

held to have been handed down by apostolical authority, still we can form a true conjecture of the value of the sacrament of baptism in the case of infants, from the parallel of circumcision"—and then he goes on to discuss *that* argument (*on Baptism*, Book iv. Chap. 24). Analysed, the argument stands thus:—"It exists; therefore, it is a custom:—it is a custom *now*; therefore, it must have been so from the beginning—and *therefore*, it is divine!" But we deny the fact. Infant baptism had not been "the invariable custom" of the Church. There was a time when it did not exist. "Baptism," says Neander, the great church historian, "was administered at first only to adults, as men were accustomed to conceive baptism and faith as strictly connected. We have all reason for not deriving infant baptism from apostolic institution, and the recognition of it which follows somewhat later as an apostolical tradition, serves to confirm this hypothesis. (Vol. i. p. 311, American Edition). Consequently, Augustine's conclusion falls to the ground.

The Romanists are adepts in the use of this argument. It serves their turn on all occasions. Thus, the Council of Trent instructs the children of the Church that "it is a good and useful thing suppliantly to invoke" the saints in heaven, and "to flee to their prayers, help and assistance;" and that "the images of Christ, of the Virgin Mother of God, and of other saints, are to be had and retained, especially in churches, and due honour and veneration rendered to them;"—and unblushingly asserts, in opposition to truth and history, that all this is "according to the practice of the catholic and apostolic church, received from the first beginning of the Christian religion" (Cramp's "Text-Book of Popery," p. 294—*Third Edition*). Protestants should take heed that they do not tread in the steps of the "Mother of abominations."

The opposition to traditional religion which distinguished the Donatists and others (among whom *Vigilantius* deserves honourable mention—he flourished in the fourth century, and Jerome poured coarse invectives on him, as was his wont) was continued through the succeeding centuries. God's witnesses—the Paulicians, and many more—testified for truth and holiness, and suffered for their testimony, by bonds, imprisonment, or death. Our knowledge of their tenets and practices is very imperfect, for this reason, that