

tation would she yield. As well expect the northern blast to melt the icicle as for human love to thaw her snow-like purity. It was the divinity within that hedged her virginity from every blight. Can human nature of itself produce so fair a flower? Ye false creeds, have ye borne one tender bloom like unto this? No! it is divine; planted by the hand of God and watered by his grace. It grows only in one soil, the soil of the faith of Jesus Christ. It flourishes only in one garden, the garden of the Catholic Church. Agnes and her imitators are the exclusive property of that Church, which is hated because she makes war on the flesh, and which bids sensual humanity bow the knee in homage before the altar of the immaculate queen of virgins. The unconquerable virginity of Agnes is a divine effect which proves the divinity of the cause, the faith and grace of Jesus Christ. By that grace she was what she was, and it was not void in her.

If we consider next the martyrdom of Agnes, the proof of its divine character is equally strong. That martyrdom was a complete work of grace. As the soldier who dies for his country shows his patriotism so does the Christian martyr prove his faith in Christ. "O