

at the Preface, in the chapels of their Order, that word against which they had so long struggled with all the power of their learning and their voice? Sons of St. Dominic, receive the felicitations of a grateful and rejoicing brotherhood. That cause which must have triumphed by your agency, if truth were not stronger than genius, was destined to fail in your hands; but even in that, God prepared for you a new species of triumph, for He was about to show by your example that there is a glory still greater than that of victory!

Such is the term appointed for the belief in the Immaculate Conception after running such a stormy course. For five hundred years has it been attacked, and for five hundred years has it been victorious. Threatened by genius, by genius is it gloriously defended. Always denied by some, it at length receives the consent of all; finally, accused at one time of heresy by a rash theologian, it manifests itself in the nineteenth century as a devotion eminently Catholic. Such are the mysterious ways of God. That long series of combats was but the march to a solemn triumph. Wonderful policy of God! When He permits a truth to be subjected to human discussion, the voices of men are uplifted; but He, amid the tumult of the strife, silently pursues his course, and hurries on the debate to its inevitable term, where victory awaits the truth. The thought that slowly pierces