

letters patent^g. The chapter, consisting of canons or prebendaries, are sometimes appointed by the king, sometimes by the bishop, and sometimes elected by each other.

THE dean and chapter are, as was before observed, the nominal electors of a bishop. The bishop is their ordinary and immediate superior; and has, generally speaking, the power of visiting them, and correcting their excesses and enormities. They had also a check on the bishop at common law: for till the statute 32 Hen. VIII. c. 28. his grant or lease would not have bound his successors, unless confirmed by the dean and chapter^h.

DEANERIES and prebends may become void, like a bishoprick, by death, by deprivation, or by resignation to either the king or the bishopⁱ. Also I may here mention, once for all, that if a dean, prebendary, or other spiritual person be made a bishop, all the preferments of which he was before possessed are void; and the king may present to them in right of his prerogative royal. But they are not void by the election, but only by the consecrationⁱ.

III. AN arch-deacon hath an ecclesiastical jurisdiction, immediately subordinate to the bishop, throughout the whole of his diocese, or in some particular part of it. He is usually appointed by the bishop himself; and hath a kind of episcopal authority, originally derived from the bishop, but now independent and distinct from his^k. He therefore visits the clergy; and has his separate court for punishment of offenders by spiritual censures, and for hearing all other causes of ecclesiastical cognizance.

IV. THE rural deans are very antient officers of the church^l, but almost grown out of use; though their deaneries still subsist as an ecclesiastical division of the diocese, or archdeaconry. They seem to have been deputies of the bishop, planted all round his

^g Gibb. cod. 173.

^h Co. Litt. 103.

ⁱ Plowd. 498.

ⁱ 2 Roll. Abr. 352. Salk. 137.

^k 1 Burn. eccl. law. 68, 69.

^l Kennet. par. antiq. 633.

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