

King Richard commenced his march to Ireland, May 1899 : he tarried some hours at Windsor-castle, on his road to the western coast, in order to bid his young queen farewell before he departed for Ireland. Although only eleven years of age, Isabella had grown tall and very lovely ; she was rapidly assuming a womanly appearance. The king seemed greatly struck with the improvement in her person, and the progress she had made in her education. He treated her with the utmost deference ; and, if the chronicles¹ of her country are to be believed, he entirely won her young heart at this interview. Yet he had sent to dwell with her witnesses, whose deep grief and mournful habiliments for the loss of a husband and father could have told their young queen, even if their lips dared not speak, that the king had stained his hands with kindred blood. According to Froissart, Richard II. had sent the widowed duchess of Gloucester and her daughters to reside with Isabella at Windsor,—apparently under some species of restraint.

Before king Richard left Windsor-castle, he discovered that considerable reforms were required in his consort's establishment. The lady de Coucy, his cousin-german, was the queen's governess and principal lady of honour ; but, on his arrival at Windsor, it was represented to him that this lady took as much state upon her as if she had been in the situation of her mother, the princess-royal of England, or even the queen herself. In fact, the extravagance of the lady de Coucy knew no bounds ; "for," said the king's informer, "she has eighteen horses at her command. But this does not suffice ; she has a large train belonging to her husband, and in his livery, whenever she comes and goes. She keeps two or three goldsmiths, two or three cutlers, and two or three furriers constantly employed, as much as you and your queen. She is also building a chapel that will cost 1400 nobles." Exasperated at this extravagance, the king dismissed the lady de Coucy from her office in the queen's establishment : he paid all the debts she had incurred, and commanded her to leave

¹ Monstrelet and the MS. of the Ambassadors.

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