



YORK MINSTER.

part of the reign of John, the Archbishopric of York was occupied by Geoffrey Plantagenet, a natural son of the first named monarch, who was appointed to it in 1191. To show how dark was the age in which he lived he was made Archdeacon of Lincoln when a mere child, and at the age of fourteen his father procured for him the Bishopric of that See. These positions he held merely for the livings attached to them, without being in Holy Orders of any kind, and when the pope pressed him to receive them he resigned the livings and preferred the liberty of the layman. The Archbishopric of York, however, proved too tempting, and he received consecration at Tours in 1191. We are told of him that as an Archbishop "he hawked and he hunted, but

he neither held ordinations, consecrations or synods, set the liberties of the minster utterly at naught, gave benefices to boys, and if anyone suggested an appeal to Rome he was thrown into prison."* In his time wares were openly purchased and sold in churches.

But that age was not so dark as to admit of no brighter lights. Walter de Gray, Geoffrey's successor (in 1216), was a distinguished and honoured prelate, flourishing for forty years in the reign of John and Henry III. Many abuses were abolished by him and many reforms established. He gave to the diocese a healthy and religious tone and built up many waste places and cut out many corruptions. The poor and the sick were amply cared for. The stately palace of the Archbishops, called "Bishopthorpe" owes its inception to him, and the minster itself is indebted to him for some of its noblest features. Both the fine transepts (showing the best and most characteristic style of early English) belong to his period, and with their east and west aisles are a great ornament to the minster. In his days the begging friars became strong, but ere long incurred much odium by themselves heaping up the riches that they were supposed to despise.

During the reign of the three Edwards but little need be recorded of the Arch-

bishops of York beyond giving their names and dates of their appointments, which are as follows:—Sewall de Bovill, 1256; Godfrey de Ludham, 1258; Walter Giffard, 1266; William Wickwaine, 1279; John Romanus, 1286; Henry de Newerk, 1296; Thomas de Corbridge, 1300; William de Greenfield, 1304; William de Melton, 1316; William la Zouche, 1340; John de Thoresby, 1353; Alexander de Neville, 1374.

To John de Thoresby, himself a Yorkshireman and a scion of a noble house, belonged the honour of settling forever the unseemly controversy for supremacy between Canterbury and York, the arrangement being made between the

[* Ormsby's Diocesan Histories in loc.]