

also past when she could say to the paralytic, 'Take up thy bed and walk.' But from age to age God left not Himself without witness, and from age to age the most mighty apology for Christianity has been in the lives of her saints. These have averted from guilty nations the rain of fire. Other religions have withered into dishonoured decrepitude; but she, with continuous rejuvenescence, has renewed her strength like the eagle; has run and not been weary, has walked and not been faint. If ever, through her own faithlessness, she has fallen before her enemies, she has risen Antæus-like, with new vigour, "and shaken her invincible locks." How many of her witnesses have, in ages of corruption, exclaimed like the Maccabees of old, "Let us die in our integrity." And never, though she seemed to be dying, never in her worst days has she lacked "the viaticum of good examples." The 10th century was dark, yet it produced an Anselm and a Bernard; the 15th was corrupted, yet in it lived a Savonarola and a Huss; martyrs, hermits, monks; schoolmen, like St. Bonaventura and St. Thomas; kings, like Alfred and St. Louis; noble ladies, like St. Theresa and St. Elizabeth of Hungary; bishops, like St. Edmund of Canterbury and St. Carlo Borromeo; dissenters, like Bunyan and Whitefield; country pastors, like Oberlin and Lavater; modern statesmen, like Wilberforce and Montalembert; modern clergymen, like Robertson and Lacordaire; these are her best defenders. The "*Nos soli innocentes*" has ever been her best appeal. The sword of her power may be beaten down, but what fiery dart shall pierce the silver shield of her innocence? There, my brethren, there is an Apology in which, to the grave, we may all take part; for that shield may be upheld by the weakest and meanest arm. It may not be ours to utter convincing ar-

guments, but it may be ours to live holy lives. It may not be ours to be subtle and learned and logical, but it may be ours to be noble and sweet and pure. Oh! believe me, not to the diadem of Constantine, not to the tiara of Gregory, not to the gorgeousness of Leo, not to the faggots of Torquemada, not to the sword of the Crusaders, not to the logic of the schoolmen, does Christianity owe one half-hour of her dominion over any human heart; but to the majesty of her self-denials, to the beauty of her holiness, to the meekness of her saints, to the truth, the zeal, the faithfulness of those who asked for nothing better than to follow His example who died as a malefactor to save the world. And these lessons are open to us no less than to them. "They ask me for *secrets* for attaining to perfection," said St. Francis de Sales; for my part I know no other secret than this: to love God with all one's heart, and one's neighbour as oneself." This was the great lesson of Christianity, but Christianity was not only a doctrine but a Life. Oh! let us strive to imitate that Life; take it with you, my young brethren, into the dust and glare of the busy world; amid the struggles and duties of this place of learning now, amid the temptations of great cities and eager lives hereafter, into the country parsonage and the lawyer's chambers, the merchant's counting-house and the soldier's tent; take but this with you, and—pure, happy, noble, confident—you may smile hereafter when men tell you that Christianity is dead. Do this, and it shall never die; it shall grow younger with years; it shall deepen in faith and wisdom, in dominion and power, in purity and peace; the dew of its birth shall be as the womb of the morning, and all they who believe and live thereby shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever.