

Which could not have been perfectly Understood, if at the same time we had not shewn from whom they sprung, and what Disposition and Form these provinces had that were Governed by them

Lib. 2.

Cap. 8.

After Constantine the Great had Embraced the Christian Religion, and settled the Church at first safe, flourish'd soon in greater outward Splendor, and in a more ample and Noble Hierarchy. The Bishops who in the first three Ages, in the midst of persecutions, governed the Churches were Dispos'd in Various and Different Degrees, and plac'd in Great or Eminency. Whosoever on the Title of Metropolitans, Primates, Bishops or Patriarchs, as superior to those of the secular Magistrates, and according to the Extent of the provinces which they Governed. ~~Some of these~~ <sup>Some of these</sup> ~~Canon~~ <sup>Canon</sup> of General Councils take their Rise of which afterward there were many Collections Made: for the same had Believ'd, that from the very infancy of Christianity there had been some Regulations Made by the Apostles, which even to this day we see collected to the Number of 85, Under the title of Canon's Apostolorum; Never the less Neither the opinion of Jurisconsults (lib. singulari adverb. Magdebur. Century) who reckon'd them all to be the work of the Apostles; Nor that of Baronius & Beclamine, who believ'd that only fifty of these Canons were Apostolick, have been Embraced by Learned Critics, who generally take them to be a Collection of Ancient Canons, and properly of the Council Made in the Council that Met before that of Nice, and which without Entering into a Dispute, may be seen in William Boverige Cod. Can. Eccl. Primit. Vindicat. Gabriel de Stuberino, Lewis Dupin and others; and which is more remarkable, Pope Calixtus Declares them Apocryphal in Can. sancta Romana Dist. 15. The same is said of the Book of the Apostolical Constitutions, false by Attribution to St. Clement; whether it was at first forged Under the Name of Clement, or afterward may have been corrupted by Hereticks, 'tis certain it carries no Authority with it in Matters of Religion, there having been

Several things added to it at Different times.

The first Canons, then when so many Collections began, are those which we find of the Council of the fourth Century. The first Council among the Ecclesiastical, was that of Nice in Bithynia, Assembled by the order of Constantine in the Year 325 and that of Constantinople by the Command of Theodosius the Great in the Year 381. The most Ancient of the Provincial Councils (altho the Chronologers fix the Epochs of them Various by not being able to point out the Year with any Certainty) were that of Gangra in Paphlagonia, of Neocaesarea in Pontus, of Synnada in Galatia, of Antioch of Syria, and of Laodicea in Phrygia, besides a great many others held in Africa, in Spain and elsewhere less famous.

Toward the End of the fourth Century, about the Year 385, the first Collection of Canons was Published by the Labour of a certain Bishop of Ephesus named Stephen, as Peter de Marca lib. 3. de Concord. cap. 3 on the faith of Christophorus Justellus Attest. And because these Canons were a ~~Collection~~ <sup>Collection</sup> written in Greek, there was a Latin Translation of it Made for the use of the Western Churches, the Author of which is uncertain. Neither did the Roman Church, nor the Churches of those our Provinces Make use of any other Collection but this so translated to the sixth Century that the Collection of Dionysius Exiguus appears, and the Gallian and German Churches continue to Make use of it to the Ninth Century. It had for title, according to Justellus, Codex Canonum Ecclesiae Universalis; and according to Glorandus this other Collectio Canonum Orientalium. To this an Addition of other Canons was Made by the same Bishop Stephen after the Year 451. See Hist. Droit. Canon. Par. 1. c. 6. To which a new Addition of Canons was Made by Theodoros Bishop of Cyrrus See Hist. Droit. loc. Cit. cap. 788.

Sect. 3.

The Ecclesiastical State then, altho it had been settled in such Splendor by Constantine, and had acquired a most Excellent External Polity, and had procur'd its Regulations, yet, Never the less, in these Days and unto the Reign of Justinian the Emperor, it had not gone beyond the Bounds of its spiritual power, in what concern'd the Cognizance of Causes. It was yet confin'd to the Cognizance of the Affairs of Religion and faith, wherein it judg'd by way