

my brethren, to recount her virtues and draw from them practical lessons for our own spiritual good.

The thought that arises naturally in the mind of the reader of her short and simple life, as told in the acts of her martyrdom, is that she was a miracle of grace. We know that, according to St. Thomas, (1) the word miracle is properly applied only to those works of God which exceed the forces or are contrary to the laws of physical nature. We know also that in the spiritual order it is often hard to tell where the divine begins and the human ends, so perfectly, at times, are the two elements in accord. But there are extraordinary facts in the spiritual order, in which we can find nothing human except the substance which underlies them ; there are lives in which the divine power seems to take completely the place of nature, subdue human impulses and passions and produce effects contrary to them. These results may be called miracles of grace. Such a life was that of St. Paul, once the fierce persecutor, then changed into the zealous apostle, who, after his conversion, speaks of himself in the words of my text : " By the grace of God I am what I am,

(1) *Summa theol.* p. prima q. 10, art. 7 ad im.