

land, asking a supply from the abbeys and churches. The abbot of Waltham was among the first to be applied to on this occasion; and, partly by threats and partly by entreaties, he was induced to issue a security for 200 marks. A similar application was made at another time to the abbots of Waltham, St. Albans, and Reading, for the sum of 5,000 marks, which the king had promised to the young Earl of Gloucester, as a marriage portion with his niece, the daughter of Guy, Earl of Angoulême.

can hardly digest the breast of a chicken.' The king pledged him in return, and having dined heartily, and thanked him for his good cheer, he departed. A few days after, the abbot was sent for to London, and lodged in the Tower, where he was kept a close prisoner, and, for some time, fed upon bread and water. At length, a sirloin of beef was set before him, on which he fed as heartily as one of his own ploughmen. In the midst of his meal, the king burst into the room from a private



GATEWAY AND BRIDGE, WALTHAM ABBEY. (See page 413).

But this was not successful; the three abbots declaring that they were unable to raise such a sum, nor could they justify such an act, even if they were able.

Farmer relates the following pleasant anecdote of Henry III.; but the abbot who enjoyed the benefit of his prescribed regimen is not named:—“Having disguised himself in the dress of one of his guards, he contrived to visit, about dinner time, the Abbey of Waltham, where he was immediately invited to the abbot's table; a sirloin of beef being set before him, he played so good a part, that the abbot exclaimed, ‘Well fare thy heart, and here's a cup of sack to the health of thy master; I would give a hundred pounds could I feed so heartily on beef as thou dost, but my poor queasy stomach

closet, and demanded his hundred pounds, which the abbot gave with no small pleasure, and on being released returned to his monastery with a heart and pocket much lighter than when he left it a few days before.”

Such stories have been told also of other English kings, from the early Norman days down to those of Henry VIII.

Stow, in an account of Wat Tyler's rebellion, says that King Richard II. was “now at London, now at Waltham,” so that it is clear that more than one king made the abbey a place of residence.

We read but little more of Waltham Abbey until we come to the reign of Henry VIII., when it accidentally became the scene of a conversation,