

THE PASSION

“If thou knowest not how to meditate on high and heavenly things, rest on the Passion of Christ, and willingly dwell in his sacred wounds. For, if thou fly devoutly to the wounds and precious stigmas of Jesus, thou shalt feel great comfort in tribulation.

On the evening of the 18th of February, 1823, a friend of Sister Emmerich went up to the bed, where she was lying apparently asleep; and being much struck by the beautiful and mournful expression of her countenance, felt himself inwardly inspired to raise his heart fervently to God, and offer the Passion of Christ to the Eternal Father, in union with the sufferings of all those who have carried their cross after him. While making this short prayer, he chanced to fix his eyes for a moment upon the stigmatised hands of Sister Emmerich. She immediately hid them under the counterpane, starting as if someone had given her a blow. He felt surprised at this, and asked her, ‘What has happened to you?’ ‘Many things,’ she answered in an expressive tone. Whilst he was considering what her meaning could be, she appeared to be asleep. At the end of about a quarter of an hour, she suddenly started up with all the eagerness of a person having a violent struggle with another, stretched out both her arms, clenching her hand, as if to repel an enemy standing on the left side of her bed, and exclaimed in an indignant voice: ‘What do you mean by this contract of Magdalum?’ Then she continued to speak with the warmth of a person who is being questioned during a quarrel—‘Yes, it is that accursed spirit—the liar from the beginning—Satan, who is reproaching him about the Magdalum contract, and other things of the same nature, and says that he spent all that money upon himself.’ When asked, ‘Who has spent money? Who is being spoken to in that way?’ she replied, ‘Jesus, my adorable Spouse, on Mount Olivet.’ Then she again turned to the left, with menacing gestures, and exclaimed, ‘What meanest thou, O father of lies, with thy Magdalum contract? Did he not deliver twenty-seven poor prisoners at Thirza, with the money derived from the sale of Magdalum? I saw him, and thou darest to say that he has brought confusion into the whole estate,



driven out its inhabitants, and squandered the money for which it was sold? But thy time is come, accursed spirit! Thou wilt be chained, and his heel will crush thy head.' Here she was interrupted by the entrance of another person; her friends thought that she was in delirium, and pitied her. The following morning she owned that the previous night she had imagined herself to be following our Saviour to the Garden of Olives, after the institution of the Blessed Eucharist, but that just at that moment someone having looked at the stigmas on her hands with a degree of veneration, she felt so horrified at this being done in the presence of our Lord, that she hastily hid them, with a feeling of pain. She then related her vision of what took place in the Garden of Olives, and as she continued her narrations the following days, the friend who was listening to her was enabled to connect the different scenes of the Passion together. But as, during Lent, she was also celebrating the combats of our Lord with Satan in the desert, she had to endure in her own person many sufferings and temptations. Hence there were a few pauses in the history of the Passion, which were, however, easily filled up by means of some later communications. She usually spoke in common German, but when in a state of ecstasy, her language became much purer, and her narrations partook at once of child-like simplicity and dignified inspiration. Her friend wrote down all that she had said, directly he returned to his own apartments; for it was seldom that he could so much as even take notes in her presence. The Giver of all good gifts bestowed upon him memory, zeal, and strength to bear much trouble and fatigue, so that he has been enabled to bring this work to a conclusion. His conscience tells him that he has done his best, and he humbly begs the reader, if satisfied with the result of his labours, to bestow upon him the alms of an occasional prayer.