secretly notified King Edward to march his troops to Erpingham, in Rutlandshire. Here the main body of Warwick's forces were mustering, and before the great Earl could strike his insurgents were fallen upon by the royal army and utterly routed. This occurred on March 12th, 1470.

Without delay King Edward issued a proclamation requiring the Nevilles and the Duke of Clarence and others who had been connected with the outbreak to come and justify themselves, or submit to the royal mercy within two weeks. Should this not be done, then they were to be declared traitors and outlawed. As neither the king nor Warwick would trust the promises of the other, not even when made under most solemn oaths, of course there was no surrender.

Warwick and the Duke of Clarence attempted to corrupt the fidelity of Lord Stanley, but that cunning

nobleman deemed the time inauspicious to join forces against the ruling monarch; so, after some difficulty, Warwick and Clarence reached the northern coast and sailed to France, where they were cordially welcomed once more by that crafty sovereign, King Louis Eleventh.

That monarch, unrivalled for diplomatic cunning, considered the moment opportune to detach himself from King Edward and the Yorkists. Playing his cards well, he effected, marvellous to relate, a reconciliation between those sworn foes, Warwick and Margaret of Anjou, each of whom had compassed the death of the other's nearest and dearest friends.

Margaret, you will remember, was the daughter of Rene, the titular monarch of Naples and Jerusalem; and she had been married to Henry Sixth of England in the year 1445, on April the 22nd.

This beauty of Anjou was responsible for the death of Warwick's father and brother. On the other hand, Warwick had not only torn the English crown from the head of her husband, but had been chiefly instrumental in causing Margaret's banishment and sufferings.

In spite of all, these fell antagonists agreed to act in unison, having been drawn together by self-interested motives; they were united to the undoing of one who had become equally to both obnoxious—King Edward.

I relate all these circumstances that you may the more fully realize the sort of conditions which surrounded the Duke of Gloucester at this time of his life.

Not a word of all the intriguing did the Earl of Warwick whisper to the Duke of Clarence, but that wily individual intuitively became cognizant that there was double-dealing going on; nor did many days elapse before the duke succeeded in finding confirmation of his fears. He took the Earl of Warwick to task and upbraided him with inconstancy.

"Inconstant!" exclaimed the Earl, with subsultive

movement of his heavy eyebrows.

"You have made terms with Margaret of Anjou; you have agreed to restore Heny Sixth to the throne, if you get the assistance of Louis of France, Margaret and the Lancastrians."

Warwick chuckled.

"Duke, you are cute; the hates of Margaret and I have indeed swollen with such volume lately that now their retaining banks have been overflowed, and both streams, amalgamated, rush on as one, of mighty current, destined to sweep the usurping Edward and his friends adown the precipice of Hades. But, be not downhearted, Duke," cheered the Earl; "Margaret of Anjou has agreed that the administration of the government shall be vested in you and I."

"What about the young Prince Edward?"

"Margaret's son will marry my daughter a week from to-morrow," said Warwick, watching Clarence narrowly, his mobile face grown stern.

"So now you have three strings to your bow, King-Maker," sneered Clarence. "Your son, the Duke of Northumberland, is affianced to the daughter of King Edward; one of your daughters is already my wife, and another of your daughters is to become married to the heir of the House of Lancaster! Shrewd as ever."

Warwick smiled complacently.

"Poor consolation for me," continued the Duke, "who am made your miserable tool."

"Never mind," joked Warwick, "if the young Prince Edward should die without issue you shall be declared heir-apparent to the English throne."

Clarence laughed harshly.

King Edward sent an emissary to appeal to the brotherly affection of Clarence, and inviting him to return to England, where full pardon would be granted to him and increased rewards and honors would be bestowed upon him. Edward's real purpose was to divide the Duke of Clarence from Warwick, and have this weak intriguing brother under his eye.

"Tell the king I shall detach myself from this traitor Warwick with all speed," he directed the messenger.

But before the Duke of Clarence could act, the Earl of Warwick had completed his designs, and returned to England almost simultaneously with the royal messenger. Clarence went with the Earl.

King Edward and the Duke of Gloucester were in the north of England with their troops quelling an uprising which had taken place under the leadership of the new nephew of Warwick.

Word came to them.

"Back to Portsmouth with all speed!" was the cry, the intensity of the tone showing how earnest it was.

Warwick was landing a big force there unopposed.

They moved too late. Warwick check-mated them. He marched inward, his name in itself a tower of strength and a rallying-point for the many disaffected spirits of the realm. His friends and numerous retainers trooped to his banners,so that speedily he found himself at the head of an army of sixty-thousand men.

Marching into London unresisted, Warwick proclaimed the imbecile King Henry Sixth once more ruler and released him from the tower. Then he proceeded to the Midland counties to cope with King Edward and Gloucester, the latter ever staunch and true to his troubled and forsaken brother.

Warwick's bold attitude, the numbers who attached themselves to him, the sureness displayed by the old Lancastrian party, with Warwick's rapid movement, all contributed to startle the waverers and helped them quickly to decide that Warwick would be the winner, and was, therefore, the leader they should join.

On the other hand, the king's adherents dwindled appallingly in number while Edward was marching from Doncaster to Nottingham to meet Warwick. One culminating and crushing desertion was that of Warwick's brother, Montacute, who had been deprived of the Earldom of Northumberland in order that the title might be

restored to the Percys, and had taken umbrage thereat because he received instead but the barren title of a Marquisate. He took his revenge by leading off six thousand men from King Edward.

Despair seemed coming on perforce.

King Edward, Richard of Gloucester, Lord Hastings, Anthony Woodville, that favorite brother of Edward's queen, and several other of the friends of the sovereign, and a number of soldiers and archers were occupying a fortified house, to which the sole access was by a bridge over a deep and wide moat. In the neighboring villages the rest of the royal troops were quartered. Dinner had just been served to the king and the noblemen on that eventful day, when they were startled by the sudden entrance of the ever-ready Dymoke.

"Your Majesty," he said, "Montacute hath turned traitor; but now he and some other noblemen are riding through Your Majesty's forces singing out "God bless King Henry!"

"Then our life and dignity hang upon but meagre moments," quoth the king.

"Dignity must be abandoned for a short space," cried the Duke of Gloucester, springing to his feet; "our lives we yet may save to do good service in a future cause."

"Yea, Your Majesty must save your life," conjoined Lord Hastings.

"To that I am agreed," shouted Edward, also becoming active. "Dymoke, get you forth and ascertain which route is best to escape whilst I buckle on my armor. Richard and Hastings, post a battalion of faithful guards at the bridge to resist any sudden assault."

Dymoke rode away.

"I advise Your Majesty to make all possible speed from this," urged Anthony Woodville, not to seem lacking in concern for the king's safety.

Dymoke came thundering back.

"Your Majesty, delay means catastrope," reported the trusty champion. "Your Majesty's treacherous

friends, now becomes enemies, are marching to surround you."

King Edward sprang up; fighting was out of the question. Instantaneous escape was the only safety. His Majesty, Richard of Gloucester and Anthony mounted hurriedly their horses.

One or two words of direction to Lord Hastings to make the best arrangements possible for the few remaining adherents, and away tore the king and his companions toward the nearest sea-port.

"Dymoke, my worthy fellow," quoth Lord Hastings, "I leave you in command here. Men, he is your commander. Go in with Warwick, for therein lies your salvation; but when your time comes be ready to serve again King Edward."

A cheer went up.

"Make enough resistance to these miscreants at the bridge to secure your rights of capitulation, and to give the king time to escape," cried Lord Hastings significantly; then he mounted his steed and flew after his monarch, whom he overtook before he had ridden many miles.

With their retainers they safely reached Lynn, where they found two Dutch ships and an English one about to sail.

Without money in their pockets and with only the clothes in which they had been going to fight, King Edward and his company immediately put off to those vessels. Not one in twenty of the party knew whither they were bound, the one aim being but to leave the shores of England behind before pursuing enemies could come up.

The course of the ships was set for the coast of Holland.

Barely had they sighted the flats of Holland before some other ships hove into view. King Edward and Gloucester were standing on the deck of the English ship, and the captain of the vessel was scrutinizing the oncoming sails.

"Whom the devil can they be?" quoth His Majesty. "They are pursuing us Gloucester."

"They are Easterling vessels, Your Majesty." vouchsafed the skipper.

"Yes, yes, so they are," assented the Duke of Gloucester; "at present warring with both France and England. See, they have crowded on all sail and are bearing down upon us full speed!"

"Those hostile guerillas," quoth Hastings, stepping up, "are expecting bounty. It will not do for this ship to be overhauled.

"Can you outsail them, skipper?" queried Gloucester.

"That I cannot; also, with our few arms resistance is hopeless."

"What do you purpose?" asked the king.

"Our one alternative is but to run ashore."

"Which means peradventure the loss of the ship?"

"Aye, Your Majesty," said the captain.

"You shall be reimbursed three-fold, good mariner."

"I count coins of little value when I serve my king," loyally responded the skipper. "Over yonder lies Alcmaer; I shall strand my ship near there."

Not a word was spoken after this, but every person present registered a resolution to have the courageous captain honored at some future day for his sacrifice.

On sped the vessel toward the shore; on came the pursuing Easterlings. Shallower and more shallow became the water at each plumb-line descent. Down came the canvas on the hostile ships; then were their helms jumed hard aport—there was not enough water for them to follow farther. Not many more leagues intervened until the light-draught ship which bore the royal party struck hard aground.

The Easterlings kept standing off and on, reluctant to foresake their prey.

"They wait for the rising of the tide," said the skipper. "Then they will attack us."

"Humph!" ejaculated King Edward.

His Majesty noticed that the receding tide had left by this time the vessel they were aboard of almost dry, and:

"We might walk ashore," he said.

"Dangerous quick-sand traps beset the footsteps there," explained the skipper. "Wait but a short space, Your Majesty; there are those ashore can guide us through the labyrinth. I shall signal, Your Majesty."

Not many minutes had elapsed, nor were there many minutes to bestrew, for nearly had the time come for the returning of the tide, when:

"A guide is coming down the sand," quoth the captain.

Closely behind the guide came half a dozen people. By his habiliments one of these was proclaimed to be a servant of the Lord of the Province. Shortly this emissary reached the ship, and came aboard, having been informed by the master of the vessel that the king of England was on the deck and wished speech of him.

Noticing the movements of the people ashore, the ships of the Easterlings had come as near as the depth of the water would allow and had dropped anchor. Their intention was to board the king's vessel at the next tide, as the captain had said. King Edward's safety depended upon but a few hours.

Hastings and Anthony took a gloomy view of the situation. They expected enemies on land in front to augment those afloat behind. Richard of Gloucester was more hopeful, and spoke cheery words to the gloomy and despondent monarch, whilst the messenger with his escort retraced his steps to inform the Lord of the Province of the dire extremity of England's king.

"He will prove our friend," said the Duke of Gloucester.

"In faith, heaven has turned against us," muttered the king; "even this Hollander will glory in our downfall."

But His Majesty's dread was engendered by the

shadow of his tribulation; soon another party was described approaching seaward.

"That is the Lord himself," vouchsafed the skipper. "It bodes good for him to come in person; he is a mild-mannered and a kindly man, indeed."

So the sequel proved.

There was some commotion among the Easterlings at the approach of this governing Lord, as though it was an occurrence unexpected. They endeavored to weigh anchor and sail away; but before they could do so the Lord of the Province had come on board the stranded ship, wherein lodged King Edward, whence he despatched two of his attendants in a dory to convey his commands that the Easterlings should lie still.

To King Edward and his noble companions the Lord was courtesy personified.

"Have I the honor to converse with England's king?" the Lord enquired, bowing graciously.

"Yea, with England's dethroned king; the shuttlecock of fate and traitors," His Majesty spoke bitterly.

"Away with dolor, Your Majesty!" cried the Lord; "I say King Edward, beloved of the English people, should not despair. The dregs are always at the bottom of the pot, Your Majesty; your face-twisting draught may now be well-nigh drunk."

"God grant your kindly words may prove true prescience," said the king. "I thank thee much, consoling friend."

"Pray, speak not of it, Your Majesty; it is but plain humanity."

"It may be humanity; but it is not plain."

The Lord laughed, and said:

"I crave that Your Majesty and all your faithful followers shall come ashore and partake of the comforts of my home.

Sumptuous was the hospitality bestowed upon the king and his followers by this nobleman of Holland during the days that the royal concourse stayed. Then at his own expense did the Lord conduct his guests safely

to the Hague, where he bade farewell to them.

On a future day, when the sun shone again for King Edward, His Majesty displayed his gratitude in a practical way to the Lord who had thus saved him from death, added to debasement. The Holland Lord was created Earl of Winchester.

Immediately after their touching leave-taking from the Lord King Edward sent forward the Duke of Gloucester to inform the Duke of Burgundy, the monarch's brother-in-law, of his predicament.

First hearing of the king's presence in such solemn plight, the Duke of Bergundy felt vexation and anxiety.

"Ye gods," expostulated Richard of Gloucester; he is married to your wife's sister; yourself and His Majesty are brothers, in law at all events. Duke. For the love of duty do not permit the king of England to think he is unwelcome."

In spite of the Duke of Burgundy's effort to appear otherwise, the frigidity of his reception touched the exiled sovereign to the quick. Here was he, thrown from fortune's highest pinnacle to sue for charity from his own relations. More galling was this thought when he remembered that all had been wrought by his own weakness and misconduct.

Being cut off from his old associations, however, and thus cast upon his own resources, had a salutary effect upon His Majesty's nature. His sudden fall had torn from him all that was enervating and had revivified his innate energy of soul.

"This adversity has remettled thee, my royal brother," remarked the Duke of Gloucester, when he noted the old fire in Edward's eyes and heard him vow to be avenged upon his enemies.

"Would to heaven I had come to my senses sooner!" exclaimed the king; "then this had not happened."

"Which would have been a pity," put in Richard; "for then you could not have had this purifying experience."

"Had there been no dross, Dick," retorted Edward,

"then had we no need for the trying fire."

"Well said, Your Majesty," cried Hastings.

"The House of York is noted for its wit," quoth Anthony Woodville.

"Aye, wit of the worthless sort," satirically ejaculated the king.

"Clarence is the only Yorkist who can turn wit to account," the Duke of Gloucester interposed.

"Verily, verily," said His Majesty; "his forte is wit and Malmsey wine."

"Aye," quoth Gloucester, "he can tank more of that inside himself than any dozen honest men."

"That means he is not honest," laughed Anthony.

"Methinks he has been outwitted by the Warwick this time," Lord Hastings chuckled.

So, with such chat, the weary days wore on; and king Edward and his brother Richard were impatient and determined to renew once more their triumphs. Fair battle was their one desire.

By-and-bye there came news from England that there was trouble there. Warwick had fallen in a bed of thorns.

Dymoke arrived, and soon sought out the king at the residence of the Duke of Burgundy. He was greeted joyfully.

"Bringest thou news?" asked King Edward.

"Yea, Your Majesty; from the Duke of Clarence. He sends to tell Your Majesty that he but awaits your coming to abandon Warwick and assist your cause with several thousand men."

"This gives us courage somewhat," King Edward spake. "Said the Duke of Clarence aught about our letter to him during his sojourn in France?"

"He did, Your Majesty. At that time it had been his purpose to cut loose from Warwick and return to his allegiance to Your Majesty, his beloved brother, as he was pleased to term Your Majesty."

"Why did he not, Dymoke?"

"Warwick's plans were fully at maturity, he said;

so he could not. He had to return to England with the King-Maker against his will; so says the Duke of Clarence."

"Forsooth! Then why, in faith's name, did he not forsake the traitor Warwick once the shores of England were reached?"

"Ah, Your Majesty, the Duke says that was merely policy."

"'A bastard policy; it was neither brotherly nor valiant."

"As you say, Your Majesty; but he may be trusted this time."

"Why?"

"Warwick has promised that he shall be declared the heir-apparent to the crown of England if young Edward of Wales dies childless. That is perfidy; and means nothing from the lips of Warwick. The Duke of Clarence knows it, and is enraged. Even for his own revenge he will support Your Majesty for at least a time."

Dymoke's manner of speech and his eloquent gestures had wonderful effect upon his listeners. All had composed themselves to hearken to his tale of England's woes, which he proceeded to relate, whilst his auditors' faces bore unmistakable evidences of delight.

"Sudden and complete has been the revolution in England, Your Majesty, as you have sorely felt," quoth Dymoke; but just as sharp and as finished shall it be again."

"A re-bouleversement, so to say," put in the Duke of Burgundy.

Gleeful looks were exchanged.

"Subsequent to Your Majesty's retirement from England," continued Dymoke, "Henry Sixth was brought from his captivity in the tower; in name he became once more the king of England; in fact, he was not. Warwick and Clarence had executive power conferred upon them by Margaret of Anjou, will Your Majesty note? Worst of all, Henry Sixth was again reduced to

a state of imbecility most pitiful, but they would have him out. This was in the month of October in the year just gone, at the beginning of the month."

"Aye, aye; the fateful 1470."

"The Bishop of Winchester, by the assent of the Duke of Clarence and of the Earl of Warwick, went to the Tower at London and took Henry from his keepers. Then sent they forth a calumny—yea, it was a calumny, Your Majesty—(here Dymoke made an outrageous facial contortion)—that Henry was not arrayed as became a prince; nor was he as clean, they said, Your Majesty, as should be a prince. So they had him out and new arrayed him. Thus they brought him to the Palace of Westminster, and so he was restored to the crown of England as a cloak for the arch-evil-doer Warwick!"

"Great God!" ejaculated Gloucester.

"Although I say that the Earl of Warwick and the Duke of Clarence have been declared protectors of the realm during the minority of Edward Prince of Wales, Your Majesty can guess that Warwick is the voice of the kingdom. His belittling of Your Majesty's brother has played him right into Your Majesty's hands. Again I repeat, Your Majesty, that the screaming part of the farce is that in event of the dying of the prince without issue the crown has been entailed upon the Duke of Clarence. Who are they that can entail England's crown upon any person, and at the same time proclaim Your Majesty a usurper and the courageous Duke of Gloucester an attainted outlaw? Their words are mere sounds."

"So, so," quoth Gloucester.

"Your Majesty," vehemently spake Dymoke, "the season has returned when the fruit is fully ripe to fall into the grasp of the legitimate king. For myself, your Majesty, I am sworn to do my doughtiest; and I shall! Long live Edward Fourth, sovereign of England!"

Then all rose up and cried together:

"Here stand we, thy lieges, King Edward of England, prepared to pour our life's blood for the cause of

the truest !"

"Yes, yes," said the Duke of Burgundy; "Edward recently so envied and feared, now denounced as a usurper by the usurpers, can rise again. I shall loan him the funds if it take my final sou."

King Edward was moved deeply; he grasped the hand of the Duke of Burgundy in silence.

"How much will Your Majesty require?" asked the Duke.

"We might make a start with five thousand guineas," said the king.

"We shall make it fifty thousand francs," ejaculated the Duke; "that's settled."

"How many men can we muster, Gloucester?" enquired the king.

"With the help of the Duke of Burgundy and of the valiant Dymoke, I can raise three hundred men beside the two thousand that Your Majesty shall lead."

"A small force," quoth the king, "but, Heaven helping us, we shall proceed to England; as David went forth, dauntless, to slay the great Goliath of Gath."

Early in the month of March, 1471, King Edward set sail from the Port of Vere, in the Island of Walcheren, with nearly two thousand men; and on the fourteenth of that month he disembarked his little force at Ravenspur in Yorkshire. As the last of the equipment came ashore, Dymoke remarked:

"Your Majesty, here is a good omen—seventy-two years ago Henry of Lancaster landed on this very spot, when he came to depose Richard Second. Edward Fourth can turn the tables also, for the rule works either way."

"Good !" laughed the king; "Dymoke you are a brave fellow, and a good comforter. Job lacked men like you."

Dymoke bowed low.

"Farther shall this analogy to Henry of Lancaster be carried," spake the king. "Ride forth rapidly, Dymoke, and disclaim that we have any design upon

the throne and crown. Say that our object at this return to England is merely to recover the inheritance to which we are entitled as the Duke of York. Hold; tell also the troops to dissimulate so far as to shout long live King Henry—with an ardent mental reservation, of course. Command that they do much of that shouting in all the towns and villages through which we shall pass. See; we shall decorate with this."

And King Edward plumed his helmet with an ostrich feather, the device of his hated rival—Edward Prince of Wales.

During the interim Richard of Gloucester had got ashore at the head of his three-hundred men. His landing had been made at a point about four miles from Ravenspur.

Together these royal brothers began their seemingly desperate march toward the south. Marching and camping made up the tedium of the first few days. But they were anxious ones to the king and Gloucester, for progress was extremely discouraging when they noticed that scarcely a single person of quality had joined the king's standard. Some encouragement, though, existed for the king in the fact that although the men of the north kept aloof, still they permitted the unmolested passage of the royal troops.

"At least they are neutral, if they do not side with us," quoth the king; "which is all always an advantage."

"Aye, they await the turn of fortune in our favor," vouchsafed Richard of Gloucester.

"We cannot go unmolested much longer," again spoke King Edward," for tomorrow we pass within four miles of Pomfret Castle, which is occupied by Warwick's perfidious brother, whom we reduced to the title of Marquis of Montagu when he revelled in the lands and titles of the Percys. His force is a superior one. We do not forget that his turning traitor compelled us to flee from England."

"We are able," was Gloucester's laconic rejoinder, "to make mince-meat of him."

Shortly Dymoke galloped up. Good news he brought. Quoth he:

"The Marquis of Montagu will keep his soldiers at Pomfret Castle; so there will be no attack upon Your Majesty from that quarter. I have the news from a trusted emissary, Your Majesty."

His Majesty and the Duke of Gloucester laughed merrily.

"It seems as though our invasion is to be a peaceful one," remarked the king.

"By my word I shall fight Warwick!" cried Richard; "he shall be forced to battle, and we shall kill him or take him prisoner."

Flashing of the young Duke's eyes showed that he meant his words.

"Valorous Dick, we fear he is too powerful for your tender arm," the king jocosely said.

"I share not your fear, your Majesty. Let me but meet the King-maker on a fair field and I shall kill him —or he kills me!"

"Which he shall never do," remarked Dymoke with grim significance.

Now came they to the City of York. There was some short parley at the gates; then they were thrown wide to admit King Edward and his soldiers. Thus had the tide turned in favor of the invaders.

Right along circumstances kept improving.

No sooner had they reached Nottingham than Sir William Stanley and Sir William Norres joined forces with King Edward and the indomitable Duke of Gloucester, increasing their strength by nearly seven hundred men.

Three thousand more men flocked to Edward's standard at Leicester.

Thus had the invasion been carried as far inland as Warwick without the striking of a blow. Further satisfaction was in store for King Edward at this City; for his brother, the Duke of Clarence, carried out Dymoke's predictions.

Clarence deserted to His Majesty with four thousand men.

So things went on.

Relying on his own and Gloucester's genius and desperate valor, King Edward earnestly desired to do battle with his enemies at the earliest opportunity.

"Success on the field can be obtained by only intrepidity and promptitude," remarked Richard of Gloucester.

"Aye, aye," quoth the king, "let cowardice be foreign to our vocabulary. To obtain victory early in the contest, Dick, is of vital importance toward our ultimate success."

"That is a pregnant truth, Your Majesty," vouchsafed the Duke; "we must be alive to the fact that delay will give our foes time to concentrate their forces. If my kingly brother will accept a suggestion, let it be that he challenge the arch-traitor Warwick to do immediate battle."

"We had resolved on that course," said the king; then to Dymoke:

"The Earl of Warwick lies at Coventry, Dymoke, does he not?"

"He does, Your Majesty."

"His force, is it strong?"

"In faith, yes, Your Majesty; superior to your own."

Edward ruminated, then:

"No matter," said he; "not only shall we risk an engagement with his army, but we shall force a struggle upon the King-Maker!"

"Bravo!" cried Gloucester;" now speaks my brother like unto his kingly self of old."

Dymoke soon thundered off with a challenge from the king to the Earl of Warwick; nor did much time elapse before he had returned.

"What news?" demanded Edward.

"Your Majesty, the Earl of Warwick refuses to fight."

The king and his noblemen regarded one another in astonished silence. Richard of Gloucester was the first to speak:

"It is a trick," he shouted, enraged.

"How, surely?" queried the king.

"To lead Your Majesty's army into ambush, should we fall upon him; and to gain time for Margaret of Anjou's troops to come."

"Then we shall press on to London rapidly," King Edward said, determinedly. "We must wipe out that other Neville traitor there, the Archbishop of York, who masquerades in decorations of our bestowal."

Tremendous cheers greeted this speech, and cries of: "Long live King Edward."

Toward the English city of cities the march was resumed, for there lay the key of the situation. All were in confident hope that possession of the capital would be obtained after little opposition.

So rapid had been the progress of Edward's invading army, and so skilfully had the advance been conducted, that King Edward and his legions had made their way far into the midland counties before the news of their landing even had reached the metropolis.

Great was the danger; for if London refused to receive King Edward, his discomfiture might be called complete. Lord Hastings intimated this much to the Duke of Gloucester.

"Nay, but there is no such peradventure," retorted Gloucester; "Edward is a favorite with the citizens of London; they will not oppose his entry. As for the perfidious archbishop, he will coincide with the mass and feign welcome to the king to save his traitorous head."

"Ah, yes," Anthony Woodville interposed"; the city dames are enthusiastic in their admiration for a prince so handsome and withal so affable. Many of these fair ones have already been liberal with favors on the king; others are ready to follow their example at a glance of his bright eyes."

"You slander His Majesty, and he is not present,"

scornfully said the Duke of Gloucester.

"Also have their husbands powerful reasons for wishing well to King Edward," interjected the Duke of Clarence.

All but Richard laughed.

"Why so?" enquired the Duke of Gloucester, almost angrily.

"Well, you see," explained the Duke of Clarence, putting on a wily look, "they are grateful to him, of course, for the encouragement which His Majesty extended to commerce."

"You mean further," said Gloucester.

"Maybe, yes."

"Go on."

"Not a trifling circumstance is it that His Majesty is indebted to many of these rich Londoners for large sums of money; to restore His Majesty to the crown is their only hope for reimbursement, you see, Dicky, my boy."

Richard but chewed his slim moustache; it irritated him to be called "Dicky, my boy," by Clarence; and truth sometimes is bitter.

Lord Hastings hurried to add:

"And those former gracious presents of royal venison may not have been forgotten; nor the peaceful days when, in the green glades of Hainault and in Windsor forests, these city Magnates were regaled and flattered by the most gallant and most fascinating king who ever sat on England's throne."

"Methinks," quoth Richard, "that Lord Hastings hath himself been taking lessons."

"My words are truth," said Hastings sententiously.

"Aye, that be they," sneered the Duke of Clarence, eyeing Richard of Gloucester cynically; "the gods bestowed the handsomeness provided for the children of the Duke of York all upon King Edward."

"Faith, but I claim the others are not homely," spoke up Lord Hastings quickly, bowing to the Duke of Gloucester.

"Perpaps not," persisted the Duke of Clarence; "at all events they have been liberal in their bestowal of wisdom upon my intrepid brother Richard. Why sit thyself so silently, adolescent Dick? Let us have a sample of your wit."

"Perfidious fool," said Gloucester, with much feeling; "King Edward errs to place his faith in you."

Thus speaking, Richard spurred his horse and rode away to join his own contingent of the army.

I was with Gloucester, Mr. Brains, and heard this talk. I relate it to you because it exhibits well the characters of the self-seeking snake Clarence and the strong-minded Richard, who could thus curb his anger with his will.

Again let me proceed:

Warwick the King-Maker showed no anxiety about London's fidelity to himself, for had he not entrusted that great city's care to his brother George Neville, the Archbishop of York? He had not calculated the degrees of cute diplomacy held by that same brother, however; for, perforce, as the Duke of Gloucester had explained, this priestly Neville was King Edward's friend.

When His Majesty presented himself at the gates of London, he was immediately invited to come within.

Richard of Gloucester and Dymoke were the royal emissaries the first day of the invading army's approach to the capital. This was the tenth of April, I remember well. I rode close to the Duke's saddle.

Little parley was required.

Richard took possession of the Tower in King Edward's name, proclaiming that His Majesty would arrive next day.

Like unto the turning of a kaleidoscope, London became gay with flags and decoration. All the citizens were enthusiastic.

Next day their gleeful joy culminated when, handsome and noble-looking, King Edward rode through the city and took up his abode in the bishop's palace.

"Dick," His Majesty exclaimed to Gloucester,

shortly after his triumphal ride and while viewing the gala appearance of the houses seen from a window of the palace; "once more we feel that we are truly king of England."

"This is joyful, indeed," vouchsafed the Duke. "Verily never before methinks has an expedition more hazardous and apparently so desperate been crowned with such unalloyed success. Just six months have gone since Your Majesty escaped and landed in Holland, a fugitive. Truly, King Ned, you must stick to that which again you have won at so much daring and anxiety."

King Edward moved his head thoughtfully, and:

"We can hardly realize," quoth he, "that it is only twenty-eight days since we landed at Ravenspur; and here we are in possession of the capital! I think there will be astonishment for Warwick."

"All goes well," said Gloucester; "soon shall I have a chance to meet that arch-cabalist. We shall see if he can once more refuse to fight."

"How goes it with that unfortunate imbecile Henry," King Edward asked.

"Clarence hath made him prisoner and hath returned him to comfortable quarters in the Tower."

"So is he well."

Dymoke, in haste, was announced.

He spoke his news quickly.

"Warwick has been balked, Your Majesty," he said; "now he marches on toward this place enraged. He expects to find your forces camped outside the walls, his sacerdotal brother holding out against Your Majesty."

"Let us march to meet him!" cried elatedly the Duke of Gloucester.

"Aye, so be it," said the king.

And so they did.

They encountered the King-Maker, eleven miles north from London, at Barnet, in Hertfordshire; and the opposing forces engaged in battle on the fourteenth of April in the year fourteen-seventy-one.

Such fierce fighting as the king and the Duke of Gloucester did that day is seldom recorded.

Their men were endued with the fervor of their masters, especially those of Richard. His reckless valor was appaling; his troops would not be outdone.

But through it all the Duke of Gloucester sought to singly encounter the powerful Duke of Warwick,that veteran of war.

There was ghastly slaughtering of the Lancastrians; their opponents' swords and bodies seemed forged into one concretion of unyielding steel.

"York!" roared the Duke of Gloucester,as he clove his track through the already faltering Lancastrians toward the searched-for King-Maker. "York! You traitor, that can fight for Lancaster! York! You dastard hireling."

Like a hurricane the stripling Duke threw himself upon the Earl of Warwick, amid sword-clashing and surrounded by the fierce white faces of the combatants.

"An illustrious onslaught; one worthy of the House of York," yelled the great Earl, almost transformed with rage at the thought of impending defeat. "Come not in my way, rash youngster; I am in no mood to trifle. This is a day for deeds of men, hark ye—Christ and the Virgin!"

This blasphemous exclamation had resulted from Richard's pell-mell attack on the Earl, who was forced on his guard to parry the thrusts of his lithe opponent.

"You fight like the devil," growled Warwick,whose helmet Richard had already battered much.

Warwick made a charge and a vicious lunge to rid him of the active Duke. Gloucester swerved to avoid the rush, but his horse stumbled on a pile of bloody corpses and the two steeds collided with a stunning jar.

Both riders were unhorsed.

Instantly their feet were found, and each fell once more upon the other. Fire flashed from swords and helmets.

By his greater weight the Earl of Warwick threw

more force into his blows. Richard was nimble; but his agility took him backward step by step,until they fought a duel truly, without ere a second or a surgeon to look on.

Gradually they had withdrawn from the heat of the battle, all concerned there being too intent upon their sanguinary labor to take notice of single combatants.

On went the carnage; and on fought Warwick and the Duke of Gloucester.

Nay, there were two pairs of eyes beholding them. These belonged to the Duke of Clarence and to Dymoke. Detaching themselves from the general melee, they rode toward the duellists.

Dymoke could not trust this perfidious brother of the king; and at that moment your humble servant also found duty in yon part of the field.

"Fair play is a duel," quoth Dymoke under his breath.

Without a warning sound to the combatants, so deeply engrossed in fencing for each others vitals, the Duke of Clarence rode upon the two. Swinging in his saddle, he plunged his sword in Warwick's body from behind.

"Great God! What treachery!" cried the Duke of Gloucester, pale and panting.

Remorse for the horrible deed of his brother rent his soul, although he had tried his fiercest to slay the hero slain. Dropping his sword, he fell beside his recent foe and raised his head.

"Bring water," said the Duke.

Dymoke produced a flask.

"Never mind, brave Dick," faltered the dying Warwick; "this is the end of the King-Maker. You fought nobly; give me your hand; there—beware of false friends —ambition—mind—is—death."

Thus died his greatness the Earl of Warwick,foully slain by a quondam friend, who even then stood by with a superciliously laughing sneer upon his lips.

Dymoke and Gloucester stood uncovered, their

swords asheath, whilst Clarence leaned upon his treacherous gory blade.

"Of all men the Duke of Clarence ought to have been the last to do this coward's trick," quoth Richard, addressing Dymoke.

"I saved your life," muttered Clarence, with satire in his tone; "what would you?"

"That I had died, rather than see a nobleman so grossly murdered."

"Methinks yourself was endeavoring to do the same."

"God forbid! There is a difference between fair fight and foul murder."

"Amen," said Dymoke.

Meanwhile the Lancastrians had been routed utterly. Shrilly the bugle-calls of the pursuivants rang out, and the Yorkists desisted from the slaughter of their fellow-countrymen. Pursuers returned and fell into the ranks.

King Edward rode to his brothers and Dymoke, where we stood about the assassinated Earl. Edward leaped from his horse, affected to his heart.

"He was our enemy," said he; "but once he was our friend; may he repose most peacefully."

The Duke of Clarence laughed with harshness.

"Your ribaldry is not opportune, our brother George," the king rebuked him.

"These people who curse a man while yet he lives and bless him when he dies are an enigma to my brain."

"You never had a brain."

"Ah, no; I had forgotten; our brother Richard got all that. But, methinks, King Edward, that you owe me something more than angry words for ridding Your Majesty of such a mighty foe."

"For ridding me?"

"Yea, t'was he," quoth Gloucester; "remark where the blood poured forth. He stabbed him from behind, and unawares; he murdered him."

"Have it as you will," sneered Clarence; "albeit,he

is dead. I owed him a grudge for playing fast and loose with me; he cannot do that any more. I am satisfied."

Sheathing his sword, he mounted his horse and let it jog away.

"Dymoke, search for the Earl's retainers," ordered the king; "have them bear his body from the field."

Nor did Dymoke delay to carry out the king's desire; so that the great Earl of Warwick received that burial which became a gallant nobleman, in the mausoleum of his ancestors, none of whom had equalled in lustre the newly-encoffined scion of the famous House.

Little dreamed Margaret of Anjou as she landed at Weymouth that her chief ally that very day was being arranged for his entry into the charnel house. Swift couriers soon brought her the news, however, of the disaster which had befallen her cause at Barnet; and she grieved for the death of Warwick, not that she loved him, but because his going meant almost hopelessness for the cause of Henry Sixth, whose energetic and ambitious spouse she was.

Yet did she not utterly despair.

With those Lancaster allies who still were faithful, she marched toward Wales. There she hoped to join the Earl of Pembroke and his Welsh levies.

Day and night she pressed forward her troops, taking barely time to rest. Rapid as was her movement, there were others too nimble to let the ex-queen pass unchallenged.

King Edward and his legions, the intrepid Richard ever with him, intercepted her progress. When her forces reached Tewkesbury, there were King Edward's soldiers, prepared to offer battle.

Margaret refused to recognize a useless venture; so, on May 4th, 1471, began that memorable struggle which ended in the total overthrow for the Lancastrians.

Richard of Gloucester here again proved his remarkable intrepidity. He fought like a man with charmed life. Reckless apparently, yet he emerged from

the battle unscratched.

As quickly as Margaret of Anjou recognized that the tide of battle had gone irretrievably against her, she and her ladies fled. They sought and found refuge in a neighboring convent, whence they were taken as prisoners by officers of the king.

"Tell me", craved Margaret, "have you heard aught of my son, the Prince of Wales?"

Dymoke advanced, his head bared, and said:

"Your son, my lady, whom you called Prince Edward, I grieve to tell thee, was slain fighting bravely in single combat with the Duke of Clarence."

One of the prettiest young ladies in the room swooned. She was a widow. How short her wedded life had been, and fraught with so much trouble! Ex-queen Margaret but bowed her head and wept.

Immediately she dried her eyes, and, speaking calmly, said:

"Lead on; I care not where ye take us. Life for me is lived."

So was she incarcerated; nor was she released for close upon five years. You have heard, Mr. Brains, how she was ransomed in 1476 by French Louis.

Harmonizing with the people,the weather apparently did its best to glorify King Edward when he returned to London on May 20th, 1471. Spring was regal as she can be only in England. Sunshine glinted from the house-tops, from the pavements, from the river. Old Thames seemed silvered especially for the occasion.

Edward's reception everywhere was enthusiastic and magnificent.

Gloomy was the contrast in the tower; for there sat the idiotic Henry, brooding, ever brooding; sunshine but added to his misery. Full well he knew that he would walk abroad in it no more. His keepers were harsh,but he did not seem to reck.

This ill-starred and dethroned monarch became subject of discussion between King Edward and his brothers.

"Richard of Gloucester", was the king but saying, "what shall we do with Henry Sixth? He is old and crazy. We fear he cannot live to prove annoyance to us long—but in the interim?"

"Sentence him to death for treason," interpolated the Duke of Clarence, accompanying his speech with a grin.

"Heartless wretch! We adjure your horrid speech to cease," quoth the king. "We would confer with Richard; him was addressed."

"Let him have proper food, attention and fresh air; a priest to utter consolation. He was ever of a churchy trend," the Duke of Gloucester answered.

"I did but joke," spoke Clarence; "brother Richard speaks my thoughts."

Had Satan tried he could not have invented a more sardonic laugh than that one used so often by the Duke of Clarence. True merriment and him were not akin. Thus when he now relieved himself and added emphasis to his lying words with such harsh cachinnation, both King Edward and the Duke of Gloucester knew he was insincere.

Perhaps King Edward had covert reasons for his course, but when next he spoke he said:

"Clarence, we commission you to see carefully to the making comfortable of the idiot Henry. Gloucester goes to oversee the housing of our troops. Let these things be done, as ye love us."

Scrupulously well did the Duke of Clarence carry out his orders from the king. Next day came word, whilst he and Gloucester were with the monarch, that the unfortunate inbecile had died of grief and melancholy.

"King Edward glanced menacingly at his brother George, and:

"Foul doing!" he vouchsafed.

"None of mine," added Clarence, with his chronic sneer.

"How looked Henry yestereve?"

"Dirty, ill-clad and sick."

"What did you?"

"Ordered his keepers to give him a bathe, and to put whole clean garments upon him."

"Moreover?"

"To be careful not to get his head below the water in the bath, or he might peradventure drown."

"Gave you those orders as from the king?"

"Aye, did I; and recompensed the villains well, also."

"You meant that they should understand your king desired that they should end their prisoner's life?"

"If Your Majesty will have it so."

"What vengeance could you have to wreak upon a being so childish as poor crazy Henry?"

"We cannot tell; some day he might have been again made king."

"What would that matter to the Duke of Clarence?"

"Yes, yes; what would it matter?"

Here came again the sneer.

"Richard of Gloucester," remarked His Majesty, and turned toward his younger brother; "see to it that Henry Sixth hath decent burial."

"Shall the 'melancholy-and-grief' explanation of his demise be sent abroad, Your Majesty?" asked Clarence.

"So, so," said the king; "they will not believe it; but they will not openly complain, methinks."

The Duke of Clarence chuckled until his face grew purple at these words of the king.

Richard was grieved; yet still he thought there was better safety in the death of Henry Sixth, so long as King Edward nor himself were blood-guilty. The imbecile's life had been much a living death.

Gloucester accordingly gave orders to have the body of the late king Henry en-coffined and displayed before the populace at St. Paul's. From there the remains were solemnly removed, and were conveyed by water to Chertsey Abbey for interment.

Shortly afterward Kind Edward heard some gossip

which roused his ire toward the Duke of Clarence. It was said that that worthy was intriguing for the crown; even had it been hinted that he was concocting schemes to get rid of not only King Edward but also his son and heir-apparent, young Prince Edward.

Conscience could not deter this over-ambitious Clarence from evil deeds.

Edward was fain to trust him, but he feared that these distasteful rumors might prove too true, judging from past actions of his perfidious brother George.

"What think you, Gloucester, of these rumors? Of a truth they annoy us," spake the king.

"King Ned," quoth Gloucester, "you know the calibre of our brother George. Give these rumors all the credence they deserve; be, at all events,aware. Only security is safe."

"Shall we commit him to the Tower?"

"Leave me to investigate. If the king desire my council, His Majesty must let me be informed. I am no jumper-to-conclusions."

"If; there is no if; we do wish the counsel of our wise brother. Follow that course which seems proper to yourself, then report."

"Fear not immediate danger from that source,King Ned. I shall do as you command. He is here, under our supervision. Your Majesty has more to fear from Henry."

"The exiled Earl of Richmond," completed Edward.

"Aye; yes; forsooth," quoth Gloucester, nodding his head many times and frowning deeply. "He may be considered Your Majesty's only rival."

"He is the sole surviving representative of the House of Lancaster," reflectively proceeded the king. "We are aware he has fled the country; mayhap, Dick, yourself have learned his hiding place?"

"That have I. He has found asylum with the Duke of Bretagne."

"What a God-send to England is that country call-

ed France!"

"Yea, it harboreth the emasculated viper until his sting grows forth again, that he may strike afresh," quoth Gloucester.

"We dare not then complain; we have been harbored there," laughed the king.

"So have we," admitted Richard.

"Again," cried Edward, after a brooding space, "it has been tributary to our crown; we swear thus shall it be again. But, Gloucester, a revenos a nous mouton, as that country's language says: what about yon Richmond?"

"Let Your Majesty send an embassy to the Duke of Bretagne, requesting that he surrender the Earl of Richmond to Your Majesty; not as a prisoner, but in order that he may resume the position and receive the honors to which his rank entitles him."

"Good!" commented the king; "also shall we add that it is our desire that he should marry our daughter."

"Surely then," quoth Gloucester, "they cannot but believe our faith is sound toward him."

Both laughed; and with that the Duke of Clarence entered.

"How now?" he shouted. "What causeth all this merriment?"

King Edward looked at Gloucester.

"This is a secret for two," remarked the Duke of Gloucester.

"Ah, but," spoke Clarence, with an accompanying leer, "methinks the Earl of Richmond should be made a secret of three at least."

"Eavesdropper!" roared King Edward.

"Paul Pry," sneered Richard.

"It matters not," quoth Edward; "tell him all, Gloucester."

"Not I, forsooth; albeit Your Majesty command it."

"We shall not command it; he hath overheard."

"Now Your Majesty speaks sense, like the man who admitted he was in the river when well-nigh was he

drowned," said the Duke of Clarence.

"Yourself; we hear evil whisperings of the Duke of Clarence," quoth the king in anger.

"Believe not all you hear; nor yet eat all you see, Your Majesty. These rumors are but the breath of a scandal, meant to turn Your Majesty against a loving brother."

Thus said the Duke of Clarence in a slippery tone.

King Edward sat silent for a moment, then he said:

"Prove your fealty, brother George."

"But show the way, Your Majesty; then shall I, willingly."

"Bring to me the Earl of Richmond."

"That deed requires much shrewdness; methinks 'tis Gloucester could best accomplish it."

"But Clarence must," peremptorily concluded King Edward.

"We bow with gratitude," quoth Clarence; "and haste to do the sovereign's will. Sedulously shall I rehearse the honied words which treat of position, honors and marriage with the daughter of England's greatest king. I go immediately. Adieu, Your Majesty; fare thee well, astute and gallant Richard."

Then he went out and straightway embarked for France with other nobles as embassadors to Bretagne.

Well was their case presented; the Duke of Bretagne consented to let his exile visitor depart; escorted by the courteous embassadors As they rode forth:

"One word!" exclaimed the Duke of Clarence to the good-humored Duke of Bretagne, as though a sudden thought had caught him; and back went he to whisper:

"There is treachery. The Duke of Gloucester hath advised the king to entice the Earl to England; then to slay him."

Off rode Clarence with that after his cavalcade of nobles.

Not many leagues farther had the party proceeded, before the Duke of Bretagne and a goodly following rode up and called upon the Englishmen to halt. They

did so.

Everyone but Clarence was wide-eyed with wonder. Even Richmond seemed astonished.

"I cannot let him go; my purpose has changed meanwhile," explained the Duke of Bretagne. "The Earl of Richmond, I beg, shall join my party and return with me."

"We cannot permit this," cried Lord Hastings.

There was delay.

"Well, well; well, well," began sly Clarence. "Let there be no strife. The Duke of Bretagne no doubt has proper aims. I deem it, though, he has not had faith in England's king."

Accordingly the Earl of Richmond stayed in France.

So much did the Duke of Bretagne fear treachery that he had the Earl of Richmond placed for security in the sanctuary of a church.

Through the perfidy of the Duke of Clarence was Richard of Gloucester's "viper" left to regain his sting. In this case there had been but embryo sting; destined not to reach maturity for years.

Perhaps Clarence himself had a sinister intent. It suited not his purpose then to have the Earl of Richmond removed.

"Wait until I am the last Plantagenet, and then —" he muttered.

He augured not that it was for his brother Richard that he had left this "viper" to mature.

King Edward was angered fiercely when he heard how his attempt to lay hold upon the final adherent of the red rose had been foiled. Suspicion that his brother George had not acted honestly grew strong within His Majesty.

O pshaw, but why should I waste time in detail?

Sire Brains, you know how King Edward, aided much by the prowess of the Duke of Gloucester, carried out his threat to again bring France into allegiance to the English crown; how he allied himself with Char-

les the Bold of Burgundy and brought Louis the Eleventh to treat with him on that historic bridge where the grating was erected, because each could not trust the other.

Who has not heard of the remarkable and perhaps questionable modes made use of by King Edward to raise money for his many wars?

Through it all there continually cropped out the perfidious harassments of the Duke of Clarence, who never ceased to intrigue that he might gain the crown. Richard of Gloucester was his thwarter every time; for well did Richard care for the safety of his sovereign brother.

At length came a time when forbearance was exhausted.

During these years another son had been born to King Edward, so that Clarence saw his purpose of coming to the throne becoming daily harder to accomplish. He resolved on a desperate measure, for he was getting up in years. None other than to murder the princes was his plot; then to hire assassination for the king.

Subtly he contrived to suborn a member of the king's household to poison slowly the children.

They began to fail. Listlessness displanted briskness.

Strangest of all, the Duke of Clarence became a regular galliard. Often and deep drank he of his favorite Malmsey wine.

Gloucester noted the changes; nor was he long before he unearthed the devil's scheme, and laid it bare before King Edward.

Quickly the poisoning menial was hanged, drawn and quartered; the Duke of Clarence was cast into the Tower of London to await his trial.

No sooner had the Duke of Clarence been imprisoned than he seemed to fling up all hope of ever reaching the crown and the throne. Inebriety took an unrestrained hold upon him; for he was allowed wine ad libitum. Carousals with his keepers were the order of the night

—and day too, for that matter. Playing cards and drinking were their pastimes.

Thus did the days go by, until the night of February 19th, 1478, arrived.

More a galliard than ever did the Duke of Clarence feel that night ; but this mien was merely an artificial gaiety and briskness, born of despair. He knew his days were numbered.

Revelry held high carnival. When the clock struck eleven the trio were extremely tipsy; especially the two keepers. They were sleepily drunk.

" Hi, keeper," hiccoughed the Duke, "fill-ill-lup this jug with Mam'sy 'gain, can't you ?"

No response.

" You hear ? Fill up this jug with Mam'sy 'gain."

Both the keepers snored.

" Drunk; they're drunk. That Mam'sy butt's where ? Lem see. Ah ! Dukie Clarence, you'll have t' fill 't 'self—jug I mean—not butt."

He lurched and tottered out of the room with the wine-jug in his right hand, guiding his equivocal progression with his left on chairs and walls, or whatever support came handy. By-and-bye he entered a narrow passage, damp glistening furtively from the black stone of its walls in retort to a dim and flickering rush-light, stuck on a bracket far toward the end of the gloomy corridor.

" Boo-oo-o",sounded from the lips of the tipsy Duke; " 't is ghastly here; have t' sing t' frighten bogles 'way."

His cracked and unsteady voice broke out:

" He dud whissilun she dud singun all t' bellsun earth dud ring for Jos'phun his fair ladie-ee-e !"

" Jos'ph; wonder who's Jos'ph ? Dukie Clarence, gotty go t' bottom o' these dirty steps."

He began, with drunken care, to descend to a lower level. He reached the foot in safety, laughed bibulously at his own seeming nimbleness, planted the jug upon the hard floor, and somewhat majestically performed a

minuet around and in its vicinity, to prove to himself that he was quite sober and full-witted.

This cellar was redolent of the Thames and rats, and was even damper and more gruesome than the corridor above. Here flickered another rude rush-light, appearing to merely enhance the gloom. Over in a corner stood, upon a trestle-and-plank scaffold, a huge butt of Malmsey wine. Toward this meandered the Duke, having again secured possession of his jug.

Already had the great barrell been tapped. The Duke tried to turn the spigot. Whether he was too tipsy or whether it was difficult to move, it would be hard to say; nevertheless, not one drop of Malmsey could the Duke draw off. Drunken despair took hold of him; he gazed helplessly around. His look fell upon a big sledge-hammer and a diminutive ladder, just tall enough to reach the top of the stubborn vat.

Deliberately and with bacchanalian precision once more did he deposit his jug upon the ground.

Accompanying his manipulation of the ladder came from his lips a number of admonitory speeches.

"L-l-ladder", said he, "stan' up. There ladder, yuccan stan' 'f yul-like, can' you? Yes l-l-ladderk un stan'; no, ladderk un fall!"

Which was the truth, for both ladder and Duke slid, toppling over.

After repeated essays, however, the ladder was set; the Duke smashed in the top of the butt with the heavy hammer. He knew naught of vents; all he desired was to get at the wine. Stepping cautiously to the floor, he procured his jug and reascended. He balanced himself for a moment at the top, then ventured to dip his vessel into the big barrel.

Out went his feet; he tipped headlong into the liquor.

A gurgle; a little scuffle.

In the morning his keepers found the feet of the Duke projecting from the top of the butt; they hauled him out; he was dead.

His Royal Highness Prince George, the Duke of Clarence, otherwise George Plantagenet, had been accidentally drowned in a butt of Malmsey wine, his favorite liquor, which catastrophe annulled the state trial to be he d and gave much relief to the ruling Monarch, also to Richard of Gloucester, whose keen vigil the deceased Duke had so much needed.

Surely the Duke of Clarence could not have died in a more pleasant way. Just think; in a sea of wine!

Fate, as the mortals call that something which they do not comprehend, was rapidly clearing the way for the "Meteor King" of Penelope.

More and more every day did the Duke of Gloucester become King Edward's adviser. All the best laws which His Majesty framed may be said to have been propounded by Richard of Gloucester.

Events flowed evenly for five years after the tragic death of the Duke of Clarence; then was Gloucester stricken with grief, for his beloved brother the king passed onward to the realm of spirit.

That was the day, the ninth of April, 1483, when the City of London was being made dreary by rain and mud; then came the demise of Edward.

Death struck suddenly. Edward, ever fond of luxury and high living, had become quite apoplectic.

Had those days been these, it would have been said that the king died of heart-failure, induced by Bright's disease of the kidneys, whence had emanated a complication of disorders.

Young Edward, the heir, was but a mere boy. He had been born in Westminster Abbey, on November third, 1470, while his illustrious father was in exile; hence the prince was in but his thirteenth year.

Richard of Gloucester was at his seat of government in the north when the tidings reached him that his brother the king was dead. That he truly loved him there is no doubt; for I was present, and saw his soul bowed down with genuine grief at a time when dissembling was unnecessary.

Yea; but I had studied the moods of Richard long enough to know when the outward signs were indices to the heart's content. He could dissemble with a vengeance; but whene'er his voice-tones touched my ear that instant could I say:

"Ha, the Duke speaks vainly"; or

"Now then his soul is torn."

Many were those he might deceive; but not, Sire Brains, myself, I've sworn.

Richard and the noblemen of his party at once began to cogitate on the succession.

The Duke of Buckingham and Lord Hastings were friends to my noble Duke of Gloucester, ostensibly. They were pocket-friends. They but advised our Richard to the course which served their own ends best.

Thirteen-year-old Edward was proclaimed king by order of the Council, his ruling title being Edward the Fifth.

Messengers were despatched to Ludlow Castle to bring his Young Majesty to London.

His mother, the Queen Elizabeth, desired her brother, Earl Rivers, to levy an army in the vicinity of Ludlow and on the border of Wales to escort the youngster on his journey, but Lord Hastings and his adherents in the Council objected strongly. They desired that not too much power and eclat be so soon bestowed where it would redound to the glory of the hated Woodvilles.

They had other fish to fry.

After a deal of wrangling it was finally resolved that the escort for Edward should consist of merely twenty-thousand men.

Dear; Oh, dear; God bless you, Sire Brains. I tell you that, despite the fact that the late king had assembled the leaders of the two factions around his deathbed and had prevailed upon them to swear reconciliation and fealty to each other, yet had they sworn with a deadly mental reservation.

Here already was a struggle inevitable.

Rankling still in the memories of the Lords of Norman decent was the insolent pride of some of the upstart peers.

Both parties eschewed their oaths to the dying king and prepared for the impending contest.

Abetted and aided strongly by the other members of the Woodville family, the queen schemed to retain the functions of government during the minority of Edward the Fifth. Contrariwise, the great body of nobles and prelates determined to prevent the scheme's success.

With all of this the Duke of Buckingham and Lord Hastings kept the Duke of Gloucester perfectly familiar; and they artfully insinuated time and again that there was but one rightful man in England powerful enough to assume the Protectorship—that was the Duke of Gloucester.

Meanwhile the days had not been passing unused Richard had ordered us to mass a retinue of six-hundred horsemen, and we had done so.

Never shall I forget that 29th of April when we set out for London. Richard rode moodily along, his chin upon his breast. He had appointed to meet Buckingham and Hastings at Northampton, and all along the way to there he took part in religious ceremonials on behalf of his dead brother.

Not far were we from Northampton when a cavalcade hove into view in front, riding to meet us. These proved to be the Earl of Rivers, brother of the queen, and Sir Richard Gray, her son by her first marriage, and their retinues, who had come upon the road to greet the Duke of Gloucester.

Their speech was affable enough, but methought that Richard's voice had not the golden ring of faith. He was annoyed when he learned that they had sent the young king on to Stony Stratford, as if they feared that he should encounter his uncle.

Part of the conversation of the three I did not hear, as we rode into Northampton, until presently the Duke of Gloucester raised his tone in authoritative argument:

"Your talk may be correct," said he; "but these unseemly quarrels but rend ourselves."

Gloucester resolved and did.

He was one of the first to swear allegiance to his nephew, and throughout Yorkshire his example was generally followed.

No time lost he before he wrote a letter of condolence to the queen. Indeed, I know it, he even made overtures of amity to her relatives, whom I knew he detested most heartily.

I gathered that Rivers and Gray had remained at Northampton to await the Duke of Gloucester and submit to him their arrangements for the entry of young King Edward into London; hence the reason for their meeting us upon the road.

Affability personified was the Duke of Gloucester as he invited Gray and Rivers to dine with him in Northampton, but I could read from his manner that he had taken umbrage at what he deemed their officiousness; for already the specious phrases of Buckingham and Hastings had begun to arouse the green-eyed demon in his heart; which became all the easier from the fact that he bore these Woodvilles no special love, although he strove manfully not to let his feelings bias him.

The Duke of Buckingham and Lord Hastings were announced shortly after dinner, and they bowed to the two Woodvilles with cold formality, putting a more genial tenor into their greeting of Richard.

"We would speak a word with the Duke of Gloucester apart," said Buckingham immediately.

Rivers and Gray withdrew; then said Buckingham: "These cursed Woodvilles are carrying a high hand; the Duke of Gloucester may not know that the Marquis of Dorset has seized upon the King's Treasures and is using the powers attached to his high office as Admiral of England to equip a naval force in aid of the Woodville party."

"Well, well," quoth Richard musingly; "he is the queen's brother; also uncle of the young king; but he is

too forward."

"True, true," Lord Hastings commented.

"Allow them now to gain advantage, and England's noblemen may soon become but paupers, or alien exiles. Richard of Gloucester they fear the greatest; his downfall will they seek the earliest."

So spake Buckingham; and Richard strode the floor, with his under-lip pursed out, thinking furiously. I could see the clamor of the contending forces of his intellect depicted on his countenance; at last his face grew stern.

"Right!" he exclaimed; "there is no time to be lost. We shall act on the instant. Our first step—"

He paused.

"Arrest Rivers and Gray," spoke Buckingham and Hastings in a breath.

This was done.

Rivers and Gray were arrested early the following morning, and, under a strong guard, were sent to Pontefract.

Richard went immediately to Stony Stratford; and I saw him myself bow his knee before the young monarch and do him homage.

"Arise, good Uncle Richard," said the king"; it pleases me to see you."

Then Richard chatted with him, and shortly withdrew, having noticed that all the attendants of the king were partisans of the Woodvilles.

Buckingham and Hastings that night had, at their own and Richard's desire, all the loyal youth's confidential servants arrested and despatched after Rivers and Gray.

Our journey to London was resumed, Gloucester now having taken charge of the young king.

Great was the acclaim of our progress. Everywhere along the road Edward and his uncle were received with unstinted enthusiasm.

Finally, at Hornsey, the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London, arrayed in their official robes and ac-

companied by over five-hundred mounted citizens dressed in purple gowns, met the cavalcade; and we were led into the metropolis amid all possible display of pomp and rejoicing on May 4th, 1483. I have seen many fetes, but none ever impressed me as being more hearty than that which welcomed to London England's youthful king.

What necessity is there for me to relate at length those incidents which have become but details of history?

The queen, as soon as she became apprised of the fact that her brother and her son had been arrested at Northampton, sought sanctuary at Westminster with her other son, the Duke of York, who was then but eleven years old.

Well would it have been for the unfortunate widow if she could have at this time taken both her sons and fled from Britain, for already the conspirators were at work encompassing the destruction of those innocent babes, for whose death Richard was to be maligned.

On the arrival of the Duke of Gloucester at his residence in Crosby Place, Bishopsgate, he found it thronged with nobles and prelates, assembled there to tell him how delighted they were at the blow which had been struck at the detested Woodvilles. Here did they openly speak of the Pretectorship being assumed by Gloucester, such a procedure being taken for granted as a matter of course.

I had not much opportunity to observe, but what I had I made good use of. I could see that the duke was flushed and elated, being somewhat carried out of himself by the overwhelming adoration which was apparently more directed toward him than to the new king.

This, I tell you, may have been the inception of the Duke of Gloucester's ambition to ascend the throne of England, if he ever had such an ambition. Personally, I was convinced that he was the rightful one. The flattery went on, and thus was he brought in the end to believe himself the people's choice by the efforts of the

conspiring nobles and church dignitaries.

Gorgeous indeed was the coronation, of which you have no doubt read so many times that I cannot tell you anything new. You are perfectly acquainted with the events leading up to Richard's crowning. Through all of it he who had now become King Richard Third and his queen, Anne Neville, as you will recall, bore themselves with becoming grace.

There was a match of love! Well do I recall the wedding of the handsome couple: he nineteen; she seventeen. But that is by the way.

Prepossessing in appearance, physically strong, of powerful will and brave, Richard as well had the intellect and judgment fitted for a king; and so did he look a perfect monarch.

Unsurpassed in grandeur was the procession which took place from the great hall at Westminster to the adjacent abbey, on July 6th, the day following that of King Richard's coronation; but of all that history has spoken the truth, so I need not dwell upon it.

That of which the recounting will interest you the most was the banquet which was partaken of in the great hall at four o'clock. No more magnificence could man desire.

King Richard and his queen had nothing presented to them unless it were upon a dish of gold or silver.

Noblemen were everywhere vying with one another to do the monarch and his lady service.

Lord Audley was State Carver, Lord Scrope was Cupbearer, and during the banquet Lord Lovel stood before the king, two esquires lying at the monarch's feet beneath the board.

Peers and peeresses supported canopies over the heads of Richard and Anne, whilst on each side of the queen stood a countess with a plaisance, or napkin, for her use.

All the ladies sat apart at a long table in the middle of the hall.

The guests at the banquet were the Cardinal-Arch-

bishop, the Lord Chancellor, prelates, nobles and judges of the land, the Lord Mayor and the chief citizens of London.

Consistent with the king's character was a scene which took place immediately after the second course had been put upon the table. Sir Robert Dymoke; aye, he was a "Sir" now; he was the king's champion, too, and a rare good one. Sir Robert rode pell-mell into the hall, his horse trapped with white silk and red silk, and Sir Robert himself in white harness. As by the flash of a fairy's wand, I saw also that the heralds of arms were standing upon a stage. Great was the blare. Then the King's Champion, looking more gallant than ever and much admired of the ladies I could see, rode before the king.

"Hark!" he roared; and there was instant silence.

He demanded:

"Is there one man here present who can say why King Richard should not claim the crown of England?"

Whether it was through fear of the king's displeasure, or whether it was that only strong partisans of Richard graced the board, I am not prepared to argue; but I know that, with one accord, when Dymoke had ceased to talk, there burst from the assembly a cry of

"King Richard!"

that set the slivers on the dry rafters buzzing.

One of the lords-in-waiting presently advanced to the Champion and presented to him a covered cup, filled with red wine. Swinging it gracefully toward himself, Sir Robert uncovered the cup and drank of the contents until, by his inverting the vessel, the concourse of people were assured that it was empty to the very dregs.

After a few seconds he cast back all the wine from his mouth into the cup and re-covered it.

Although I had good opportunity to learn that fair Dymoke had a capacious maw, yet was I that time astonished that his mouth could hold so much.

When he had finished his part of the ceremony,

meant to exhibit his physical powerfulness and to show that the King's Champion was strong enough to taste wine without becoming mastered by it, and also that he would not regale himself before the king, Dymoke made obeisance to King Richard, turned his great horse about and rode through the hall, bearing away in his right hand the cup with the wine.

Following the exodus of big Dymoke, King-at-Arms Garter, supported by eighteen heralds, advanced in front of the king and solemnly proclaimed his style and titles.

That day's splendor was perfectly harmonic; not a single accident or incident occurred to mar it.

When the darkness began to fall, the hall was brilliantly illuminated with wax torches and cressets. This was the signal for the king and queen to retire. Wafers and hipocras had been already served; so Richard and his consort arose and departed to their private apartments in the palace.

Afterward, on the eighth of September of that year, 1483, the coronation ceremony was again gone through with equal splendor at York, Richard wishing thereby to do honor to the people whom he had for so long governed in the northern counties.

Then he made a regal procession through the northern and midland counties, everywhere meeting enthusiastic acclaim from the populace. In Warwick the people went nearly wild with joy, in spite of the fact that Richard had at the end been the foe of the great earl.

Yea, but, as I skim through events rapidly, I must not omit, Sire Brains, to shed a correct lucidity upon another incident. I refer to the execution of Lord Hastings.

You know the stories that have been handed down by allegedly truthful chroniclers, among other legends that of the strawberries and the banquet.

Let me ask you, studying the matter in the light of my revelations and knowing as you now do the strong-willed character of Richard, whether you believe that

he would give way to such imbecile anger as he is alleged to have displayed when he ordered the arrest of Hastings? And to prate about midwives and a wizened arm, forsooth; he had no wizened arm. Faugh! It would be improbable that he should talk in such an inane way.

His Majesty commanded that Lord Hastings be arrested only because he became cognizant, through men whose integrity he could not doubt, that the nobleman was conspiring with other men to assassinate the sons of the late King Edward, not that he feared treachery to himself.

Buckingham and that servile cur Catesby were responsible for the death of Hastings.

Lord Hastings was a genuine man; good to the core, he was true to the little fellows in the Tower. That was reason enough to Buckingham, who plotted continually and secretly for the exiled Richmond, why Hastings should be gotten rid of.

"Catesby," quoth Buckingham one day, "you are a worthy fellow, and one to be trusted"; with which he slapped his snakeship upon the shoulder.

"Your Grace flatters me," he retorted to the Duke, sycophantically smiling.

"Not at all, Catesby; I trust you. Listen: Hasttings desires the death of the wards of King Richard, and also that His Majesty himself should pass away."

"No, then!" exclaimed Catesby, with deceitful astonishment.

"Yea, does he that, to clear the way for Richmond who is across the water. Hastings has but one desire —that is to place yon Richmond on the throne of England, which would mean ruin to yourself and I, who are faithful friends of Richard."

"Indeed, indeed, I do agree with that, Your Grace. Cannot this evil be averted? King Richard should be told of the treachery of Hastings."

"Aye, that, Catesby, I dare not to do; I could not break in already upon the happiness of His Majesty

with tales of plots and intrigues."

"I say, but, your Grace, he lives upon a volcano's mouth unwittingly, do we but not tell him."

"King Richard thinks worlds of Hastings.

"What would not I risk to be but half as far into the king's good thoughts," quoth Catesby with a sigh.

"Then here lies your chance," quickly spoke Buckingham; "by the pulling down of Hastings you may climb up; there will be one traitor less."

Buckingham had chosen well his confidant. Catesby lost not a moment before he had detailed more lies to King Richard than even Buckingham had told to Catesby.

King Richard was astonished. He would not believe Catesby. But when the Duke of Buckingham corroborated in the main all Catesby's falsehoods and produced documents purporting to have passed between Richmond and Lord Hastings then Richard permitted that Hastings be confined until the truth might be searched out.

This was exactly what the Duke of Buckingham required to suit his purpose.

Once arrested, Hastings was practically dead, for Buckingham used his power and had him brought to trial quickly, ostensibly to show whats trong fealty to the king was his and how enraged he was at any person who could think to circumvent His Majesty.

King Richard had great faith in Buckingham.

Easily did Buckingham and Catesby procure false witnesses and papers, by which Lord Hastings was condemned. Buckingham brought the warrant for the execution to His Majesty to sign.

So moved was King Richard that he wept, and:

"I cannot sign away a life so kind; I cannot thus destroy a man who for so long has been my friend", he said.

"Sorely doth it grieve myself," dissemblingly spake Buckingham, "that Hastings hath brought this upon himself through falseness."

"These judges are horrible men?"

"That be they Your Majesty"

King Richard thought painfully, then:

"Send Lord Hastings into exile," quoth he.

"That he may live, alas, to strike a blow more deadly at Your Majesty."

This said Buckingham with much subtlety. He guessed aright that Richard would remember other exiles.

"God! God! This crown is one of thorns already", groaned the king, for a moment losing hold upon himself.

Resuming stern control of self, he seized a pen from out his private secretary's hand, and scratched the quill through those convolutions which composed his autograph.

Sealing the document, he passed it to the duke.

"Now go with it", cried he; and, casting himself upon a seat, he thrust his hands before his face.

Crushing was the emotion over which he strove to gain control.

Buckingham moved with alacrity, and had Lord Hastings quick beheaded, lest King Richard should relent and countermand the execution order.

Lord Hastings thus was finished.

Buckingham let it go abroad that King Richard had destroyed him merely because he was a friend of the princes in the Tower.

Now come I to relate one of the most lamentable events of my life. You must remember, though, that these were peculiar times. Taking of life was not considered so terrible a crime, the general opinion seeming to be that the end justified the means.

"Yea, although Richard trusted him much, one of the most unscrupulous men in the king's Council was the Duke of Buckingham, as I had reason to realize on several occasions similar to the Lord Hastings affair. He simulated to be plotting for the benefit of King Richard, whilst he contrived to so arrange matters al-

ways that if anything blamable occurred he himself should escape the censure, turning circumstances so that the king might surely come easily into public condem nation.

King Richard was unconsciously happy in the plaudits of the people.

I noticed that the nobles of the king's train were much in consultation. Sometimes I would accidentally overhear some one or more of them bitterly denouncing the hated Woodvilles. I came once past the door of a chamber suddenly and heard the Duke of Buckingham wrathfully exclaim:

"The last Woodville vestige should be obliterated; it can be done!"

Shortly afterward I was encountered by Sir James Tyrrell. In his hand he had an official-looking document.

"Sire," said he, "you are commanded by divers of the king's councillors to carry this to Governor Brackenbury at the Tower in London, with all possible speed."

This Sir James Tyrrell was a hanger-on at King Richard's court whom I had an unaccountable antipathy to, so I answered shortly:

"Prithee deliver me the Council's order."

"I have been commissioned to command thee, Sire," he retorted savagely, scowling at me.

"Of that I know not; I shall take no command from thee," I growled, and brushed past him.

He was terribly annoyed, and cursed me from the bottom of his hazelnut heart, vowing that some day not far distant he would bring me down in the dust at his feet to crave his pardon and spoil some of my fine feathers. Not an answer did I deign him.

As I repassed the chamber door the Duke of Buckingham caught a glance of me and called to me. I entered.

"Have you seen Sir James Tyrrell?" he asked.

"Your Grace, I have," said I.

"Gave he you the order?"

"Naught gave he I."

"Eh?"

"He gave me nothing."

"What said he, then?"

"Ah, he bullied me a little, and ordered me to proceed to London with a message."

"And thou?"

"I answered him in kind; told him to go to the devil with his commands."

"He was deputed by the Councillors of the king to see you," roared Buckingham in wrath.

"I knew that not, Your Grace. He said so; but I would not believe his most insignificant statement though he took an oath on forty bibles. A king's messenger does not rush off at the beck and boo of every underling, let alone an underling of his poor calibre!"

For a moment Buckingham stood with his mouth agape; then he noticed Tyrrell fuming and fussing behind me, and burst into a tremendous laugh. He liked not Tyrrell himself, and was really delighted because I had snubbed the knight.

Tyrrell now was purple and white with suppressed rage, yet he spoke no word. Buckingham took the document from his hand and passed it to me, after which he wrote an order in the king's name for me to hasten its delivery.

"Perhaps," quoth he, "you shall demand the personal signature of His Majesty?"

"Satire you mean that for, Your Grace," said I; "nevertheless not one step toward London do I go without."

He went; and some cock and bull story he told the king, for he returned shortly with the requisite signet and seals.

In no time I was in the saddle and away.

Brackenbury, as your well-red memory will serve you, Sire Brains, was governor of the famous Tower at London, wherein were lodged the two boy princes.

Of course I had no idea of what was in the letter

that I carried; never for a moment suspected I that it had any importance for the princes.

Brackenbury received me heartily, for he was a close friend of my honorable father.

"How now, my boy?" cried he. "Bring you good news or bad?"

"That I cannot tell, Lord Brackenbury," I replied; with which I handed him the letter.

He bade me be seated, and I heard him tear open the document whilst I gazed carelessly through the casement. Suddenly I was startled.

"My God!" ejaculated Lord Brackenbury; "this is damned knavery."

Springing to his feet simultaneously with this outbreak he had thrown over his chair, which clattered on the oaken floor. I hastened to replace it.

Holding his chair with his right hand, he had the letter in his left, and was regarding the missive with a look which was a mixture of anger and bewilderment. He spoke, more to himself than to me:

"Do away with the Princes? Find them another lodging; one from which they cannot return? May I be hanged, drawn and quartered first; and be damned to King Richard."

"Treason! Treason!" I said.

He turned upon me.

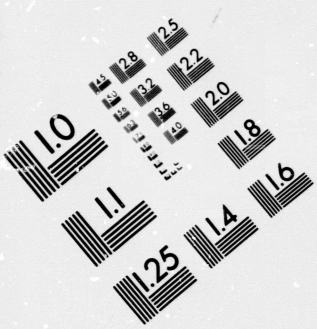
"Aye, 'tis treason", he whispered hoarsely; "treason, treason, treason."

I but watched the working of his agony.

"Nay, nay," he went on; "King Richard hath not signed this. He would not. It merely says: 'it is the king's desire. Buckingham'."

There was a loud singing in my ears at these words, for I recollected the speech of that unscrupulous duke about destroying the last Woodville vestige. Before I could think twice upon the matter, however, Brackenbury had begun again to speak, this time to me directly:

"Tell the Duke of Buckingham that I shall heed



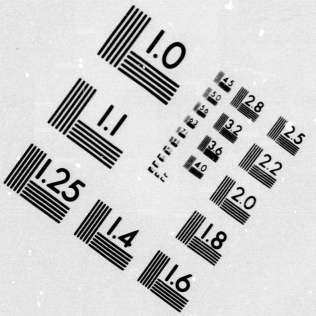
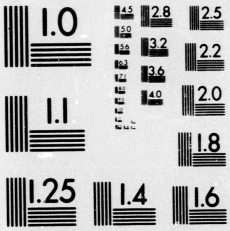
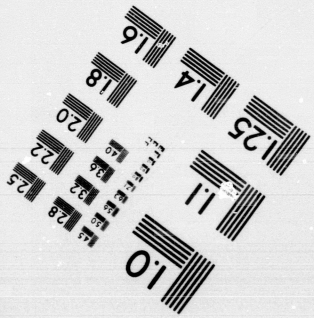
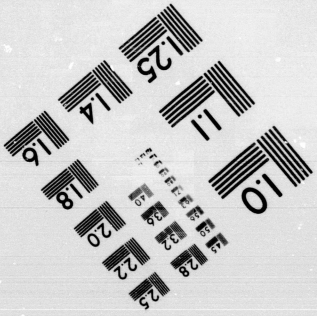




**IMAGE EVALUATION**
**TEST TARGET (MT-3)**



no message in such a serious affair that is not signed and sealed by the hand of King Richard himself."

"Is that all?" asked I.

"It is all."

So back I went.

Buckingham was furious. I deemed for a moment that he would take an apoplectic fit; yea, faith, had he been a stouter man there is no doubt that then he would have died, and King Richard and England would have missed much tribulation. Buckingham was too shrewd though to keep such anger long. I augured from his eye that he had made a deadly resolve.

Being summoned next day to the presence of the king in his private chamber, I had barely entered when the Duke of Buckingham announced himself by his usual loud knocks upon the doorpost and strode into the room.

After greeting and making his obeisance to the king Buckingham glanced at me, and His Majesty motioned that I withdraw.

Scarcely half an hour had gone before I was summoned to the king's presence again. His Majesty passed me a document signed and sealed, addressed in his own hand-writing to Brackenbury. Said His Majesty:

"Thou'lt deliver this immediately."

Shortly was I once more galloping toward London, much racked in my brain as to what this message meant. Surely, I thought, Buckingham had been poisoning the mind of King Richard toward the governor of the Tower.

Afterward I learned about that interview of Buckingham with the king.

"Your Majesty," said the Duke, "there are those in England who still persist to say that only you are the legitimate son of the Duke of York and Cicely of Westmoreland."

"What baseness; where is he who would smirch the honor of my mother?"

"Ah, there are several, Your Majesty; and these

same profess to be acting for your welfare. You see, by proving Edward Fourth a bastard there is escaped the danger of the princes in the Tower becoming heirs-apparent to the throne at any time."

"Explain, Duke; why this innuendo? Do you think my brothers Edward and George were bastards yourself?"

"Nay, Sire, far be that from me. But methinks there is a document in the hands of Brackenbury at the Tower in London which can prove a great deal about your mother's marriage."

"You only think so; you do not know."

"Yea, then, Your Majesty, let us make sure."

"Aye, Buckingham, go search for that document."

"Brackenbury refuses that we shall without some order from Your Majesty."

"Brackenbury is a safe man and true."

"Correctly spoken, Your Majesty; methinks he is too conscientious sometimes."

"That cannot be, Buckingham."

"Your Majesty will pardon my effrontery, but, say I, in this instance Brackenbury is too conscientious."

"How so, Duke?" quoth Richard, somewhat nettled.

"Well, Your Majesty, it is simple. He is a strong friend of York, also strongly inclined to fair play. Therefore, thus do I reason: Richard is king; Brackenbury is his friend. Edward Fourth is dead, God rest him. Brackenbury would like to please Your Majesty; yet would he have no scandal stirred up to malign dead Edward. He deems best to leave well enough alone."

"More praise to his wisdom and his gentleness," the king put in.

"Also," went on Buckingham, "he has sworn that not even the suspicion of a taint shall touch the Rose of Raby."

"Then, Duke, enough is said," quoth Richard with some spirit. "He is resisting in a noble cause. Suffice it that I am the king at your desire, who are chief

among the powerful nobles of this Island."

"That is it, Your Majesty; but let us have documentary proof for the people, that we may show them we have chosen legally as well as wisely."

"Thou art persistent, Buckingham."

"Persistence reaches even Heaven's throne, 'tis said."

"Tut, tut; why palaver?"

"Hearken, Your Majesty: No harm can fall on Brackenbury should yourself indite an order that he deliver for but one night the keys to Tyrrell, whom I can send upon this search. Mayhap he shall find proof that Cicely was formally and truly married ere the birth of Edward; then shall Your Majesty's soul be quiet, and no stain shall mar York's past. Again, should there be not that proof, conditions can remain but as they are, with Richard unmistakably the king. At all events, we shall know what is to know; and that is calming to harassment of the mind."

"Buckingham, how plausible you are. Egad, you could sophisticate the Prince of Hell. I weary of such everlasting argument. Go to; I shall write a note to Brackenbury. Much rather would I though that some more trusty man than Tyrrell had the Tower keys for a single night."

"You misjudge that man, King Richard; I know him well."

"Perhaps too well," said Richard, and he laughed metallically. "Gods, gods," he concluded, that deep sound in his voice, "a man may be proved a bastard any time methinks in England."

Brackenbury's face was rather gloomy when he noted the royal chirography, and the seal imprinted with King Richard's signet-ring.

He read, and was silent for some time; then he said:

"Mystery, mystery. I am commanded by His Majesty to deliver the keys of the Tower to Sir James Tyrrell, until such time as he shall return them, and to

absent myself. Tyrrell is unscrupulous; I fear trouble for those babes. Can this; Oh, can this be King Richard? There is no doubt about it, alas."

I related to him what Buckingham had done so far as I opined.

"Then he has told the king some lie most specious; for I am assured His Majesty can wish the princes not a particle of harm."

"That shall I wager," added I.

"Well, well," said Brackenbury; "these times are reckless, but let us hope for the safety of the children. Tonight I must deliver the keys to Tyrrell and begone myself. Would that I could stay; or that the princes could be spirited away. No, no; the king's order is not to be avoided; and these innocents are strongly guarded."

"You dare not stay," I vouchsafed; "but I may. Conceal me. I shall strive to thwart any diabolism of that cowardly Tyrrell."

"That may be," quoth Brackenbury.

"Let us in," said I, "and have a chat with those unfortunate princes against whose guilelessness the nobility of England now doth concentrate their craftiness."

Surrounded by luxury, there were the princes; but methought they looked care-worn, as if they pined to romp a little with the boys who noised upon the street. We spoke few words before their loneliness became the topic.

"Our sweet mother comes not very oft to visit us. We should rather wish that she could live with us, or that we might go to her presence as of old," quoth Edward, pensively.

"Cheer up, cheer up," I blurted out; "those old days may soon come back again"; and good Brackenbury went spluttering and hawking toward the casement, as though suddenly he had drawn a fly into his wind-pipe with his breath.

"My, my," he cried, "this cough must be the death

of me; how my eyes do water!"

"Sire, sire, you choke," I shouted; and I slapped him between the shoulders until he roared and turned with great show of wrath upon me. Then both the princes laughed most merrily, and gloom for the moment had departed.

Upon the cheffonier I saw a harp, beautifully inlaid with ivory and pearls, a dainty mandolin, a zither, flutes, and other tuneful instruments.

"Those are presents from our Uncle Richard," cried both the boys. "They are so handsome. Is he not kind to us?"

"Indeed he is," said I.

"We have learned some new music, and shall play it to him when he comes again to London," Edward said.

"That shall be a treat," quoth Brackenbury, "for verily no man was ever fonder of the strains of melody than is your Uncle Richard."

Which was a truth. His court was ever crowded with good minstrels from all countries. Aye, have I often seen him stop upon the highway to listen to a strolling band. Should any of their members play a little more bewitchingly than did the rest, Richard had these added to his private troupe at once.

Music, Sire Brains, could move King Richard to his deeper depths. Saints and angels, how he did love sweet sounds!

Next to the chase, the tournament and hawking he was enamored of the violin. He oft-times essayed to draw the bow across the strings, but as often did he cast the instrument away because he could not draw from it that music which his spiritism sought.

Times and times have I heard him curse vindictively and slip his fingers in his ears when he chanced to overhear some idiot grating on a fiddle.

"Great gods! he would cry; there is one more of those creatures who may have a soul for music and ability to make but discord. Why does he torment his

soul and mine?"

But his nephews, although so young, were sweet musicians. They played and sang for Brackenbury and myself, it seemed so sadly, until we were compelled to say adieu to hide our bursting emotion.

"My Lord," said Brackenbury, when we were alone, "never was I touched so in my life. I could think of naught but swan-songs. Guard well those innocents to-night, Sire; they seem to me already of the high angelic choir."

I grasped hard his hand.

Accordingly I remained inside the Tower that night, little imagining what friends would bear me company.

My place of hiding was close upon the entrance to the apartments of the little princes. Bending forward from my dark nook, I could view the dimly-lighted corridor from end to end.

Night crept on.

The monotonous tramp, tramp of the sentries keeping guard over the princes' rooms were the only sounds.

I heard a clock strike midnight. Almost at the same instant I detected a noise toward the far end of the passage. Watching, I saw three men approaching. One was Tyrrell. His two companions were the most abandoned-looking rascals upon whom I had ever cast gaze.

They were challenged by the soldiers. Tyrrell gave the password, then exhibited a paper to the one in charge of the guard. Without any parley, the soldiers were filed up and marched down the corridor, leaving Tyrrell and his two villains in charge.

After a few words to the men, Tyrrell also departed.

Wretch that he was, I felt like leaping at his throat as he passed.

Tyrrell's departure was the signal for the two remaining ruffians to work. They unlocked a door and began to pass surreptitiously through a slight opening. Must I do anything, now was the time; so I slipped toward them swiftly, expecting to follow in when once

they had gone from the door. Chagrin and horror took hold upon me as I placed my hand upon the latch; the door was barred on the other side.

Recollecting that there was another way toward the princes' apartments, I sped to find it, only to discover, as I feared, that here also had the murderers forestalled any intrusion.

Galloping back to the first door, I hammered at it with a vengeance and called upon them to open in the name of King Richard. Come what might, I was determined to compel attention.

For some moments they heeded not my noise. Then I shouted several times at the top of my voice:

"Harm not the princes. Hurt them and ye shall hang by order of King Richard."

With such quickness was the door pulled open that I well-nigh fell my length upon the floor.

"W'at in 'ell do ee mean?" asked he who stood there, "we 'ave the King's horder."

"It is forged," said I.

"An' 'ave you a countermand?" asked he.

"A verbal one," quoth I, as bravely as possible

"Verbs be damned," he cried, and made to slam the door; but I was quick and passed half through.

By this the other murderer had come from an inner chamber.

"Wot in 'ell's ee want?" he queried, with a grimace.

"Hoh, 'ell knows," said the other.

"Maike hit ha triple job; knock 'im on the 'ead; the two young uns his a-smothered an' done; not a bleedin' kick in em."

Sire Brains, at that my blood surged; then I felt myself grow stern and cold, and my muscles tautened and hardened as does the wet moor-line of a schooner before it snaps.

My hand sprang to my sword; but these were beasts, not men; so, on second thought, my gloved fist came crashing up beneath the nighest villain's jaw and

he fell thump upon the floor.

Like a frenzied lion I leaped after the second wretch, who had stepped somewhat aback as his companion dropped. He could not escape me, for the ante-room in which we were was small. Quicker than I can tell it to you, Sire Brains, that murderer and I were tied up in a knot. Gods! It was a struggle grim and great. He was strong of muscle and strong of odor, which latter went well-high to overcome me first. From my mother had I inherited a keen aversion to the unwashed and filth of every kind.

Tusseling hither and across the room, sometimes incommoded by my scabbard mixing with my knees and shins, I noticed that the fallen villain was coming to his feet again. Here would be an odds of two to one. Knowledge of that egged me to a fiercer strain, and I battled viciously to reach the door behind which usually slept the princes. Fully was my spirit now aroused and my strength attuned, the preliminary struggle having apparently acted but to limber up my muscles. I gathered in the burly heap of flesh and sent him bumping through the opening.

Inside the chamber, by the rushlight's lowly glimmer, I had a view that sickened me, that unmanned me, that sank my heart into my boots, that sent a yellow blur before my eyes. Ye devils! There lay the two youngsters, side by side, their faces livid and distorted, their eyeballs bulging and the terror-gleam yet in them. How frightful!

Thought of the authors of this diabolism had gone from me as I stepped to the couch-side with a meagre hope that I might find some lingering breath in the poor wee bodies, or at the worst that I might close those terrible eyes.

How vividly I mentally recalled their music and their singing!

Not even time had I to guess at the method of the murder ere I was attacked behind and most viciously belabored with a footstool in the hands of one rascal and

an iron wielded by the other.

I fell upon the bed where lay the princes, and insensibility overcame me.

When I revived, I heard the gurgle of water, and felt that I was lying on the ground in the open air. They had not made a triple job. I was still alive. I heard low speaking, and was aware that there were persons near.

"No, do not put him in the river. I have a better plan. I shall degrade him in the eyes of the king. Go, and leave him to me."

This was the voice of Tyrrell.

I tried to rise, but I felt I could not. I had been roughly handled My body pained everywhere.

Tyrrell came to me with a bottle in his hand.

I groaned.

"The King's Messenger is not dead yet, eh?" he enquired sarcastically.

"You'll pay for this," said I; and again I groaned.

"Take a sup," quoth Tyrrell; and he put the bottle's neck to my lips.

I turned away my head; but some of the liquor got into my mouth, and I found it to be strong wine. Of course I feared it was poisoned; though now I know it was not.

Tyrrell pretended vexation at my refusal of the wine, and poured it over my face and clothes until I smelled like unto a tap-room.

Without more ado, having given me that baptism of wine, Tyrrell, swearing a vindictive oath, fetched me over the pate with the bottle, thus causing my relapse into helplessness.

Long did I lie thus, for when I recovered darkness had gone and the day was somewhat advanced. With difficulty and much pain I got upon my feet. What a sight I was!

My clothes were all torn and dirty; my face felt to be a mass of bruises; to cap all, I smelt horridly of intoxicants.

Here was a jolly predicament for a King's Courier and a nobleman like myself to be in, who prided himself much upon his personal appearance. I tried to guess what would happen should a certain young damsel see me in that fearful state.

Gods! What would the king say?

Beside, he would be wroth with me for dilatoriness in bearing to him Brackenbury's acknowledgement of the royal message, which I had delivered to the governor the night before.

How brave I had been in the cause of the princes! How ignominiously and cruelly I had been foiled!

Both the princes were dead. I was sure of that. How vividly I did picture the struggles of the two poor little fellows beneath the murderous cushing of the assassins!

Even did I not know what disposition had been made of their bodies.

I felt sick, and almost swooned again.

I resolved to go to the king as soon as possible and tell His Majesty every circumstance. Mentally I was convinced that Richard wotted not that the youths had been killed.

Laboriously I walked to the hostelry where lodged my horse. Here I was commiserated by the landlord, who, in spite of my protests, laughingly insinuated that I had been on a spree; and he was somewhat huffed because I had not spent my money in his house.

I ate a hasty meal, washed myself and made my raiment as presentable as possible; but I could not obliterate the bruise marks from my face, nor get rid of the winesmells from my clothes.

Finally I mounted, and put spurs to my horse on the road to Warwick, from which town I expected the king had departed by that time.

Furiously did I ride, stopping only twice on the road, and, myself and my horse thoroughly fatigued, I arrived in the town of Warwick at an early hour on the following morning, resolved to see the king as soon as

practicable and tell His Majesty the truth about the villainy of Buckingham and Tyrrell.

Sleep was a truant, in spite of my fatigue; so that it was with relief, though with some trepidation, that I at last found the hour arrived when I should see the king.

King Richard, as I have told you, Sire Brains, was the most self-controlled of mortals, yet I detected that he looked somewhat aghast when I appeared with my discolored face and crestfallen mien caused by the pain of my limbs. Then his nostrils sniffed the alcoholic aroma of my person, and his face darkened.

"Hast been at the king's business, man?" he queried sternly.

"Your Majesty, I have."

"Those bruises, that battered drapery, and, worst of all, that distillery smell, were they acquired in the performance of your duty to the king?"

"Aye, that were they, Your Majesty, I am compelled to answer."

"Compelled?"

"Yea, Your Majesty."

"You should be compelled by no one but your king."

"Circumstances, not persons, Your Majesty, compel me."

King Richard assumed his cuttingly sarcastic humor. Said he:

"Young men may enjoy, if it be enjoyment, an occasional debauch in hours of leisure; but when a King's Messenger is under orders and drinks to the befuddlement of his brain and to the befoulment of himself, he becomes a traitor."

"Your Majesty, I can explain if" —

"Go from the presence of the king!"

"Your Majesty, 'tis but my duty to obey; I have a verbal message from the Tower."

"Deliver it most rapidly, man, lest it spoil in your keeping."

"The princes are dead, Your Majesty."

"What!"

"Even the sons of the late King Edward are no more, Your Majesty."

Never before had I seen him so completely unmanned; he took this even worse than the beheading of Lord Hastings. He leaped upon his feet, and as I made my adieu he commanded:

"Remain!"

I returned, facing him.

"Ill will it fare with thee, Sire," he said, "if in this you lie. 'Tis no subject for a joke. Sooner would I that King Richard himself were dead than that those words should be true."

"I crave permission of Your Majesty that I may speak."

"Proceed."

With that told I His Majesty every item of my escapade. As I spoke on, his face turned pale and his features hardened into such a look as even his visage had never borne before.

When I had finished he summoned a lackey and bade him search for the Duke of Buckingham, and say that the king had desire for that nobleman's instant presence.

Soon the Duke strode in.

King Richard paced accross the room and back.

"Buckingham," he said, "I seek advice. One of my most trusted friends hath turned traitor; how shall I punish him?"

Buckingham knew Richard well; so he was cautious.

"Is this false friend now in Your Majesty's power?" cooly enquired the duke.

"Nay, then, he is not."

"Then when Your Majesty catches him let him be punished."

"Buckingham speaks imprudently."

"I did but joke, Your Majesty. In earnest I shall say there are traitors and seeming traitors; perhaps

this friend is but a seeming traitor to Your Majesty."

King Richard watched him keenly, folded his arms and said:

"Fox."

"I am obliged to Your Majesty for the compliment," added Buckingham, and he bowed low mockingly.

The king pursued:

"Dost know the princes, my nephews, lodged in the Tower at London, have been basely assassinated?"

"Say it not, Your Majesty!"

"Aye, smothered in their innocent sleep."

"But now am I apprised of it, Your Majesty. Yet, were such the case, I should say it were an act of Providence, to secure more firmly on thy brow the crown of England."

"False, false friend," quoth the king. "So this is why you had yon order from me, asking Brackenbury to give up the Tower keys, for but one night, mayhap? Hast found the document bearing on my mother's marriage which thou made such pretence of wanting, and which thou saidst Brackenbury refused to deliver?"

"Sir James Tyrrell hath not yet come with it, Your Majesty."

"Tyrrell be damned; and also thou. Fetch the princes well guarded to my presence before two days, else thy headless body shall be made dogmeat."

"Give me Your Majesty's warrant for their deliverance and I shall go at once," said Buckingham, saluting the king profoundly.

The king's secretary was called and ordered to prepare the document, which he did forthwith. King Richard signed and sealed it, then delivered it to Buckingham.

Buckingham left.

I was permitted by the king to retire and nurse myself back into respectability.

During the following day the king continued his progress through the northern and midland counties.

I have told you that I flattered myself the king had

a fondness for me. This he deigned now to show. Not another word did His Majesty utter about my alleged spree. I knew he believed my story.

Once and again when I noticed a look of pain in his eyes I knew he was thinking of the murdered princes, and wondering by what subterfuge Buckingham would try to hoodwink and cajole him. His Majesty was not to be kept long in suspense.

On October the twelfth, while we were in the city of Lincoln, about the time that Buckingham's mission should have been accomplished, that caitiff Catesby, who sowehow had curried favor with the king, came riding in great haste, fairly bursting with the importance of the news he held.

Personally I am of the opinion that King Richard had no liking for this man, but His Majesty tolerated him because he was useful as an unscrupulous spy.

I say that Catesby was a lying sneak, and false as Mephisto.

His news to the king now was that Buckingham had had a rebellion already planned all through the south of England at the time that he ostensibly left for London to bring the princes from the Tower. Instead of speeding to London he had gone to join his forces, and was using the king's warrant to inflame the people by saying that it had been issued to himself along with orders to put the princes to death. Force was required to save the lives of the youths, Buckingham was telling the people.

To show the perfidy of Catesby, it is enough to say that Buckingham had entrusted him with a message to the Earl of Richmond, who was about to land a force of men from Brittany and claim the crown of England for himself. Catesby instead had gone to King Richard.

His Majesty was more perturbed over the assassination of his nephews than about the rising against himself, for now there was no doubt that Buckingham had had the princes murdered.

For once I was convinced in my bones that Catesby

spoke truth when he said:

"Your Majesty, Buckingham has been murdering to clear the way for the Earl of Richmond to usurp the throne of England. All obstacles are at last removed excepting——"

"King Richard," grimly added His Majesty.

"This rising is to remove that final obstacle, Your Majesty," quoth Catesby.

"Enough!" cried Richard; and he laughed.

By his countenance I read that Buckingham's doom was sealed, could His Majesty but encounter him. As for Henry Tudor, the Earl of Richmond, King Richard feared him not.

That rebellion, Sire Brains, as you have read, was as short-lived as it deserved. Nature was an ally of King Richard in the cause of right.

King Richard, on the same day, immediately after the departure of Catesby, sent for the royal private secretary, and dictated a letter to the Chancellor, then severely ill in his bed at London. This letter I remember was in substance as follows:

"By the King.—Right Reverend Father in God, and right trusty and well-beloved, we greet you well, and in our heartiest wise thank you for the manifold presents that your servants in your behalf have given us since we have been here; which we assure you we took and accepted with good heart; and so we have cause. By God's grace we intend to advance toward our rebel and traitor the Duke of Buckingham, to resist and withstand his malicious purpose, for which cause it behoveth us to have our Great Seal here. We being informed that, because of such diseases and infirmities as you sustain in your person, you cannot to your ease conveniently come unto us with the same, we hereby charge you that forthwith upon the sight of this you safely do send our Great Seal unto us, receiving this our letter for your sufficient discharge in that behalf. Even under our signet at our City of Lincoln, the 12th day of October."

As soon as the secretary had finished writing, the king added this postscript with his own hand:

"We would most gladly you came yourself, if that you may, and if you may not we pray you not to fail, but to accomplish in all diligence our said commandment, to send our Seal incontinent upon the sight hereof, as we trust you, with such as you trust and the officers pertaining to attend with it. Here, loved be God, our mind is all well and truly determined to resist the malice of him that had best cause to be true, the Duke of Buckingham, the most untrue creature living. With God's grace we shall not be long until we are in those parts and subdue his malice. We assure you there was never falser traitor."

With which rode I out, and bore the missive to the Chancellor.

Forthwith, with the usual ceremony and care, the Great Seal was by the Chancellor sent to the king.

The professed object of Buckingham's rising, as I have said, was to rescue the princes from their imprisonment, so termed by that Duke and his officers; but shortly after Buckingham had been proclaimed leader he sent forth the news that King Richard had contrived assassination of the boys. Thus, ostensibly, the object of the rebellion was changed to revenge.

How ceaselessly and rapidly I rode on the king's errands at that time only His Majesty and myself could have told.

I got news for the king that, in conjunction with the expected arrival of the Earl of Richmond, the 18th of October had been fixed for the rising. Buckingham raised his standard on that day at Brecknock, whilst Dorset, St. Leger and others mustered their followers at preconcerted stations. In Kent the rebels met at Maidstone and Rochester, proceeded to Gravesend, and went thence to Guildford. In Berkshire they gathered at Newbury; and in the west Salisbury and Exeter were chosen. There was a coincident movement in nearly every southern county.

Failure, nevertheless, was soon to descend upon them.

Floods in the river Severn stopped the progress of Buckingham ; the greater part of Richmond's fleet was dispersed by a storm, so that he dare not land. The rebellion needed hardly any putting down.

When it was found how matters stood, Dorset and most of the other ring-leaders fled to Brittany.

King Richard and our forces marched on to Exeter without a blow being struck.

Buckingham was not worse than scores of other conspirators in England only that he was practically their leader and chief caballer, so when I learned that Catesby, the coward, had contrived to have him betrayed into King Richard's hands I was somewhat sorry.

At Salisbury Buckingham was beheaded without form of trial, and the populace shouted :

" Thus perish all King Richard's false friends and enemies !"

We entered London in triumph once more on the 26th November, when King Richard restored his Great Seal to the keeping of Lord Chancellor Russell.

Thus had the justice of King Richard's cause been vindicated.

We hoped for quietude.

His Majesty did find the opening of the year 1484 serene. Not having just then any disaffection to fight, he was enabled to meet the Lords and the Commons of his realm on the day appointed for the assembling of parliament.

To give you an idea, Sire Brains, of how energetic our new king was, and with what celerity he could travel, let me tell you that he made a swift progress into Kent in the few days before the assembling of the Houses. At Canterbury on the tenth of January, he was at Sandwich on the 16th, and had returned to London by the 22nd of that month, on which day he opened parliament in person.

I was present, Sire Brains, at that opening, and I

remember well the customary oration, which was delivered by the Bishop of Lincoln, as Chancellor. He exhorted the assembly to unity, peace, temperance and moderation. Allusion was made by him to the many distinguished persons who had perished from evil counsellors; and while he spoke thus he laid especial stress upon the fall of the Duke of Buckingham, holding up his fate as a warning to future inciters of rebellion.

Sir William Catesby got his reward, for on the day following the opening of parliament he was elected Speaker.

things.

Did he not give a safe-guard to the wife of that arch-rebel, Alexander Cheyney, and grant to her the custody of her husband's lands and all his property?

Did he not order the officers and tenants settled on Lady Rivers as her jointure to pay to her all their rents and duties?

By my sword, he took off the sequestration he had put on the lands of an out-law, that that man's wife might have the benefit.

been so easily tricked into allowing his execution ever attended the king. Just one month after the death of Hastings Richard signed at Reading an official instrument by which he covenanted to protect the lady and her children in all their possessions, to suffer none to do them wrong, to save to them their wardships and other just rights, and to assist them upon all occasions as their good and gracious sovereign lord.

Listen, Sire Brains:

Permission sent he to the widowed Duchess of Buckingham to come to London with her children and her servants, and gave her an annuity of two hundred marks. Even the perfidious Buckingham's widow!

Still, Sire Brains, you must have read of these

To the widow of Lord Hastings he entrusted the keeping of all her castles and presented her with the wardship and marriage of her son and heir. He had loved Lord Hastings; and remorse that he should have

numerous civilities and courtesies to the ladies of his political enemies, which many other kings had not done, Sire Brains.

"Why should I add to their sorrows," he said to me one day, from his nobleness of heart. "Griefs we all have that cannot be escaped, but as the king it is my duty to lessen the tribulations of my people so far as I have power. These persons called enemies are also of my realm. My soul doth pity them. A father does not destroy his erring children, but loves them even as he does his steadfast ones."

Although Lord Oxford was an implacable foe to Richard, even to his death on earth, yet did His Majesty grant to his lady a pension of one hundred pounds a year during the earl's exile and hostility.

to the pages of history to show you, Sire Brains, that some of the best laws England ever had were passed during his meteoric reign.

Richard's path was one not of roses.

His son, heir-apparent, died that same year, only eleven years old. King Richard grieved keenly.

Then followed the death of his beloved Queen Anne.

How base and prejudiced are mortals to accuse the king of murdering her, that he might marry his niece Elizabeth! He did not do so. He loved his wife well until she died, after which he felt bitterly the loss; of that I often had good evidence.

Sorrow had made a sad, sad man of Richard, but through everything he went and never became morose or lost his innate gentleness of heart. He showed

Richard had called his son after his beloved brother.

Next to be passed was an act stating that King Richard, moved with benignity and pity and laying aside the great rigor of the law, had granted his grace and pardon to divers persons culpable in the recent rebellion. The leaders of the rising, however, were pronounced rebels and traitors; so, being convicted of high treason, their estates were forfeited to the crown.

There is no requirement for my enumerating all the acts of King Richard; enough have been committed

Then forthwith an act was passed for the settlement of the crown upon King Richard and his heirs, with a recapitulation of his title. The conclusion of the bill to which parliament assented was "that the high and excellent Prince Edward, son of our said sovereign Lord King Richard the Third, be heir-apparent to succeed him in the crown and royal dignity."

Acts of good-nature and kindness to the female sex were continually Richard's, I tell you, Sire Brains. He was no unnatural hater of women. Many annuities did he settle on widows and other ladies. To one he paid the arrears of a pension granted by Edward Fourth, although at that time, remember, Sire Brains, it was a rare act for a king to heed his forerunner's debts and bounties.

To Lady Dynham King Richard donated four tons of wine every year.

You may well smack your lips, Sire Brains.

While he was Duke of Gloucester he made several annual allowances, and these he confirmed when he became king.

He settled a small annuity on the widow of a herald, and a larger one on the sister of Lord Lovell.

Could these acts of kindness have been done by a king of a malicious, envious and brutal disposition?

Let me tell of a few more:

Gifts gave he to the monks of an abbey that had been burned down, also to a merchant who had suffered loss in trade. He granted protection for asking alms to a man whose dwelling-house and property, with thirteen tenements, had been consumed by fire, to the man's utter undoing. Not only that, but the king recommended him as having kept a good household by which many poor creatures had been refreshed.

Was His Majesty, Sire Brains, called upon to pay the debts of the Duke of Buckingham, or those of the Bishop of Exeter, who pursued Richard with malignity

to his end?

Great swords and battle-axes! The king granted a commission to the Hermit of the Chapel of Reculver to receive alms for the re-building of the roof of that structure, which had been ordained for the burial of those who should perish by storms.

Beside all these he gave hundreds of what might be called religious benefactions, not to speak of generosity unknown to all but himself and the Greatest One.

There were instances where he granted annuities for good services done to his father.

What kind of a temper, Sire Brains, do these and similar actions display?

There is nothing of your damned common, cruel, crooked-backed Richard shown forth here.

Let the glasses jingle, Sire Brains. I shall be calmer; but is it not clear that our King Richard had human sympathies, as you would call them, of an eminent order?

But to go on:

Sore, sore, Sire Brains, as were King Richard's sorrows, yet no trouble weighed so heavily upon him as the murder of his two nephews. That he never forgot. Yea, he would have abandoned the throne and crown of England but that he new none lived to follow him except yon weak incapable, the Earl of Richmond, Henry Tudor.

Many times did I watch His Majesty; and when those fits of gloom stole over him I was torn with pain, upon the heels of which came anger because there was not one person whom I might slay for bringing this on him, poor man.

What! Tyrrell and Catesby?

There burned within me that desire to hack them in a million pieces; what galled me most was that they knew it, and enjoyed my emasculated wrath. Tyrrell got his deserts quite soon, as you know, Sire Brains; but Catesby remained much honored in the land. Often did I try to raise a quarrel with him, that I might

kill him; but he was too shrewd a coward to let himself be shown a coward.

Astonished! You are astonished, Sire Brains?

Let me whisper to you: those were the days of days. If a miscreant slapped my face back-handed or otherwise affronted me, I did not run peddling to a police-court. Nay, Sire Brains, I clapped my hand upon my weapon thus, and thus requited me!

Ah, soothe thee, soothe thee, Sire Brains; although this table is not oaken, as it should be, yet shall I not split it. Terrible I may look, but my instincts truly are as soft as carded wool.

This divergence, I shall admit, was quite uncalled for; I but lived in retrospect. Now let me proceed:

King Richard felt bitterly the fact that Elizabeth believed him guilty of the murder of her children. She had had speech with His Majesty; and how cuttingly she upbraided him!

"'Twas but a coward's deed," she said; "and again, "usurper Richard, you are a caitiff to deny it, and try to throw the blame upon a nobleman slain by yourself forsooth because he knew too particularly of your cruel action."

King Richard's face was fearful to behold; yet said he not one word in self-defence. He knew that would be useless.

Ye Gods! How I did wish the Lady Grey had been born a man.

Peace, peace; sit you quiet there, Sire Brains.

Shortly after that I made occasion to interview the widowed queen, that I might disabuse her mind about the murder of her sons. As well might I have saved my breath; in fact, 't were better I had never spoken, for:

"Murderer of my babes," she cried, in scorn begat of blinded mother's love; "methinks also that thou wert one of those foul men who took my children's lives away."

"My mission was to save," I pleaded.

"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.

Would that King Dick's strong arm had reached him on that fatal Bosworth day; of which more later. To go on.

It was known that the Earl of Richmond was making extensive preparations in Brittany to descend upon the throne of England a second time.

King Richard was no coward; he feared not the bastard would-be usurper, let him come when he might.

Instant means were adopted to repel the invasion. Every port was vigilantly guarded; the southern and eastern coasts were patrolled by armed vessels; and mandates were issued calling upon every man possessing landed property to join the royal standard.

Transmission of messages was accelerated remarkably by the king. He had horsemen stationed twenty miles apart, so that a letter could be delivered at a distance of over two hundred miles in forty-eight hours.

I had again become a strong favorite with His Majesty, and was near him well-nigh all the time. I was present and saw that he received the intelligence with joy when he was at length told by his emissaries that the Earl of Richmond, with the permission of King Charles of France, had raised an army of three thousand adventurers, most of them Normans, and that a fleet was lying in the mouth of the river Seine to transport them to England.

King Richard acted with his customary shrewd quickness. He took a central position at Nottingham, whence he marched forth proudly on Tuesday the sixteenth of August, 1485, at the head of twelve thousand men.

So went we forward; and on the evening of the same day we entered Leicester.

Usurper Richmond had landed at Milford with his adventurers on the sixth of August, and had marched through the northern districts of Wales, where were a people in the interests of the Stanleys, upon whom the Earl's chief reliance was placed.

Notwithstanding that fact, Richmond's army did

not increase much. He had only four thousand men when he entered Shrewsbury. Thence he advanced by Newport, Stafford, Tamworth and Atherstone toward our force, maintaining meanwhile a secret correspondence with the perfidious Stanleys.

Yea, unfortunately, on their support depended the unworthy cause of Henry Tudor.

At last, on Sunday, the 21st of August, the two armies encamped on Redmoor plain, one mile from the market town of Bosworth. We were in sight of each other.

How deplorable was King Richard's return to those vile "Benevolences" which he had revoked in the forepart of his reign! Yet money was required for war. Men even in your days, Sire Brains, take remarkable steps to "raise the wind."

I knew that on the morrow we should see one of the most desperate fights on record. If Lord Stanley and his brother, Sir William Stanley, held true to Richard, the day would be ours.

Yes, yes; there we were; the crown was going to be fiercely combatted for, and thus I summed the situation up: Richard was the better versed in arms; Henry was the better served. Richard was brave as a lion; Henry was a blanked coward.

Our men lay well.

Henry's camp ran in a straight line, about three hundred yards from a brook he had crossed, toward Ambeame Hill, sometimes within the wood and again on the meadows at the west called White-Moors. His was a magnificent looking force; but we were the men to fight!

Now do I come to that fateful 22nd of August.

On the morning of that day our armies were drawn up in battle array. Lord Stanley and his brother had their men in an intermediate position, from which they could easily fall in with either party.

Every man in our ranks looked resolved to win and live—or fight to the death. The archers had their

fingers itching at their bowstrings; and the spear-men grasped their weapons and were stern.

But there was delay.

By-and-bye, up rode furiously to King Richard Sir Robert Dymoke, wrath personified, though he gave not vent to anger before His Majesty.

"My Sovereign Lord the King," he cried, "the Earl of Northumberland hath withdrawn his large force to a neutral distance; I fear me he with Stanley hath traitorous intentions toward Your Majesty."

King Richard considered for a moment.

"I shall go forth, with Your Majesty's command," went on the Champion Dymoke, "to challenge bastard Henry; aye, with another traitor Lord or two at his back."

"Nay," said His Majesty; "but await a short time the tardy answer of Stanley."

"Methinks," quoth Dymoke, "that he vascillates already, with a strong inclination to drop toward Henry. Were it not that Your Majesty hath his son, Lord Strange, a hostage, and that he fears our valor may prevail even above such numbers, there would have been no doubt."

King Richard slowly nodded his head, saying:

"Aye; so, so; it is vain to wait"; then, with a vigor and fire in his eyes:

"Let the battle begin!"

Good Lord! How swiftly those soldiers buckled their helms! How rapidly those archers bent their bows and frushed their feathers! How quickly the bill-men shook their bills and proved their staves!

I felt the blood surge within me with eagerness when I saw how ready all were to maul the enemy in front, in spite of the terrible odds against us. Such experiences are memorized eternally, Sire Brains.

For a minute there was a fearful pause; then blared out the trumpets with the order to advance.

With one accord our soldiers shouted:

"On for King Richard! Down with the Rich-

mond!"

The bloody struggle had begun.

Like the roar of an avalanche, the king's archers let fly their arrows; the Earl's bowmen retorted; and for a time nothing could be heard save the rattle of the barbed points against shield and helmet. Many found vital openings; men fell here and there all around; but the ranks were sharply closed, and on we moved.

When these death-dealing arrow-showers began to lull, both armies were entangled, smiting each other hand to hand with a vigor that produced much slaughter everywhere.

Gods! I had not much time then to notice, for the fight raged furiously around us.

One of the first to fall upon our side was the brave Duke of Norfolk. Just for a moment his son, the Earl of Surrey, bent over his dying father, then, eager to give vengeance, he called to his followers and fought his way into the thickest of the fray. Heavens, but he did mow down those wretches! Until finally he was surrounded and taken prisoner.

Through it all came the cry:

"Lord Stanley moves to join forces with the Earl of Richmond."

This was a fact; but the Earl of Northumberland preferred discretion, and remained a passive spectator at a distance.

Demons! King Richard seemed super-human to me at that time in his enormous activity. One of his blows sufficed for any man.

Victory still trembled in the balance; and that movement on the part of Lord Stanley determined King Richard on a sagacious and daring stroke for victory.

"Follow me, ye knights who may," he roared; "I go to slay this Henry and end the struggle."

Off he charged at the words, with them who heard thundering at his heels. In his left hand His Majesty carried his spear; but he did not use it. His trust was in his right arm and his sword.

Sir William Brandon, standard-bearer for the Earl of Richmond, was the first man to encounter us. He was as if fascinated at the intrepidity of the king, and could neither resist nor depart, but appeared to fall by his own astonishment. Richard at one stroke cleft his head, and contemptuously cast the standard down. This was a red dragon upon a ground of green and white silk, the ensign of Cadwallador, the last king of the Britons and Henry's maternal ancestor.

Crashing along, King Richard next collided with the powerful Sir John Cheney, whom he unhorsed with little difficulty.

Sire Brains, were these the acts of a hunchbacked, puny or decrepit fellow with a withered arm?

Not the least attention did he pay to the warriors on his right and left, except to demolish them who came in his path, which he was cutting toward vile Henry. That cowardly wretch was thoroughly frightened, and continually moved backward, allowing his people to crowd between himself and the fierce on-coming king.

Great devils! How we pounded in pell-mell behind the king, tumbling the dunderheads hither and thither!

Truly Richmond was in the utmost danger, and fortune was favoring us. We were winning the battle by the king's valor on our side and the consternation we were creating on the other side.

Here was a critical moment; victory was quivering toward the king. So saw that other whitelivered Stanley, Sir William; for he instantly closed with his three thousand men and nearly surrounded the king and us, preventing succor from our forces.

Thus by perfidy and dint of numbers did he turn the fortunes of the day against us. Had Sir William deferred his help another minute the victory had been ours, for verily King Richard would have slain the Earl of Richmond.

Yea, and that same Henry knew it. Afterward he said that Sir William had come in time to save his life, but that he had stayed away long enough to endanger

it.

Seeing our desperate condition, we fought but to sell our lives most dear. King Richard had sworn that he never would surrender, so we cared not to out-live His Majesty.

One by one, after terrible combatting, they cut down our party of knights, until there remained but King Richard, Dymoke and myself. Our horses had been slain, and we fought standing.

Brutal hordes of Richmond's horsemen strove with might and main to crush us, themselves out of our reach. Some we pulled from their chargers and slew.

King Richard had yet but one aim—to reach the Earl of Richmond. As he ferociously parried and struck he continued to press toward the place where rode the earl. Back to back with the king, I struggled after him, the gallant Dymoke seeming to guard us all around.

Seeing the great disadvantage of our arms, as there was a lull in the terrible onslaught, caused by the glut of warriors' corpses and the carcases of chargers, King Richard shouted:

"A horse, Dymoke; a horse! As you love me get me a horse, 'til I pursue that caitiff Richmond. Let me but come at him, I shall make two halves of him, one leg to each."

"A horse, eh?" snarled the leader of a band of hostile knights who came prancing their steeds on top of us; "here is a horse."

And he made a terrific lunge at His Majesty with a spear.

Dymoke was too quick though. With a swoop of his heavy sword, he smashed the spear that would have slain the king, and before the attacking knight could straighten himself Dymoke had seized him by the neck and brought him clattering to the earth. Not one word spake that insulting Sir again; his back was broken.

Then the rush became more than we could stand.

I saw the king sink down, weak at last from his innumerable wounds, and at the same time my legs became as wool.

One crushing blow upon my head and all was dark. Dymoke's great sturdy figure leaping here and there, whilst his sword was smiting furiously, was the last scene before my vanishing sight.

When my consciousness returned I raised my head to see where lay the king. He was gone; but Dymoke rested on the ground close by, his sword still in his grasp, and he surrounded by a ring of cloven-skulled warriors.

Not far away, I heard a noisy tumult and a cheering for "King Henry." Inwardly I cursed him. Then came they riding past, and, horrors incarnate, what did I see?

There was the nude body of his Noble Majesty King Richard cast athwart a horse, which was being led behind the Earl of Richmond.

I groaned in spirit.

Thus went they "triumphantly" to Leicester.

King Richard verily was dead; realizing that, I fell back myself and cast off my earthly shell; which I had no sooner done than I began to live eternally with that gallant Richard and those brave warriors for whom and beside whom I had fought.

We hovered over that ghoulish cavalcade, all wrath now strangely gone, pitying mortals who could take delight or satisfaction from an exhibition of that kind. They had but the casing of the spirit-part; we had the true being, our Richard.

Aye, repugnance arose within the Earth people's minds against the usurping Tudor who had ordered and was countenancing the display of horridness.

To the town hall of Leicester went the sanguinary cortege and there the body of the king was hideously exposed for two days. For all Henry cared there it might have stayed; but some of the better elements

among the men of those days, the Grey Friars, took it up and buried it in their own church, without ceremony. Service they held, but anything more would have drawn down upon them the vindictive anger of the ruling power.

Thus was King Richard foully undone by four English noblemen—the two Stanleys, Shrewsbury and Northumberland—who should have been, and were professedly, his devoted adherents. Enemies Richard had feared not; but this successful plot was concocted by false friends.

Many more truths, historic and spiritic, might I tell you, Sire Brains but this was the main desire—that you should learn of Richard Third as he was. I have put you upon the right trail of thought, so shall I say:

"Good night."

---

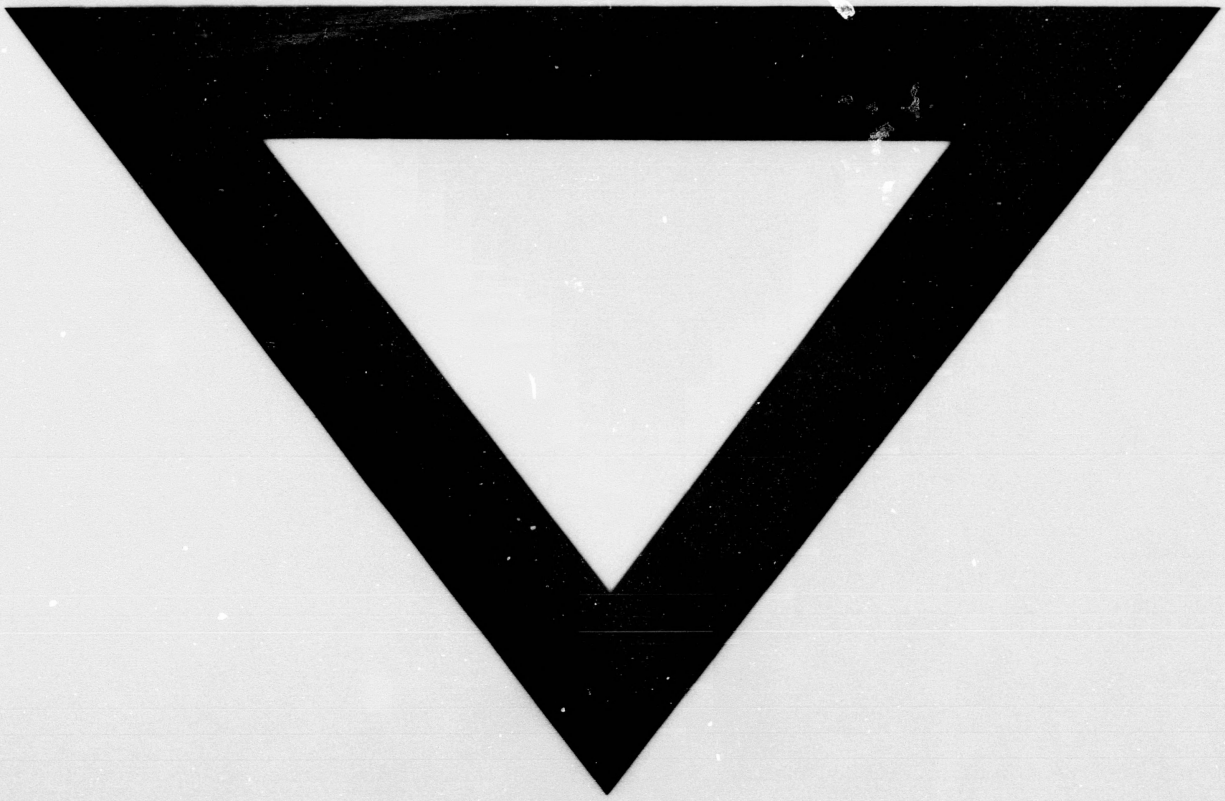
There was no tramping of feet at the departure of Astragus, as there had been at his entry: he simply rose to his full height, saluted his host and became invisible to that mortal.

Mr. Brains dropped his arms upon the table, his forehead upon his arms, and—thought.

, took it
eremony.
ıve drawn
ıe ruling

e by four
ɔury and
were pro-
:hard had
cocted by

might I
ire—that
I have
ıll I say :

ɔarture of
.e simply
ecame in-

able, his