

authority of his Church. The right of the Church to teach with binding authority may be disregarded, it cannot be confuted. The Church may be derided, she cannot be ignored; she may be persecuted, but she cannot be conquered. Weak children may give scandal; vain worldly children may forget her teachings; false children, in the pride of intellect, may seek to minimize or explain away her dogmas,—all this has happened in every age,—yet she, more unchanging than any natural law and more untiring, keeps on her way, exhorting, reproving, rebuking; a stumbling-block, indeed, to the self-sufficient and worldly wise, but life and resurrection to men of “good will.”

Not only is the Church a witness to God's intervention in the moral order, and a continual reminder of his loving care for our souls, she is also set as a testimony against the overweening pride of material strength. No kingdom is so widespread as she; none has lived her years, or equalled her achievements, or surpassed her conquests. She has seen, and will see again, mighty empires that rejoiced and confided in horsemen, and chariots, and armed battalions, shattered and destroyed, whilst she, deprived of all these, and confiding in the strength of the Lord, has gone on, and will go on, conquering and to conquer. Whether men realize it or not, she is a living testimony to the truth that mere brute force, mere superiority of numbers, in men, and ships, and guns, and money, cannot avert national disaster, or ensure the perpetuity of a nation. The world has not been given over to the rule of the strongest; they may triumph for a time, but defeat inevitably overtakes them. All through the history of mankind can be traced the decadence and overthrow, in God's own time, of material strength.

On you, Dearly Beloved, to whom it “has been