

fortune have declared for whatever party it might, disappointment alone was in store for the heart of Isabella, since the Richard, whom she hoped to meet, was but a counterfeit in royal robes to deceive the common people. The chiefs of the insurrection were betrayed by the mayor of Cirencester, and their summary execution followed in a few hours. Isabella was too young to be punished for her share in this rebellion, excepting by close restraint. She was sent, after quiet was restored, strictly guarded, to the palace of Havering-atte-Bower; and this appears to have been her place of residence during the tragical events that succeeded the insurrection, in which she took a part so decided, considering her tender age.

These transactions took place at the end of January and the beginning of February, 1400, when the insurrection was subdued: it became a favourite topic of conversation between the knights and lords of Henry's bedchamber, who always concluded by observing on the impossibility that Henry IV. should reign peaceably while Richard II. was suffered to exist. The wily king gave no intimation that he heard these colloquies. After an abortive invasion by the count de St. Pol, Richard's brother-in-law, the king's flatterers and tempters beset him more than ever. "Yet," says Froissart, emphatically, "the king of England made no reply; but, leaving them in conversation, went to his falconers, and placing a falcon on his wrist, forgot all in feeding him." Froissart is far too courtly to acknowledge that so accomplished a knight as Henry of Lancaster ordered so foul a murder; but other historians do not allow that Henry forgot all while feeding his falcon.

There are so many circumstantial details in the narrative of old Fabyan concerning the death of Richard II., that there is little doubt of its being the true history of the murder of the unhappy king. Froissart has given the opening or prologue of the tragedy; but the following relation, gathered from Fabyan and others, tells the manner in which it was played out:—King Henry, sitting one day at table, in a sighing manner said, "Have I no faithful friend who will deliver me of one, whose life will be my death, and whose death

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¹ There was a lord

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Valentine's-day, 1400
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