A King Murderer

The Story of the Two Unfortunate Princes

By MARGARET BARR

The romance tragedy of English history is the career of the Duke of Gloucester, afterward King Richard III. Within it are many stories, and Richard is both the hero and the villain of every one of them.

When King Edward IV., Richard's brother, died, Edward's oldest son, who became king, was a little boy. Richard, whose courage was equaled only by his ambition and who possibly at the time designed to make himself king, at once dashed at the head of a troop of his adherents to where young Edward was and captured him.

The next important scene in the tragedy is the little king riding on horseback from the city of London to Westminster abbey, his Uncle Richard riding beside him, regarding his nephew sovereign with every pretense of reverence and affection. It is probable that Richard was even then plotting to supplant the child; that this apparent devotion was to win the confidence of the people with a view to furthering his opportunity, but whether the arch fiend then contemplated murdering his brother's son has not been proved.

The little king's mother as soon as she saw reason to fear her brother-in-law took refuge with her other children in the sanctuary of Westminster, for in those days no person, king or commoner, might drag one from the sanctuary without incurring the anathemas of the church. But the boy remained with his uncle, who also secured possession of his younger brother, the Duke of Clarence.

The Tower of London, which for more than two centuries has been only a fortress and is now mostly an object of curiosity for tourists, was then also a palace and a prison. Richard fixed the residence of his nephews there, assuming to reign in the minor king's name. England at the time needed a strong governing hand. Richard succeeded in convincing certain persons of influence that he had better be king. Others he threatened; others he put out of his way by beheading them. Many of the commoners were with him.

When all was ripe he seized the scepter. From the first the little princes were virtually prisoners in the Tower, though they were treated with all the reverence due a king and a prince of the blood. But they never came out from the gloomy walls. The people never saw them. Young as they were, they were old enough to realize that they were in the hands of one in whose way they stood and their lives were in danger.

Richard had a son of his own whom he idolized and whom he desired should succeed him on the throne of England. Probably this feature of the case turned his mind to the murder of the two princes, his nephews, for so long as they lived their title to the crown would stand before that of Richard's son. At any rate, there came a time when Richard determined to murder his nephews and looked about for some one to do the deed.

He sent an order to the lieutenant of the Tower to have the princes put to death. The officer refused to obey it. In this he braved the king, then an all powerful sovereign, but to force a man to commit the murder would have at once made the murder known, and this did not suit Richard's purpose. When he received word that the lieutenant would not do his bidding he lamented aloud that he had no one on whom he could rely in his extremity. A page overheard what he said and, knowing his meaning, told him that he knew a man who would serve him as he wished to be served. The man was called, accepted the commission and left for the Tower.

For four centuries a pitying world has been wondering as to the death scene of the poor little king and his brother. All that is known is that to keep their cries from being heard they were smothered in their bedclothes. When all was over their bodies were taken down to the foot of the stairs below the room in which the deed was done and there buried. Later, when the murder became known, it was given out that they had been buried in Westminster abbey. But this story was disproved many years later, in the reign of Charles II., when on making changes in the Tower the skeletons of two children were found at the foot of the staircase, as recorded by one of the murderers at the time of the murder.

The taking off of the princes being known only to a few, was kept for a long while. But there were whisperings, and in time it became known to the queen mother and her daughters that their dear ones had been murdered by their uncle. In addition to their horror at the crime and their bereavement, they dreaded lest the king murderer, defying the sacredness of their refuge, would drag them from the sanctuary and kill them also. As time passed and nothing was heard by the people of the princes, who were supposed to be living in the royal apartments of the Tower, they began to wonder. Then the dreadful news spread from mouth to mouth, and a great horror fell upon all England.

At last the murderer received his first punishment. His beloved son, for whom he had committed the crime, sickened and died. Richard had no other son and at his death, after all, the crown would rest on another head than one of his own family.

Meanwhile the queen mother of the murdered king remained in the sanctuary. Her oldest daughter, Elizabeth, was now heir apparent to the throne. The Duke of Buckingham, a powerful noble, conceived the idea of marrying this princess to a prince of the blood, the Earl of Richmond. The princess being of the house of York and the earl of the house of Lancaster, two families that had kept England in a protracted warfare by their disputes for the crown, the marriage would unite the two families and end the wars. Richmond was in France, but he crossed the channel and landed in England at the head of a French force. The attempt, however, was a failure. Richard with his accustomed energy attacked him before the French and English columns were prepared to fight and defeated and routed them. The Duke of Buckingham was captured by Richard and immediately beheaded.

A second landing was made by Richmond, and Richard again sprang forth to his work.

On the king's way to the battle which was to decide his fate he slept in an inn called the Blue Boar. Richard took with him his own bed and had it set up for him to sleep in the night before the battle. He had on his conscience the crime of murder, his nobles were beginning to desert him, and there was no one to whom he might turn for comfort.

In a house not far away lived a boy under the care of a man who, though he gave him every comfort and educated him, told him that he was not his father. The boy's name was Richard Plantagenet, and this is all he knew of his parentage.

The night before the battle of Bosworth a trooper rode up to the house where the boy, Plantagenet, lived and told him to come with him. They went to the inn where the king was lodged, and the boy stood in the royal presence. Richard embraced him and told him that he was his father, though the lad had not been born in wedlock.

"Tomorrow," said the king, "I fight for my crown. If I win I will acknowledge you, and you shall hereafter live with me as my son."

Quite likely Richard contemplated—in case he won the fight—to force this natural son upon the English people as his successor. Be this as it may, young Plantagenet the next day took position on a hill overlooking the battlefield on which was to be decided whether he was to live the life of a royal personage or that of an outcast.

The king awoke in the morning showing by his appearance that he was under a terrific dread. His face was livid, and he complained of having had frightful dreams. The crime of murder being on his conscience, knowing that he could not rely upon some of the nobles who had brought their retainers to serve him, it is likely that he feared defeat and punishment.

And what saw young Richard Plantagenet from the hilltop? When the battle was well on, one of the nobles who formed a part of Richard's army swung his troops to the other side. This was the signal for the defection of others, and presently the greater part of both armies were opposing the king.

Then the boy saw his father make a marvelous dash to turn the tide in his favor. The king saw the Earl of Richmond and, putting spurs to his horse, followed by only a handful of retainers, made straight for his opponent. Coming near the earl, he struck down single handed those who defended him. But the struggle was too unequal. A soldier bore down the king and dispatched him.

History gives no definite account of the subsequent life of the boy who from the hilltop saw the dashing of his hopes. But there is an account of a man who was a bricklayer and who, at noontimes, when his fellow workmen were resting, would be found to be reading. On one occasion a person, curious to know what he read, looked at the book. He found it to be written in Latin.

This man was Richard Plantagenet, who from a hill near Bosworth field saw his father slain and his sudden hope of living the life of a prince go out forever. This man afterward was for many years known to be the natural son of Richard III., King of England. Over a tombstone over a grave near the where he lived is his name, Richard Plantagenet.

The king being dead, the bedstead he had slept in the night before his death remained in the Blue Boar inn. One day many years after these events happened the landlady while cleaning the room heard something drop on the floor and roll away. Picking it up, she saw that it was a gold coin bearing a date just previous to Richard's death. The bed was examined and found to have a false bottom, which was full of money. It had been so fitted by the king to carry treasure.

The [illegible] Earl of Richmond went from [illegible] field to London, where he was received by the people as their [illegible]. He married the Princess Elizabeth, thus uniting the families of York and Lancaster and ending the celebrated [illegible] of the roses.

For four centuries the fate of the little King Edward V. and his brother has stirred the sympathy of all peoples. Artists have chosen the children for themes for pictures, and Shakespeare made the deeds of King Richard the subject of one of his principal tragedies. It was the last act in the real tragedy, the wars of the roses, in which multitudes perished while kings fought for a crown. But when the other historic events shall have passed into oblivion the murder of the royal children will continue to excite the sympathy of the world.

It Happened In China.

An American commercial traveler who was in China soon after the downfall of the empire was approached one day by a Chinaman, who told him, in fairly good English, that he had a brick of pure silver, weighing thirty pounds, which had been looted from one of the government subtreasuries during a riot. The Chinaman explained that to only an American would he trust the secret and said that he would sell the silver for a sum which amounted to $5 in our money.

Not being one who would look such a gift horse in the mouth, the American promptly paid the $5 and took possession of the silver bar.

Soon after, being in Hongkong and wishing to test the value of his purchase, the American took the silver bar to a Chinese assayer and asked for its weight.

The pigtailed savant of the scales carefully tested the metal, weighed it and then remarked laconically, "He weigh lead."—Chicago Record Herald.

Letters of Introduction.

In Rubinstein's reminiscences in the Paris Annales we read how the illustrious pianist went from Berlin to settle at Vienna, fortified by letters of introduction to various celebrities given to him by the Russian ambassador at the Prussian court. He presented several of them without any beneficial result, and it then occurred to him to tear open those which remained and read them. They all ran, he says, roughly speaking, as follows:

Dear Countess—Our position as ambassador and ambassadress imposes upon us the tiresome duty of patronizing and introducing all kinds of compatriots, who are often most importunate in their solicitations. I therefore now venture to introduce to you a certain Rubinstein, the bearer of this communication.

After that experience, Rubinstein says, he threw all his letters of introduction into the fire and found that he got on a great deal better without them.

Easing Your Burden.

One hot summer day I was driving along when I overtook a woman who carried a heavy basket. She gladly accepted my offer of a ride, but sat with the heavy basket still on her arm.

"My good woman," I said, "your basket will ride just as well in the bottom of the carriage and you would be much more comfortable."

"So it would, sir, thank you," said she; "I never thought of that."

That is what I do very often too, I said.

The woman looked up inquiringly.

"Yes, I do the same thing. The Lord has taken me up in his chariot, and I rejoice to ride in it. But very often I carry a burden of care on my back that would ride just as well if I put it down. If the Lord is willing to carry me he is willing to carry my cares."—Mark Guy Pearse.

Chopin's Superstition.

Chopin, unlike most musical geniuses, was a late riser. He practiced so long at the piano with his back unsupported that his spine was permanently injured. He never composed except when seated at the piano, and he always had the lights turned out when he was improvising. A public audience unnerved him to such an extent that he could not properly interpret the music before him. Seated in the midst of a small select circle, he easily extemporized and improvised. He "talked" to his piano whenever he was melancholy. He thought more of his manservant and his cat than he did of his intimate friends. Chopin had a superstitious dread of the figure seven and would not live in a house bearing that number or start upon a journey on that date.

Rings and Pledges.

There was an ancient Norse custom according to which when an oath was witnessed the person by whom it was pledged passed his hand through a silver ring, which was held sacred to the ceremony. In Iceland the bridegroom when plighting his troth used to pass his four fingers and thumb through a large ring and in this manner receive the hand of his bride. And even as lately as the end of the eighteenth century in Orkney a man and woman pledged their faith at the standing stones of Stennis by joining their hands through the perforated stone of Odin.

The Pillars of Success.

See the eminent author?

To what does he attribute his success?

To the fact that he wrote a dozen unsuccessful books and wasn't discouraged.

And there goes the multimillionaire. How did he lay the foundation of his great wealth?

On twenty failures.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

A Suspicious Man.

"Why does your husband eat so much horseradish?"

"He read an item stating that it is so cheap that it isn't worth while to adulterate it. My husband has but little confidence in his fellow man."—Kansas City Journal.

Not Superstitious.

He—Are you superstitious about the number 13? She—I'm not a bit superstitious; only I don't like it because I think it brings bad luck.—London Answers.

A Happy Couple.

The ancients believed that to make a happy couple the husband must be deaf and the wife blind.—Florida Times-Union.

Property has its duties as well as its rights.—Drummond.

Settled In Heaven—Perhaps

By M. QUAD

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Nobody could ever exactly fix the date when the dispute between Joab Warner and Moses Stansell originated, but it was generally concluded that it lasted twenty-nine years before Providence put an end to it. One fall evening, when Delhi consisted of only seven houses and a huckleberry patch, Joab and Moses met at the postoffice, and after a little talk Joab said:

"Moses, I'm told that you've got a tolerable appetite for cider."

"Yes, tolerable," admitted Moses.

"You allus lay in a bar'l for winter?"

"I surely do."

"And what do you put into it to keep it from gettin' hard and twangy?"

"I allus use a little peppermint."

"I've heard you did, and I'm goin' to tell you of a better thing. Put in sassafras instead of peppermint, and you'll have a bar'l of cider equal to champagne. You know how folks cry for my cider along in the winter, and it's the sassafras what does it."

"Sassafras couldn't beat peppermint," says Moses as he shakes his head.

"But it does beat it all holler," says Joab. "You use it once and you'll be grateful to me all the rest of your life."

"I don't doubt you mean well, Joab, but I shall stick to peppermint."

"I'm givin' you sassafras, Moses."

"And I'm givin' you peppermint, Joab."

"Waal, I wouldn't give peppermint to a grubby calf!"

"And I wouldn't give sassafras to an ailin' hog!"

That was the beginning of the dispute. They didn't lay hands on each other, but they felt edgeways, and they never met without bringing up the question. They had it all to themselves at first, but after a bit other folks were dragged into it, and a good share of the county was divided into "peppermints" and "sassafrasers." Both disputants were church members and belonged to the same church, and the pastor finally called them before him and said:

"See here, brethren, why this dispute?"

"'Cause Mose is a mule," replied Joab.

"'Cause Joab is an idiot," replied Moses.

"That is not Christian talk."

"Let him give up, then, and say he's wrong."

"He's the one that's got to give up."

"But you will divide the church if you keep this up," warned the pastor.

"I'd hate to see it," replied Moses, "but peppermint's the thing to preserve cider."

"And I will never divide a church if I kin help it," added Joab, "but nobody but a idiot would use peppermint. Sassafras is the thing, parson—sassafras!"

"Peppermint, parson—peppermint!"

"But if both are good"—

"But they hain't!"

Almost every night in the year Joab and Moses met at the postoffice, and after sort of elbowing each other around for a spell Joab would say:

"Why, hello, Moses, is that you? I thought I smelt peppermint around here!"

"And I smelt sassafras as soon as you left home!" Moses would reply.

"Still stickin' to it, are you, that peppermint is the right thing to keep cider from gettin' too hard?"

"I am, and allus I shall, and so would any one else but a born fool!"

There would be more to it, and a dozen men would go over the question and call each other fools and liars, and the trouble kept spreading. It beat Joab when he ran for supervisor, and it downed Moses when he wanted to be a deacon of his church. If a lightning rod man or a tin peddler showed up within ten miles of Jericho he was asked for his opinion on the cider question, and the man who favored peppermint couldn't do business with the sassafrasers. Many people tried to smooth over the quarrel, but when they went to Joab he said:

"I'm willin' enough to be friends with Moses, but, durn his hide, he's got to drop that peppermint business fust!"

Then they would go to Moses and talk and argue and point out his duty, but he would shake his head and reply:

"It's no use talkin' till Joab lets go of sassafras. He's stickin' to it jest because he's pigheaded and wants to come out on top."

The thing had been going on for nearly forty years, and Joab and Moses had got to be grandfathers and old men when they met at the postoffice for the last time. Both were tottering and feeble, and as they caught sight of each other Joab called out:

"It's that [illegible] peppermint workin' in your system, and I don't care how soon it takes you off!"

"It's that sassafras in your blood," replied Moses, "and your folks needn't expect me to come to your funeral!"

The next day both of them were in bed, and after looking them over the doctor said their time had come to go. They lasted two weeks and died on the same day, but before dying Joab sent word to Moses:

"I ain't got no pity for such a critter. If you'd used sassafras you might have lived to be 100 years old."

When Moses received the message he braced up and sent back word:

"Nobody wants any pity from you. If thar's cider in heaven they'll use peppermint to keep it from growin' hard."

NIGHT SHOWS WILL FEATURE GREAT NEW YORK STATE FAIR

Destruction of City of Pompeii to Be Reproduced at Grounds on Wonderful Scale—Many Attractions of Sensational Order Will Make New Record in Evening Productions—Concessionaires Are Already Interesting Themselves In Securing Places.

THE decision of the New York State Fair Commission to hold night shows on the grounds this season is a somewhat radical departure from established custom, but was reached only after careful consideration and discussion. The Commission decided not only to have night shows, but to make these shows the finest thing of their kind ever seen in the state.

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MAIN ENTRANCE TO NEW YORK STATE FAIR GROUNDS, WHERE NEW DEPARTURE IN NIGHT SHOWS WILL BE PRODUCED.

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Enough has become noised about the state of what is to be expected from this innovation to create the deepest interest on the part of concessionaires, and Albert E. Brown, secretary-treasurer of the Fair Commission, is already in receipt of a constantly increasing number of inquiries. Appreciating the fact that the night shows will more than double the value of concessions to the holders, these up to date individuals are already trying to get in on the ground floor. Secretary Brown will grant all concessions May 20.

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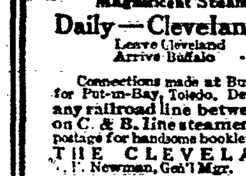

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