



Bodleian Libraries

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

This book is part of the collection held by the Bodleian Libraries and scanned by Google, Inc. for the Google Books Library Project.

For more information see:

<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/dbooks>



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.0 UK: England & Wales (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0) licence.

THE
OPINION

OF THE

Right Reverend Father in God

William Beveridge, D.D.

LATE

Lord Bishop of St. ASAPH,

CONCERNING

The Apostolical Constitutions

LONDON,

Printed for JOHN MORPHEW, near
Stationers-Hall. 1712.

7.

5.



Bp. BEVERIDGE'S Opinion
OF THE
Apostolical Constitutions.

S I R,

THE mighty Noise Mr. *Whitston's* Designs have made, and the dangerous Consequences of 'em, have given so general an Alarm to all sober, considering Christians, that I don't wonder you express so much Concern for the Honour and Interest of our common Christianity on this Occasion. The Particulars in which he wou'd innovate are so great in themselves; and withal have so wide an influence upon most other Branches of our Religion, as indeed to threaten a total Subversion of that Faith the Catholick Church has carefully kept for so many hundred years together: nay, and the very talk of these things does very much disturb and unsettle the Minds of a great many honest, religious People. Some are highly exasperated and with Indignation express an utter Abhorrence of the bold Attempt; others, from an Opinion

A 2

of

of Mr. *Whiston's* Honesty and Fairness, which his seeming Impartiality and candid Behaviour hitherto (tho' mix'd with some vehemence, occasion'd by the natural warmth and vivacity of his Temper and Constitution) has rais'd in 'em, seem doubtful what may be the Issue, and are almost prepar'd to hear and consider those Points anew, thinking the common Opinions are not the truer for having been so long and so universally received, as 'tis said they have been. And, so far indeed these are in the right that, the Antiquity of an Opinion is no Argument of its Truth; but then this ought to be consider'd withal that, seeing 'tis certain Opinions grow into or out of Credit in time and by Degrees, or else by the remarkable and memorable Determination of some very great and eminent Authority; whatever was universally allow'd and receiv'd in the Infancy and earliest Times of the Church, as the Doctrine or Practice of Christ or his Apostles, ought to be allow'd and receiv'd as such now, and undoubtedly will too by all fair, reasonable Men: for 'tis improbable in the highest degree that Errors and Falshoods shou'd in the very beginning, upon the first appearance and promulgation of Christianity, even during or soon after the Lives of Christ, his Apostles and the first Christians, at once and on a sudden gain universal Reception, and be impos'd on great numbers of People; who were very jealous of the Honour of their Founder; and as strict in observing all His Doctrines and Precepts; who were exceeding wary and cautious of admitting any Heresies and false Doctrines; and were

were dispers'd in several smaller Bodies over great part of the known World. But this is Mr. *Whiston's* own Argument, for he pretends to ground all he says only upon the Authority of the sacred Scriptures, and the genuine Writings of the first three Centuries, which are allow'd to be much purer than those that follow.

But that which is most shocking in Mr. *Whiston's* Attempt is his enlarging the Canon of Scripture by adding the *Apostolical Constitutions* as the most sacred of all the Canonical Books of the New Testament: Now if this Book were once admitted it wou'd give a new Face to the Christian Religion, and force us upon great changes in the Doctrines and Discipline, in the Ceremonies, Festivals, Fasts, &c. of the Church: and indeed it speaks so plain, that if its Authority cou'd be once thoroughly establish'd and confirm'd, it wou'd put by all the Disputes and Dissensions, &c. that disturb Christianity. And this bold step of Mr. *Whiston's* in setting up the Authority of this Book, I find, Sir, moves you most of any other, and causes you to demand my Opinion of it; which I know you believe I wou'd be very ready to give you, if I had not a more valuable Present to make you upon that Subject, and than which I know nothing can be more acceptable to you, *viz.* The Judgment of that great Man the late Right Reverend Bishop of *St. Asaph*, whom you so dearly lov'd while he was on Earth; and whom you so much honour now he's in Heaven. I'm perswaded you are all on fire to know what was that learned Prelate's Opinion of the Book you're enquiring after,

after, and therefore I'll detain you no longer, but subjoin a faithful Translation of *his* Words instead of laying together any Thoughts of my own.

“ ^a *Eusebius*, who about the beginning of the
 “ Fourth Century publish'd the Monuments of
 “ the Primitive Church, in reciting the sacred
 “ Books distributes 'em into Three Classes. For
 “ some, he says, were readily receiv'd by the
 “ Church without any Dispute: Some were with
 “ equal assurance rejected as inconsistent with the
 “ Doctrine of the Apostles; and others he calls
 “ ἀντιλεγόμενες, such as were indeed question'd by
 “ some, but yet were publicly read in most
 “ Churches ^b. In this last Class he places the
 “ Constitutions. ^c *The Acts of Paul*, says he, and
 “ *the Book entituled the Pastor, and the Revelation*
 “ *of Peter are also to be reckon'd among the Spu-*
 “ *rious* (that is such as are doubted of, as he ex-
 “ plains himself in the Place just before cited)
 “ *also the Epistle of Barnabas, and the Doctrines*
 “ *or Institutions call'd the Apostles, to which, as*
 “ *I said, may be added, if you please, the Re-*
 “ *velation of John.* I transcrib'd these last
 “ Words concerning the *Revelation of John*, that
 “ it might thence appear, what sort of Books
 “ the rest here mention'd are, *viz.* such as like

^a *Codex Canon. Eccles. Prim. illustrat. cap. 9. pag. 115. Edit. Ant-
 werp. per Cleric. ad calc. Patr. Apost.*

^b *Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. 3. cap. 31.*

^c *Ibid. c. 25. Ἐν τοῖς νόθοις καθ' ἑξῆς ἀχθῶ, καὶ τῆ Παύλου πρὸς
 Ἑβραίων ἢ γερμανῶν, ὅ τε λεγόμενον Ποιμῶν, καὶ ἡ Ἀποκάλυψις Πέ-
 τρου, καὶ πρὸς τέτοις ἢ φερομένη Βαρνάβα ἐπιστολή, καὶ τῆ Ἀπιστόλων
 αἱ λεγόμεναι διδασκαίαι, ἐτι τε ὡς ἔφην, ἡ Ἰωάννου ἀποκάλυψις εἰ
 φανείη.*

“ the *Revelation* of *St. John* were not wholly
 “ rejected, but only doubted of: and concern-
 “ ing which it was disputed whether they
 “ ought to be admitted into the sacred Canon
 “ or not. Now among the rest here enumera-
 “ ted is the Book entitled τὸ Ἀποστόλων αὐτῶν λεγο-
 “ μῆναι διδασκαί, *The Doctrines call'd the Apostles,*
 “ or ^d *The Institutions of the Apostles,* as the lear-
 “ ned *Henry Valesius* properly enough renders
 “ it. *Ruffinus* translates it *Doctrina quæ dicitur*
 “ *Apost.* he read it therefore in the Singular,
 “ τὸ Ἀποστόλων ἢ λεγομένη διδασχὴ.

“ *St. Athanasius* also in his Synopsis of the
 “ Holy Scripture, after having enumerated the
 “ Authentick Books of both Testaments, which
 “ are receiv'd by all, adds that there are other
 “ Books both of the Old and New Testaments,
 “ some of which are spoke against or doubted
 “ of, and others are call'd Apocryphal, that is,
 “ as he wou'd be understood, are wholly reje-
 “ cted ^e. According to which Distinction he
 “ reckons in the Old Testament, first those that
 “ are spoke against, as the *Wisdom of Salomon,*
 “ and *Jesus the Son of Sirach, Esther, Judith,*
 “ *Tobias, the four Books of Maccabees, &c.*
 “ Next the Apocryphal, as *Enoch, the Prayer*
 “ *of Joseph, the Testament of Moses,* and other
 “ Forgeries of the same kind. Afterwards he
 “ mentions τὰ τῆς νέας διαθήκης ἀντιλεγόμενα *those*

^d *Institutiones Apost.*

^e Εἰσὶ ἢ καὶ ἄλλα βιβλία διάφορα ὧσα τὰ προλεχθέντα, ἑμα-
 τέρως διαθήκης, τῆς παλαιᾶς δηλαδὴ καὶ τῆς νέας· τὰ μὲν ἀντιλεγό-
 μενα τὰ δὲ ἀπόκρυφα.

“ Books of the New Testament which are oppos'd,
 “ among which he enumerates Διδάχῃ τῶν Ἀπο-
 “ σόλων, *The Doctrine of the Apostles*. The same
 “ most holy Father likewise in his *Festal Epi-*
 “ *stle* after having in like manner reckon'd up
 “ the Books of both Testaments, says, † *There*
 “ *are also besides those already mention'd, other*
 “ *Books, which are not indeed receiv'd into the*
 “ *Canon, but are appointed by the Ancient Fa-*
 “ *thers to be read by Persons at their first*
 “ *coming and offering themselves to be initiated*
 “ *in the Doctrine of Piety.* Of which kind, says
 “ he, (are in the Old Testament) the *Wisdom of*
 “ *Salomon, the Wisdom of Sirach, Esther, Ju-*
 “ *dith, and Tobias* : (in the New Testament)
 “ ἡ Διδάχῃ τῶν Ἀποστόλων καὶ ὁ Ποιμὴν, *the Doctrine*
 “ *of the Apostles and the Pastor.*

“ Thus therefore it appears that we have two
 “ very considerable Witnesses, viz, *Eusebius* and
 “ *Athanasius* to prove that there was a Book ex-
 “ tant in those Times, call'd τῶν Ἀποστόλων Διδάχῃ,
 “ *the Doctrine of the Apostles*, and that it was
 “ rank'd among those Books of the New Testa-
 “ ment which were not wholly rejected, but on-
 “ ly doubted of. And that this is the Book
 “ which was also call'd Διαλογαὶ or Διαλάξεις τῶν
 “ Ἀποστόλων has formerly as well as now seem'd
 “ to learned Men more than probable. For
 “ *Zonaras*, the learned Scholiast upon the Ca-

† Ἐστὶ δὲ καὶ ἕτερα βιβλία τέτων ἕξωθεν, ἃ κανονισθέντα μὲν,
 τελευτωμένα δὲ ὡς τὰ τῶν ἁγίων ἀναγινώσκουσιν τοῖς ἀρετῆ περι-
 σσερχομένοις καὶ βελουμένοις καὶ ἡγεῖσιν τῆς ἐκκλησίας λόγον.

“ nons of the Eastern Church, in his Notes
 “ upon the above-cited Canonical Epistle of
 “ St. *Athanasius concerning Feasts*, which I pub-
 “ lish’d from the *Amerbachian Copy*, in my An-
 “ notations on the Pandects of the Canons, pag.
 “ 221. says, ^f *The Doctrine of the Apostles as*
 “ *’tis call’d, they assert to be the Constitutions of*
 “ *the Apostles written by Clement, which that*
 “ *call’d the sixth Synod does not allow to be read,*
 “ *esteeming ’em to be adulterated and corrupted*
 “ *by Hereticks.* And after him *Matthæus Bla-*
 “ *stares* says, the *διδασχλῶ τῶ Ἀποστόλων* mentio-
 “ ned by St. *Athanasius* is that which the sixth
 “ Synod rejects: ^g This, says he, *the sixth Sy-*
 “ *nod rejecteth, as I have shewn:* namely a little
 “ before where he had said the Constitutions
 “ of the Apostles were rejected by that Synod ^h.
 “ *J. B. Cotelerius* is of the same Opinion, and
 “ has answer’d the Arguments which are brought
 “ to the contrary.

“ And this Opinion seems very probable to
 “ me if it be understood not of the Constitu-
 “ tions which are now handed about, but of
 “ those cited by *Epiphanius*: For seeing that in
 “ the same Age wherein *Eusebius* and *Atha-*
 “ *nasius* wrote, these Constitutions were com-

^f Καὶ διδασχλῶ κληκῶν τῶ Ἀποστόλων, λέγουσιν ἔχει τὰς διὰ
 τῶ κληκῶν τῶ Συνοδικῶν τῶ Ἀποστόλων διατάξεις, ἃς ἡ λε-
 γομένη ἐκτὴ συνοδικὴ ἀνασινώσκεατ εἰς συλχῶρεϊ, ὡς νοθαθεϊσας,
 καὶ φθαρεϊσας ἀπὸ Ἀιρετικῶν.

^g Ταύτῃ καὶ ἡ ἐκτὴ συνοδικὴ ἠθέτησεν ὡς δεδωλή.

^h *Matth. Blast. Syntag. Alphab. lit. B. cap. 11.*

“ monly known under the Name of the Apo-
 “ stles, and were several times cited by *Epi-*
 “ *phanus*, it would therefore be very strange,
 “ if they were unknown to *Eusebius* and *Atha-*
 “ *nasius* who made the most diligent Enquiries
 “ into the Antiquities of the Church. And yet
 “ these must have been unknown to 'em un-
 “ less they meant these by *the Doctrine* and
 “ *the Doctrines of the Apostles*. Besides *Epipha-*
 “ *nus* himself stiles the Constitutions which
 “ he cites *the Doctrine*. By which Name also
 “ they are often call'd even in the Body of his
 “ Book. So, in the Preface to the first Book,
 “ the Apostles are brought in stirring up Chri-
 “ stians to receive the Constitutions with great
 “ Attention, in these Words, ⁱ *You that, by*
 “ *your Saviour's Command retain his Promises,*
 “ *hear this sacred Doctrine which is agreeable to*
 “ *his glorious Words*. And elsewhere the Con-
 “ stitution which teaches how Penitents are to
 “ be treated, is call'd ^k *διδασκαλία, ὅπως χερὴ*
 “ *προσφέρειαθ τοῖς μελανοῦσι*. As 'tis frequently
 “ thorough the whole Book, so that it cannot
 “ seem strange to any, if the same Book which
 “ some call *ἑκατάτοι*, is by others stil'd *διδασχὴ*
 “ *τ' Ἀποστόλων*.

ⁱ Ἀκέσατε διδασκαλίαν ἱερὰν οἱ ἀντιλόμοιοι τ' ἐπαγγελίας
 αὐτῶ ἐν προστάσματι τῆς Καθῆς ὁμοιοχόν τ' ἐσδόξαις φθογ-
 γαῖς αὐτῶ.

^k *Lib. 2. cap. 12.*

“ Moreover, *Epiphanius* cites a certain Book
 “ of Constitutions deliver’d by the Apostles, in
 “ such a manner, as to leave no room to doubt
 “ but that such a Book had been publick long
 “ before his time, and was common in the
 “ Hands of the Learned. ¹ *But the Apostles*
 “ *also, says he, in the Book call’d the Constitu-*
 “ *tion, say the Catholick Church is the Planta-*
 “ *tion and Vine of God.* Which Words thus
 “ cited are still extant in the beginning of the
 “ Constitutions. And in another Place, ^m *The*
 “ *Church observes to keep the Feast of Easter,*
 “ *that is the Week determin’d by the Apostles*
 “ *themselves in the Constitution.* And again,
 “ ⁿ *But if we must recur to the Authority of the*
 “ *Apostolical Constitutions, how comes it that they*
 “ *constantly fast on the fourth and sixth Days*
 “ *of the Week, except at Pentecost.* And a lit-
 “ tle after, ^o *Besides if the Apostles had said*
 “ *nothing in the Constitution concerning the fourth*
 “ *and sixth Days of the Week, we might have*
 “ *demonstrated this abundantly otherways.* But

¹ *Epiphani. Hæres. 45.* Οἱ Ἀπόστολοι φασιν ἐν τῇ διατάξει τῆς καθολικῆς, ὅτι φυλαία Θεῶν καὶ ἀμπηῶν ἡ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία.

^m *Id. Hæres. 70. n. 12.* Παράληθεται ὅ ἡ ἐκκλησία ἀγενεῖ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον καὶ πάσα, τέλει.

ⁿ *Id. Hæres. 75. n. 6.* Εἰ ὅ καὶ χρηρὸν τὸ τὸ διατάξεως τῶν Ἀποστόλων λέγειν, πῶς ἐκεῖ οὐκ εἰσὶν τέλει, καὶ προσάββατον νηστείαν διὰ παντὸς χωρὶς πενήτηκοςῆς. τὸ ἐβδομάδα τὸ εὐαγγέλιον καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν Ἀποστόλων ἐν τῇ διατάξει.

^o Εἶτα ὅ εἰ μὴ περὶ τὴν αὐτῆς ὑποθέσεως, τελεσθῶν καὶ προσάββατων οἱ αὐτοὶ Ἀπόστολοι ἐν τῇ διατάξει ἐλεγον, καὶ ἄλλως ἐν πανταχόθεν ἔχουσιν ἀποδείξει. ὅμως περὶ τότε ἀκριβῶς γέγραπται.

“ they have determin'd very strictly in that
 “ matter.

“ In all these Places it is manifest, *Epipha-*
 “ *nus* does not only cite the Book of Aposto-
 “ lical Constitutions, but also the Apostles as
 “ speaking in it: as tho' he was firmly per-
 “ suaded, that Book was written by the Apo-
 “ stles themselves. Now this cou'd not appear
 “ to him in the least probable, if it had not
 “ been certainly known that it was not com-
 “ pos'd a little before by Hereticks, but that
 “ it was so ancient, and so agreeable to the
 “ Doctrine and Traditions of the Apostles, that
 “ it might very well be ascrib'd to the Apo-
 “ stles themselves, or at least to Apostolical
 “ Men. And indeed what Opinion he had of
 “ this Book will appear from these Words:
 “ P. *To this purpose, says he, the Audiani wrest*
 “ *the Apostolical Constitution, which Book is in-*
 “ *deed by many call'd in question, but yet it is*
 “ *not to be rejected.* And therefore he does not
 “ condemn the Testimony cited by the *Audiani*
 “ out of this Book, as invalid and unworthy
 “ of Credit, but expounds the Words of the
 “ Constitution otherwise, and shews that that
 “ Constitution was made for a time only and
 “ for Peace-sake: which Answer he wou'd ne-
 “ ver have given, if the Book had not been

¶ *Hares.* 70. n. 10. Εἰς τὸ περὶ ὃ οἱ αὐτοὶ Ἀυδιανοὶ ᾠροῦ-
 ρουσι ἢ τῆς Ἀποστόλων διατάξεως, ἔσται μὲν τοῖς πολλοῖς ἐν ἀμ-
 φιλέκλῳ ἀλλ' ἐκ ἀδόκιμον.

“ of the highest Authority with him. Again
 “ he says, *ⁱ The Divine Word and Doctrine de-*
 “ *termines in the Constitutions of the Apostles*
 “ *concerning the Beard, that it ought not to be*
 “ *defac'd, i. e. that the Hairs of the Beard*
 “ *ought not to be cut.* Which are the Words
 “ of one who made no doubt but these Consti-
 “ tutions were truly Apostolical, or deliver'd
 “ by the Apostles, otherwise he wou'd never
 “ have call'd them *the Divine Word and Do-*
 “ *ctrine.*

“ From these clear Testimonies of *Epipha-*
 “ *nus* concerning the Constitutions which were
 “ anciently call'd the Apostles, it is manifest,
 “ that in the Fourth Century, when this lear-
 “ ned Father wrote, there were certain Consti-
 “ tutions under the Name of the Apostles,
 “ which were counted very ancient, and by
 “ some taken to be truly Apostolical, and there-
 “ fore it is no strange thing, that some in the
 “ preceding Century, being of the same Opi-
 “ nion, join'd these Constitutions to the Au-
 “ thentick Books of the Apostles, and some-
 “ times read and number'd them among the
 “ Canonical Books of the Holy Scripture. There
 “ is nothing in the Observation which has been
 “ made after *Daille* and others out of *Epipha-*
 “ *nus*, that some doubted of this Book. For

ⁱ *Ηαγ. Βο. η. γ. Καὶ οὐ μὴ τῶν ἡγίων ἐν τῶν διατάξεσι τῶν Ἀποστόλων φάσκει ὁ Θεὸς λόγος, καὶ ἡ διδασκαλία, μὴ φθείρην, τελευτῆσι μὴ τέμνεναι τείχας ἡγίων.*

“ none can be ignorant that several of the
 “ truly Canonical Books of the Apostles were
 “ doubted of in the first Three Centuries of
 “ Christianity. And it does not follow because
 “ a Book was call’d in question by some, that it
 “ was not approv’d by others, and accounted Ca-
 “ nonical. But the Observer urges, *pag. 32.*
 “ that these Constitutions were not placed in
 “ the Canon of Scripture by any body before
 “ the Council of *Nice*, and that therefore the
 “ Compiler of the *Apostolical Canons* liv’d not
 “ till after that time. *Epiphanius alone*, says
 “ he, *about the Year of our Lord 375 mentions*
 “ *the Clementine Constitutions with some marks*
 “ *of Esteem, but no body did so before him.* Now
 “ 1. he shou’d not have taken it for granted, but
 “ have prov’d, that no body before *Epiphanius*
 “ has plac’d the Constitutions in the Canon of
 “ Scripture, or mention’d them with any Praise :
 “ for this is the very thing in question, *viz.*
 “ whether the Constitutions were plac’d in the
 “ Canon of Scripture by this very Apostolick Ca-
 “ non before the Council of *Nice*, or not? And
 “ 2. he should have prov’d that the *διδασχλῶν* ἢ
 “ *Ἀποστόλων* mention’d by *Eusebius* and *Athana-*
 “ *sius* was not the same Book that *Epiphanius*
 “ afterwards call’d *Νέγταξις* ἢ *Ἀποστόλων*. For if
 “ it be allow’d to have been the same, which to
 “ me, as I have shewn, appears very probable,
 “ then the Apostolical Constitutions were men-
 “ tion’d before *Epiphanius*’s time, and reckon’d
 “ among those Books which were indeed ἀντιλε-
 γόμενοι,

“ γράμμοι, or *oppos'd*, but not entirely rejected
 “ from the Canon.

“ But besides, what if the Constitutions are
 “ by no body plac'd in the Canon of Scripture
 “ before *Eriphanus*, or the Council of *Nice*, but
 “ only in this Apostolick Canon. By whom I
 “ beseech you do we find it was done afterwards?
 “ Certainly it seems more agreeable to Reason
 “ and Faith, that this Book was plac'd among
 “ the Canonical ones, in the Times before the
 “ Canon was settled, rather than afterwards
 “ when that Matter was agreed on by all: and
 “ consequently in the first Ages of Christianity,
 “ rather than those that follow'd in which the
 “ Canon of Holy Scripture was establish'd and
 “ receiv'd.

“ Moreover, learned Men have no Reason to
 “ run so violently against this last Canon of the
 “ Apostles, as placing the eight Books of Aposto-
 “ lical Constitutions among the Canonical ones,
 “ or in the Canon of the New Testament. For
 “ nothing can be more unjustly objected to this
 “ Canon: in which the Constitutions are plainly
 “ distinguish'd from the Canonical Books of Ho-
 “ ly Scripture. Of the Authentick and Canoni-
 “ cal Books of both Testaments, the Canon
 “ says, *Let these Books be accounted venerable*
 “ *and holy to all of you both Clergy and Laity.*
 “ And afterwards having mention'd the Canoni-

“ Ἐσὼ ὃ ὑμῖν πᾶσι κληρικῶς καὶ λαϊκοῖς βιβλία σεβάσιμα καὶ ἅγια.

“ cal

“ cal Books of the Old and New Testament; of
 “ the Apostolical Constitutions, he says, ^f *And*
 “ *those entitled the Constitutions compil'd in eight*
 “ *Books by me Clement, to you Bishops, which*
 “ *you ought not to expose before all, because of*
 “ *the Mysteries contain'd in 'em.* The Canoni-
 “ cal Books therefore are recommended to both
 “ Clergy and Laity, but the Constitutions to the
 “ Bishops only; and that with this caution, that
 “ they shou'd not be made publick on account of
 “ the Mysteries they contain'd. Which cou'd
 “ not be said of the truly Canonical Books, nei-
 “ ther is it here said of them, for they were
 “ written for that very purpose, that all might
 “ learn from 'em the true Faith concerning God,
 “ and how they ought to conform their Lives.
 “ And seeing in this very Canon this caution is
 “ restrain'd to the Constitutions alone, and not
 “ apply'd to the other Books of either Testament
 “ there mention'd, thence it clearly appears that
 “ those are according to this Canon distinguish'd
 “ from these, as Apocryphal Books or Non-ca-
 “ nonical from those which are truly Canonical.
 “ So that the eight Books of Constitutions are
 “ here committed to the Bishops, and them on-
 “ ly, as containing to speak with *Ephraim*
 “ *πᾶς κανονικῶ τάξιν κ' ἐκκλησιαστικῶ διοίκησιν,* but
 “ in no wise as Canonical Books of Sacred Scri-
 “ pture to be read by all. And therefore, what-

^f Καὶ αἱ διαλαλαὶ ὑμῖν τοῖς Ἐπισκόποις, δι' ἐμῆ Κλήμεντος
 ἐν ὀκτὼ βιβλίοις περὶ ἀποστολικῶν, ἃς ἔχρη δημοσιῶσεν ἐπὶ πάν-
 των, διὰ τὰ ἐν αὐταῖς μυστικά.

“ ever Arguments are advanc’d against the A-
 “ postolical Canons from the Constitutions, as
 “ by them plac’d in the Canon of Holy Scripture,
 “ are altogether invalid and prove nothing.

“ What I have said hitherto has been to shew
 “ that the Apostolick Canons might have been
 “ establish’d and collected before the Council of
 “ *Nice*, tho’ we shou’d allow that the Apostolical
 “ Constitutions were mention’d in ’em from the
 “ beginning. But now finally, I am very well
 “ assur’d, that this whole Clause concerning the
 “ Constitutions of the Apostles, was inserted in
 “ this last Canon by another hand, long after the
 “ time of the first Compiler. For I make no
 “ doubt, but this as well as most other Monu-
 “ ments of the Primitive Church has been very
 “ much interpolated: which as it is clear in re-
 “ spect to other places, so it is most certain in
 “ respect to this; as appears from hence, that
 “ the Apostolical Canons do not always agree
 “ with the ancient Apostolical Constitutions.
 “ With the ancient Constitutions, I say; for we
 “ don’t speak of those which at this day bear
 “ that Name, and which learned Men have often
 “ observ’d and demonstrated, do every where va-
 “ ry from those ancient ones cited by *Epipha-*
 “ *nus*.

“ In those ancient Constitutions some things
 “ are directly contrary to the Apostolical Ca-
 “ nons. For *Epiphanius* cites these Words con-
 “ cerning *Easter*, out of the Constitutions of the
 “ Apostles, as he calls ’em, which were extant

“ in his time, ^t *do you keep Easter at the same time*
 “ *with your Brethren of the Circumcision. Act in*
 “ *conformity with them.* But that those of the
 “ Circumcision who receiv’d the Christian Faith,
 “ kept *Easter* at the same time that the Jews
 “ keep it, is known to all ; whereas in the A-
 “ postolical Canons this is expressly forbidden
 “ to be done: for the Seventh says thus: ^u *If any*
 “ *Bishop or Presbyter, or Deacon shall celebrate*
 “ *the holy Day of Easter before the Vernal Equi-*
 “ *nox as the Jews do, let him be depriv’d.* And
 “ the very same almost is said too in the Consti-
 “ tutions of the Apostles as they are now ex-
 “ tant ^w. Which being contrary to those an-
 “ cient Constitutions cited by *Epiphanius*, lear-
 “ ned Men justly conclude that the ancient Con-
 “ stitutions were very different from those which
 “ now go under the Name of the Apostles, and
 “ are attributed to *Clement*. And this also de-
 “ monstrates that the Constitutions and Canons
 “ of the Apostles anciently disagreed : for in
 “ those it was determin’d that the Christians
 “ without calculating the Times shou’d celebrate
 “ *Easter* when the Jews did, ^x *and*, says the an-
 “ cient Constitutors, *tho’ they do mistake, concern*
 “ *not your selves with that.* But in these, name-
 “ ly the Canons, every one is forbidden to cele-

^t *Epiph. Her. 70. n. 10. Ποιείτε όταν οι ἀδελφοὶ ὑμῶν οἱ ἐκ τῆς ἐπιτομῆς μετ’ αὐτῶν ἅμα ποιείτε.*

^u *Ἐἰ τις Ἐπίσκοπος, ἢ πρεσβύτερος, ἢ διάκονος ἢ ἁγίαν ἑβδομάδα ἡμέραν πρὸ τῆς ἐαρινῆς ἰσημερίας μὴ Ἰουδαίων ἐπιπέσει, καθαιρεῖται.*

^w *Lib. 5. c. 7.*

^x *Κάν τε πλανηθῶσι, μὴδ ἐν ὑμῖν μῆετω.*

“ brate *Easter* when the Jews do before the Ver-
 “ nal Equinox, upon a strict Calculation. And
 “ therefore it can never be imagin’d, that the
 “ first Author or Collector of the Canons of the
 “ Apostles cou’d recommend these Constitutions.
 “ This wou’d be to destroy in one Canon what
 “ was establish’d in another: than which no-
 “ thing can be more absurd. Wherefore I am
 “ perswaded, that part of the last Canon of the
 “ Apostles which speaks of the Constitutions are
 “ an Interpolation: of the same Author, it may
 “ be, who has corrupted and spoil’d the Consti-
 “ tutions themselves. For when he had probably
 “ from divers Constitutions of the Apostles, *Paul,*
 “ *Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp, Hippolytus* and o-
 “ thers, enlarg’d and chang’d the ancient Con-
 “ stitutions, and accommodated ’em to the Rites
 “ and Institutions of the Age he liv’d in, that he
 “ might impose his false and disguis’d Wares the
 “ better on others, the Deceiver inserts the Ti-
 “ tle of ’em in the last Canon of the Apostles,
 “ among the Books of Holy Scripture. And I
 “ am of Opinion, that all the other Interpola-
 “ tions and Corruptions which are present in
 “ these Canons are deriv’d from the same Au-
 “ thor. Who likewise seems first to have an-
 “ nex’d the Canons to the Constitutions, and
 “ join’d them in one Body, whereas before they
 “ were separate, as the Thing it self speaks and
 “ *Daille* confesses and proves *de Pseudep. lib. 3.*
 “ *cap. 1.*

This is what that learned Prelate has delive-
 red concerning the Book of Constitutions which
 Mr.

Mr. *Whiston* is so very fond of, how far Mr. *Whiston* is to be justify'd or condemn'd according to the Bishop's Opinion you will easily see, and what Judgment you are to make in the matter. There is room for a great many very useful Observations to be made upon what the Bishop has said, and indeed I can hardly deny my self the Liberty of presenting you with some, but only I fear you can't bear that his Lordship's fine Strokes shou'd be defac'd with my Roughnesses. And as Mr. *Whiston* promises us some larger Discourses and greater Discoveries in relation to these Constitutions than have been ever yet made, we may reasonably expect that their Authority will now be thoroughly examin'd, and all that can be observ'd or said either for or against 'em will be brought together, and set off to the best advantage on this occasion, far beyond any thing that has been done upon this Subject hitherto. 'Tis not possible, it may be, without some Commotion to see any Attempts made upon the known and receiv'd Canon of Holy Writ, because they may be very destructive to the Foundation of our Faith; but yet Matters of such mighty Consequence, ought to be consider'd and handled with very great Seriousness and Caution, with all imaginable Diligence and Candor and Impartiality, as we expect to be judg'd and hope to be acquitted at last, by Him who takes a strict Account of all our Proceedings, and will deal with us accordingly.

F I N I S.