

the little queen. These debts had now to be liquidated; and a struggle soon commenced between the king and the popular party concerning the supplies, which ended in the destruction of the duke of Gloucester, and his more honest colleague, the earl of Arundel. A short but fierce despotism was established by Richard, which ultimately led to his deposition. From the earliest period of her sojourn in England, there was more probability that Isabella would share a prison than a throne. Froissart thus details one of the duke of Gloucester's plots, the object of which was the life-long incarceration of the harmless little queen: "He invited the earl of March¹ to come and visit him at Pleshy. There he unbosomed to him all the secrets of his heart, telling him that certain influential persons had elected him as king of England, resolving that king Richard and his queen were to be deposed and forthwith confined in prison, where they were to be maintained with ample provision during their lives; and he besought his nephew 'to give due consideration to this project, which was supported by the earl of Arundel, the earl of Warwick, and many of the prelates and barons of England.' The earl of March was thunderstruck at hearing this proposal from his uncle; but, young as he was, he concealed his emotion." The duke of Gloucester, observing the manner of his nephew, entreated that he would keep his discourse very secret. This Mortimer promised to do, and faithfully kept his word; but honourably resolving to flee from such strong temptation to his integrity and loyalty, he craved leave of king Richard to visit his Irish domains.²

"The count de St. Pol had been sent into England by the king of France, in order to see his daughter, and learn how she was going on. The king consulted him, and his uncles Lancaster and York, on the danger that threatened him and his young consort. 'My good uncles,' said he, 'for the love of God, advise me how to act. I am daily informed that

¹ It will be remembered this prince was the heir-presumptive to the throne, the grandson of Lionel of Clarence. A deep obscurity rests on the characters and conduct of the princes of the blood of the line of Mortimer in general history.

² He was made lord deputy (viceroy) of Ireland.