Hypocrites, and much more Infants, do in one sense believe.

there is delivered unto them that sacrament, a part of the
due celebration whereof consisteth in answering to the articles
of faith, because the habit of faith which afterwards doth come
with years, is but a farther building up of the same edifice,
the first foundation whereof was laid by the sacrament of
baptism. For that which there we professed without any under-
standing, when we afterwards come to acknowledge, do we
any thing else but only bring unto ripeness the very seed
that was sown before? We are then believers, because then we
begin to be that which process of time doth make perfect.
And till we come to actual belief, the very sacrament of faith
is a shield as strong as after this the faith of the sacrament
against all contrary infernal powers. Which whatsoever doth
think impossible, is undoubtedly farther thence from Christian
belief though he be baptized than are these innocents, which
at their baptism albeit they have no conceit or cogitation of
faith, are notwithstanding pure and free from all opposite
cogitations, whereas the other is not free. If therefore with-
out any fear or scruple we may account them and term them
believers only for their outward profession's sake, which in-
wardly are farther from faith than infants, why not infants
much more at the time of their solemn initiation by baptism
the sacrament of faith, whereunto they not only conceive
nothing opposite, but have also that grace they

which is the first and most effectual cause out of which our
belief growth?

In sum, the whole Church is a multitude of believers, all
honoured with that title, even hypocrites for their profession's
sake as well as saints because of their inward sincere per-
suasion, and infants as being in the first degree of their ghostly
motion towards the actual habit of faith; the first sort are
faithful in the eye of the world, the second faithful in the
sight of God; the last in the ready direct way to become
both if all things after be suitable to these their present
beginnings 1. "This," saith St. Augustine, "would not hapy
content such persons as are incapable or urquet, but to
them which having knowledge are not troublesome it may
"suffice. Wherein I have not for ease of myself objected
"against you that custom only than which nothing is more
"firm, but of a custom most profitable I have done that little
"which I could to yield you a reasonable cause."

[3.] Were St. Augustine now living there are which would
tell him for his better instruction that to say of a child 2
"it is elect" and to say it doth believe are all one, for which
cause sith no man is able precisely to affirm the one of any
infant in particular, it followeth that precisely and absolutely
we ought not to say the other.

Which precise and absolute terms are needless in this case.
We speak of infants as the rule of piety alloweth both to
speak and think. They that can take to themselves in
ordinary talk a charitable kind of liberty to name men of
their own sort God's dear children, (notwithstanding the large
reign of hypocrisy,) should not methinks be so strict and
rigorous against the Church for presuming as it doth of a
Christian innocent. For when we know how Christ in general
hath said that of such is the kingdom of heaven 3, which

"plum Dei pertinent parvuli sancti-
"fici ati sacramento Christi, regene-
rati Spiritu Sancto, qui per ete-
tem nondum possunt cognoscre
"Deum. Unde quam potuerunt illi
"nosse nec habere isti potuerunt
"habere ante quam nosse."
1 Ep. 23. al. 98. § 16.
2 T. C. lib. i. p. 169. [135, 137.]
3 If children could have faith, yet
"they that present the child cannot
"precisely tell whether that par-
ticular child hath faith or no; we
"are to think charitably and to
"hope it is one of the Church, but
"it can be no more precisely said
"that it hath faith, than it may be
"said precisely elected."
Proxies admissible in a Covenant of Mercy.

That infants may contract and covenant with God, the law is plain. Neither is the reason of the law obscure. For sith it tendeth we cannot sufficiently express how much to their own good, and doth no way hurt or endanger them to begin the race of their lives herewith, they are as equity requireth admitted hereunto, and in favour of their tender years, such formal complements of stipulation as being requisite are impossible by themselves in their own persons to be performed, leave is given that they may sufficiently discharge by others. Albeit therefore neither deaf nor dumb men, neither furious persons nor children can receive any civil stipulation, yet this kind of ghostly stipulation they may through his indulgence, who respecting the singular benefit thereof accepteth children brought unto him for that end, entereth into articles of covenant with them, and in tender commiseration graneth, that other men's professions and promises in baptism made for them shall avail no less than if they had been themselves able to have made their own.

[5.] None more fit to undertake this office in their behalf than such as present them unto baptism. A wrong conceit, that none may receive the sacrament of baptism but they whose parents, at the least the one of them, are by the soundness of their religion and by their virtuous demeanour known to be men of God, hath caused some to repel children, whosoever bring them, if their parents be mispersuaded in religion, or for other misdeserts excommunicated; some likewise for that cause to withhold baptism, unless the father, albeit no such exception can justly be taken against him, do notwithstanding make profession of his faith, and avouch the child to be his own. Thus whereas God hath appointed

2 John i. [Chr. Letter, p. 36: "What warrant have you of present "grace in the verie worke wrought "of baptism?""]
Hooker, MS. note: "Warrant "sufficient I hope for present grace "in the sacrament. As for in the "very worke wrought, they are not "my words, but yours. What "mean you by this your glose? "Doth it not shew that in my "language, you help it with a word of two, but so hoacht, that one "peace will not hold with another. "Had you placed ex opere operato "where you use in opere operato, "it might have stood you in more "stead, and yeat the labour all one. "But in and ex make no great ods, "I suppose, in your theologica "dictionary.""

3 2 Gal. v. 3.

3 "Stipulatio est verborum concepito, quibus quis qui interrogatur "datum facturumse quod in-

1 2 John i. [Chr. Letter, p. 36: "What warrant have you of present "grace in the verie worke wrought "of baptism?""]
Hooker, MS. note: "Warrant "sufficient I hope for present grace "in the sacrament. As for in the "very worke wrought, they are not "my words, but yours. What "mean you by this your glose? "Doth it not shew that in my "language, you help it with a word of two, but so hoacht, that one "peace will not hold with another. "Had you placed ex opere operato "where you use in opere operato, "it might have stood you in more "stead, and yeat the labour all one. "But in and ex make no great ods, "I suppose, in your theologica "dictionary.""

3 2 Gal. v. 3.

3 "Stipulatio est verborum concepito, quibus quis qui interrogatur "datum facturumse quod in-

1 2 John i. [Chr. Letter, p. 36: "What warrant have you of present "grace in the verie worke wrought "of baptism?""]
Hooker, MS. note: "Warrant "sufficient I hope for present grace "in the sacrament. As for in the "very worke wrought, they are not "my words, but yours. What "mean you by this your glose? "Doth it not shew that in my "language, you help it with a word of two, but so hoacht, that one "peace will not hold with another. "Had you placed ex opere operato "where you use in opere operato, "it might have stood you in more "stead, and yeat the labour all one. "But in and ex make no great ods, "I suppose, in your theologica "dictionary.""

3 2 Gal. v. 3.

3 "Stipulatio est verborum concepito, quibus quis qui interrogatur "datum facturumse quod in-
BOOK V.  
Ch. lviv. 5.

314 Analogy from Circumcision: The Church’s Security

them ministers of holy things, they make themselves inquisitors of men’s persons a great deal farther than need is.

They should consider that God hath ordained baptism in favour of mankind. To restrain favours is an odious thing, to enlarge them acceptable both to God and man. Whereas therefore the civil law gave divers immunities to them which were fathers of three children and had them living, those immunities they held although their children were all dead, if war had consumed them, because it seemed in that case not against reason to repute them by a courteous construction of law as live men, in that the honour of their service done to the commonwealth would remain always. Can it hurt us in exhibiting the graces which God doth bestow on men, or can it prejudice his glory, if the same equity guide and direct our hands?

When God made his covenant with such as had Abraham to their father, was only Abraham’s immediate issue, or only his lineal posterity according to the flesh included within that covenant? Were not proselytes as well as Jews always taken for the sons of Abraham? Yea because the very heads of families are fathers in some sort as touching providence and care for the meanest that belong unto them, the servants which Abraham had bought with money were as capable of

...sufficient, in Default of the Parents’ Faith

circumcision, being newly born, as any natural child that Abraham himself begat.

Be it then that baptism belongeth to none but such as either believe presently, or else being infants are the children of believing parents. In case the Church do bring children to the holy font whose natural parents are either unknown, or known to be such as the church accurseth, but yet forgetteth not in that severity to take compassion upon their offspring, (for it is the Church which doth offer them to baptism by the ministry of presentors,) were it not against both equity and duty to refuse the mother of believers herself, and not to take her in this case for a faithful parent? It is not the virtue of our fathers nor the faith of any other that can give us the true holiness which we have by virtue of our new birth. Yet even through the common faith and spirit of God’s Church, (a thing which no quality of parents can prejudice,) I say through the faith of the Church of God undertaking the motherly care of our souls, so far forth we may be and are in our infancy sanctified, as to be thereby made sufficiently capable of baptism, and to be interested in the rites of our new birth for their piety’s sake that offer us thereunto.

“T it cometh sometime to pass,” saith St. Augustine, “that the children of bond-slaves are brought to baptism by their

1 Of the baptina quippe parvuli ad
2 perciampiam spiritualem gratiam
3 non tam ab eis quorum gestantur
4 manibus, quamvis et ab ipsis si et
5 ipsi boni et om. et Bod. MS. and
6 et fuerint societate sanctorum atque fidem
7 etiam quia ubiquitous est mihi
8 August. in Epist. 23. [al. 98]
9 § 5. t. ii. 265.
10 quae per eandem viam pergrinitur a piety sunt
11 pater et mater, etiam quia etiam.
12 quique in animo vero etiam.
13 quattuor etiam.
14 etiam quia etiam.
15 quidem etiam.
16 quicumque etiam.
17 quia etiam.
18 quicumque etiam.
19 quidem etiam.
20 quicumque etiam.
21 quicumque etiam.
22 quicumque etiam.
23 quicumque etiam.
24 quicumque etiam.
25 quicumque etiam.
26 quicumque etiam.
27 quicumque etiam.
28 quicumque etiam.
29 quicumque etiam.
30 quicumque etiam.
31 quicumque etiam.
32 quicumque etiam.
33 quicumque etiam.
34 quicumque etiam.
35 quicumque etiam.
36 quicumque etiam.
37 quicumque etiam.
38 quicumque etiam.
39 quicumque etiam.
40 quicumque etiam.
41 quicumque etiam.
42 quicumque etiam.
43 quicumque etiam.
44 quicumque etiam.
45 quicumque etiam.
46 quicumque etiam.
47 quicumque etiam.
48 quicumque etiam.
49 quicumque etiam.
50 quicumque etiam.
51 quicumque etiam.
52 quicumque etiam.
53 quicumque etiam.
54 quicumque etiam.
55 quicumque etiam.
56 quicumque etiam.
57 quicumque etiam.
58 quicumque etiam.
59 quicumque etiam.
60 quicumque etiam.
61 quicumque etiam.
62 quicumque etiam.
63 quicumque etiam.
64 quicumque etiam.
65 quicumque etiam.
66 quicumque etiam.
67 quicumque etiam.
68 quicumque etiam.
69 quicumque etiam.
70 quicumque etiam.
71 quicumque etiam.
72 quicumque etiam.
73 quicumque etiam.
74 quicumque etiam.
75 quicumque etiam.
76 quicumque etiam.
77 quicumque etiam.
78 quicumque etiam.
79 quicumque etiam.
80 quicumque etiam.
81 quicumque etiam.
82 quicumque etiam.
83 quicumque etiam.
84 quicumque etiam.
85 quicumque etiam.
86 quicumque etiam.
87 quicumque etiam.
88 quicumque etiam.
89 quicumque etiam.
90 quicumque etiam.
91 quicumque etiam.
92 quicumque etiam.
93 quicumque etiam.
94 quicumque etiam.
95 quicumque etiam.
96 quicumque etiam.
97 quicumque etiam.
98 quicumque etiam.
99 quicumque etiam.
100 quicumque etiam.
first profession, and broken the promise which he made to God in the arms of others. Of such as profaned themselves being Christians with irreligious delight in the ensigns of idolatry, heathenish spectacles, shows, and stage plays, Tertullian to strike them the more deep claineth the promise which they made in baptism. Why were they dumb being thus challenged? Wherefore stood they not up to answer in their own defence, that such professions and promises made in their names were frivolous, that all which others undertook for them was but mockery and profanation? That which no heretic, no wicked liver, no impious desperer of God, no miscreant or malefactor, which had himself been baptized, was ever so desperate as to disgorge in contempt of so fruitfully received customs, is now their voice that restore as they say the ancient purity of religion.

LXV. In baptism many things of very ancient continuance are now quite and clean abolished, for that the virtue and grace of this sacrament had been therewith overshadowed, as fruit with too great abundance of leaves. Notwithstanding to them which think it always imperfect reformation that doth but shear and not flay, our retaining certain of those former rites, especially the dangerous sign of the cross, hath seemed almost an impardonable oversight. “The cross,” they say, “sith it is but a mere invention of man, should not therefore at all have been added to the sacrament of baptism. To sign children’s foreheads with a cross, in token that hereafter they shall not be ashamed to make profession of the faith of Christ, is to bring into the Church a new word, whereas there ought to be no Doctor heard in the Church but our Saviour Christ. That reason which moved the Fathers to use, should move us not to use, the sign of the cross. They lived with heathens which had the cross of Christ in contempt, we with such as adore the cross, and

1 Tertull. lib. de Spectac. [c. 4.]
2 Si ex idolatria universam spectaculorum conseratur, comitantes, coniubitures, consistoriis, indubitatis praesidii, damnatam est, ait Tertull. ibid. 617. "They do superstitionally and wickedly institute a new Sacrament, which is proper to Christ only, marking the child in the forehead with a cross, in token that he shall not be ashamed to confess the Faith of Christ."
BOOK V. Ch. liv. 4.

The sign of the Cross a significant Ceremony.

[2.] These are the causes of displeasure conceived against the cross, a ceremony the use whereof hath been profitable although we observe it not as the ordinance of God but of man. For, saith Tertullian, "if of this and the like "customs thou shouldst require some commandment to be "shewed thee out of Scriptures, there is none found." What reason there is to justify traditio, use or custom in this behalf, "either thou mayest of thyself perceive, or else learn "of some other that doth." Lest therefore the name of tradition should be offensive to any, considering how far by some it hath been and is abused, we mean by traditions, ordinances made in the prime of Christian religion, established with that authority which Christ hath left to his Church for matters indifferent, and in that consideration requisite to be observed, till like authority see just and reasonable cause to alter them. So that traditions ecclesiastical are not rudely and in gross to be shaken off, because the inventors of them were trivial.

[3.] Such as say they allow no invention of man to be

"consuetudo confirmatrix, et fides observatrix. Ratrumem traditioni, ""consuetudinibus, fidelis, patrocinium "aut ipse perspicuum aut ab aliquo "qui perspiceret discus.""

"Traditiones non scriptas si ""doctrinam respicient curu doctri- ""na scripta convenire debere dici- ""mus. Quod ad rituales et eccle- ""siasticas attinet, ordinis et edifi- ""ciorum ecclesiariarum in semper ""habe sund ratio est; inutilis autem ""et noxias, nempe ineptas et super- ""stitiosas, patronis suis reliqua- 


[4.] Ceremonies have more in weight than in sight, they work by commonness of use much, although in the several acts of their usage we scarcely discern any good they do. And because the use which they have for the most part is not perfectly understood, superstition is apt to impute unto them greater virtue than indeed they have. For prevention whereto when we use this ceremony we always plainly express the end whereunto it serveth, namely, for a sign of remembrance to put us in mind of our duty.

But by this mean they say we make it a great deal worse.


2 Tertull. de Coron. Militis. c. 4. "Ad omnem progressum atque "promotum, ad omnem aditum et "exitum, ad vestitum, ad calceas- "tum, ad lavacra, ad mensas, ad "lumina, ad cubilia, ad sedilia, quae- "nque nos conversatio exercet, "forme crucis signaculo terimus. "Harum et ailia urum ejusmodi dis- "cipilinarum si legem expostules "scripturarum, nullam invenies: "traditio tibi pretendetur auctrix,

† Simon Goulart, b. at Senlis 1543; succeeded Beza, 1605, as president of the Synod of Geneva; d. 1618: a laborious writer and editor. Biog. Univ. (1887.)

mingleth with the outward administration of sacraments, and under that pretence condemn our using the sign of the cross, have belike some special dispensation themselves to violate their own rules. For neither can they indeed decently nor do they ever baptize any without manifest breach of this their profound axiom, that "men's inventions should not be mingled "with sacraments and institutions of God." They seem to like very well in baptism the custom of godfathers, "because "so generally all churches have received it." Which custom being of God no more instituted than the other, (how- soever they pretend the other hurtful and this profitable,) it followeth that even in their own opinion, if their words do shew their minds, there is no necessity of stripping sacraments out of all such attire of ceremonies as man's wisdom hath at any time clothed them withal, and consequently that either they must reform their speech as over general, or else condemn their own practice as unlawful.

1 T. C. lib. i. p. 170. [137.] "The "profitable signification of the cross "maketh the thing a great deal "worse, and bringeth in a new word "into the Church, whereas there "ought to be no Doctor heard in "the Church but only our Saviour "Christ. For although it be the "word of God that we should not "be ashamed of the cross of Christ, "yet it is not the word of God that "we should be kept in remembrance "of that by two lines drawn across "one over another in the child's "forehead." [In i. 80, al. 59, the same argument is employed against the surplice. "Although the Church "have authority to make cere- "monies, (so they be according to the rules before recited...) I "could for all that never yet learn "that it hath power: to give new "significations, as it were to insti- "tute new sacraments...And there- "fore although the surplice have a "black spot when it is whitest, yet "it is not so black as you make it "with your white significations; nor "the cause so evil, as you defend "it." Id. iii. 227. "Although the "ceremony of crossing were conve- "nient, yet to raise a doctrine of it "is unlawful: forasmuch as it is "not enough to teach the truth un- "less it be truly taught, and that

"consuetudo confirmatrix, et fides observatrix. Ratrumem traditioni, ""consuetudinibus, fidelis, patrocinium 

"aut ipse perspicuum aut ab aliquo "qui perspeceret discus.""

"Traditiones non scriptas si 

"doctrinam respicient curu doctri- 

"na scripta convenire debere dici- 

"mus. Quod ad rituales et eccle- 

"siasticas attinet, ordinis et edifi- 

"ciorum ecclesiariarum in semper 

"habe sund ratio est; inutilis autem 

"et noxias, nempe ineptas et super- 

"stitiosas, patronis suis reliqua- 